

# The Philadelphia Inquirer

MUSEUMS • GALLERIES

## Art

By Edward Sozanski

**Speaking geologically.** Rebecca Rutstein's exhibition at the Bridgette Mayer Gallery is called "Love and Subduction," and that's not a topographical error.

*Subduction* refers to the geological process by which one of the Earth's tectonic plates slides under another as they inch across the surface of the planet.

Rutstein's paintings are full of geological images that, in the case of subduction, refer to a millennial time frame. She juxtaposes these against allusions to the impermanence of daily life, such as tumbling beds and a cascade of shoes.

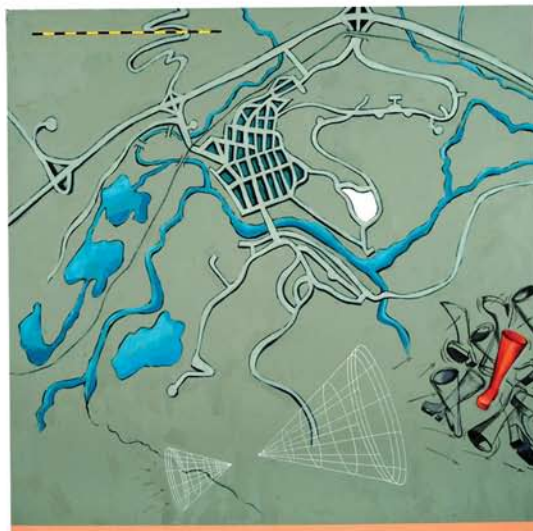
The point is always to place human existence within a larger cosmic framework — to measure mankind's fragility and unpredictability against nature's awesome constancy.

In these new paintings, Rutstein does this in a cheerful, nonthreatening way, by using more and brighter color than she used previously. She has also begun to silk-screen motifs onto her pictures. This technique further lightens what might otherwise be a viscous mix of symbols.

The recent paintings were inspired in part by a residency in Banff, Alberta, last summer. Some contain specific references to that city, but overall Rutstein has absorbed the experience into her art as light and color rather than description. As a result, her work has become more intense and invigorating.

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Bridgette Mayer Gallery, 709 Walnut St.  
11 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Wednesdays through  
Saturdays. Through May 29. Information:  
215-413-8893 or [www.mayerartconsultants.com](http://www.mayerartconsultants.com).



banff debauchery and homemade soup