

# Inside Brooklyn's Kentler International Drawing Space

By Elizabeth O'Reilly

Some of New York City's most intriguing contemporary art venues are off the beaten track. A case in point is the Kentler International Drawing Space in Red Hook, whose reputation has been growing over the past ten years as a showcase for both local and international artists.

4Sight, an exhibit opening February 8 at Kentler, demonstrates this intimate gallery's ability to draw top emerging talent from the city's vast pool. Exploring the relationship between abstraction and realism, the show presents works on paper from four Gowanus area artists; realists Elizabeth O'Reilly and David Konigsberg and abstract artists Hovey Brock and Margaret Neill. All four artists are actively exhibiting in galleries and alternative spaces around New York City.

Elizabeth O'Reilly explores issues of use and abandonment through gritty yet serene depictions of local neighborhoods. O'Reilly recently held a solo show at George Billis Gallery in Chelsea and has participated in exhibitions at the National Academy of Design. In 4Sight, her Red Hook cityscapes capture the neighborhood's hidden history and forlorn beauty.

Hovey Brock's layered watercolors simulate the effects of light, and range, in conceptual scale, from the microscopic to the astronomical. Brock has exhibited on both coasts with work described by critic Dominic Nahas as having "a vitalistic new-century energy." He is currently associated with Jeffrey Coploff gallery in Chelsea, where he held his second solo exhibition this past fall.

David Konigsberg straddles the line between realism and fiction, with visual stories of flight and redemption based as much on narrative invention as they are on memory and direct observation. Konigsberg has exhib-

ited at galleries and art centers in New York, New England and Seattle. A 1998 recipient of a MacDowell Colony grant, he will solo next spring at the Allen Sheppard Gallery.

Margaret Neill, curator and participant, investigates concepts of light, form and space, with paintings that bring to mind both the flow of fabric and the objectivity of photography. Neill has exhibited at Kentler and many other leading alternative spaces.

Her installation, Taking Notes, currently appears at the Brooklyn Central Library, and her work is in the collections of the Brooklyn Museum and the Museum of Modern Art.

"When this work comes together in an intimate space, the impact will be exciting," says Neill, whose intent is to show that the gulf between realism and abstraction is really not all that wide. "While there's tension between the disciplines – and occasionally people who practice them – there is also dialogue, many common elements, and common principles that apply."

Neill adds that she chose her fellow artists for the quality of their work. "Each has achieved a level of mastery and risk-taking that creates a potent brew."

Kentler, located on Van Brunt Street, has become a nexus of a vibrant artist community that extends from Red Hook north to the industrial district around the Gowanus Canal.

Directed by artist Florence Neal, it is an integral part of the local area and fosters interaction between the people and community of Red Hook and artists from around the world. 4Sight will be at the Kentler International drawing space from February 8 until March 17. The opening reception is Friday, February 8, 6-9 p.m.

The Kentler International Drawing Space is located at 353 Van Brunt Street, telephone

875-2098, email: [info@kentlergallery.org](mailto:info@kentlergallery.org), web site: [www.kentlergallery.org](http://www.kentlergallery.org).

Directions by subway: take the F or A Train to Jay St. Borough Hall. Outside, take the B-61 bus to Red Hook. The bus stops directly in front of the gallery between

Wolcott and Dikeman Sts.

By car: Take the BQE south to Atlantic Ave. exit, left to Columbia St., right on Degraw, left onto Van Brunt St., the gallery is 12 blocks on the left after PS 15 school yard.