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Art in Review

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"The Jeweleigha Set"

Greene Naftali Gallery
526 West 26th Street, Chelsea
Through July 29

The title of this sharply focused yet ecumenical group show alludes to the Julia set of fractal geometry with a spelling that implies jewel-like refracting structures. Nearly everything touches in one way or another on repetition in art, mathematics or nature, sometimes simultaneously. Ara Peterson presents a richly mutating kaleidoscopic video and a sculpture whose fencelike ripple of arabesques suggests an application of wave theory even before you know that its title is "Standing Wave." The waves are real in Keith Connolly's "Qvaris Object at Dawn," yet another homage to Robert Smithson, which consists of a large, banged-up mirrored ramp and a tiny video image of this object being buffeted by ocean waves on a beach. Nature dominates in Rachel Harrison's color photographs of ocean sunsets, which are so offhand as to seem also buffeted themselves. Michaela Meise, a young artist from Berlin, comments on the selective nature of vision with an elegant black-and-white sculpture: a free-standing empty frame held at eye level by three coltish legs.

Things reach a crescendo of sorts in the back gallery with David Dempewolf's "Time Travel Project - Glenn Gould," which appropriates vintage film of that pianist hunched over a keyboard playing J. S. Bach's "Canon 1 a 2," or crab canon, a musical palindrome that is played forward and backward at the same time. Mr. Dempewolf has digitally manipulated the film to run forward and backward simultaneously. Gould becomes a silent-movie blur dispensing almost continuously stuttering notes (and an apt aural foil for Mr. Peterson's sculpture). Seven mixed-media drawings by Julie Becker take the notion of refraction into a magical realm of castles, stairways leading to flying saucers, and star-studded mirrors, as if the show's theme were exponentially expanding toward another dimension, fueled by the joy of numbers and numerosness.

ROBERTA SMITH