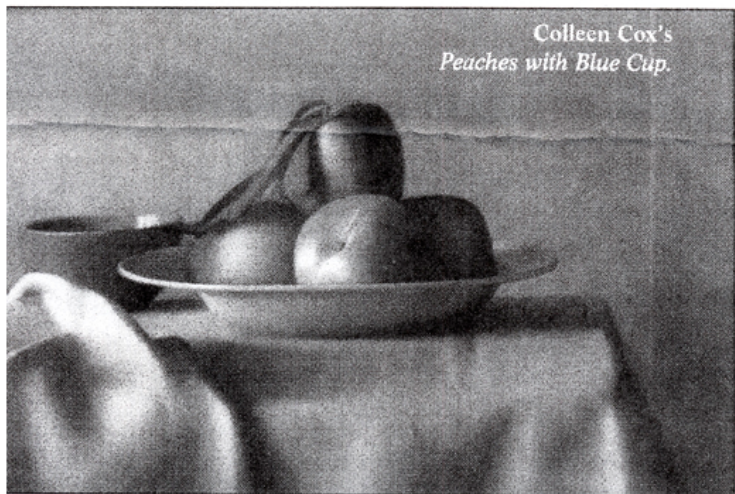


# Main Line Ticket

February 10, 2005



Colleen Cox's  
*Peaches with Blue Cup.*

## Sitting still

*Exhibit at Haverford College  
displays the beauty of still lifes*

### Mainly Art

By MARIE FOWLER

Still life painting dates back to the ancient Greeks, explains artist Joseph Byrne, "Zeuxis being one of them."

Hence, a national association of artists working in the genre adopted the name of this fifth century B.C. Greek, who famously painted a still life of grapes so well that birds pecked at them. A grass roots project founded in New York City in 1994, Zeuxis originally intended to explore contemporary still life painting, but it has since expanded. Such luminaries as Wayne Thiebaud have exhibited as guests artists in Zeuxis shows.



Lucy Barber's *Raven.*

*Tabletop Arenas*, on view in The Cantor Fitzgerald Gallery at Haverford College through Feb. 20, is drawn from the studios of 31 Zeuxis artists. The works, in various media, run the gamut from Colleen Cox's very realistically rendered fruits poised in a Vermeer-like atmosphere to Ying Li's engaging abstracts.

For the most part, these compositions reflect traditional themes and handling. In the catalog essay, writer Thomas M. Disch calls still lifes "hymns to the pleasure principle. Food for the table, yes — but food for thought."

Viewers will find many of the compositions aesthetically quite pleasing. Consider Brooklyn artist Cox's opulent fruit paintings. In her artist's statement, Cox notes, "Inevitably, the subconscious is revealed even in a seemingly mundane still life painting."

There is nothing mundane about her work, and art aficionados will certainly want to compare Cox's primal images to those of Spanish legend Salvador Dali, whose work is the subject of a major exhibition opening this week at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

If we consider Cox at one end of the spectrum, then certainly Li is at the other end with her oil *Elegy to a Skull and Lilies*. Li's pigments are so thickly applied that the term "impasto" does not begin to describe how thick rivulets of color literally arch upward, creating voids and sculptural space. The Beijing native, now an associate professor of fine art at Haverford, skillfully applies large amounts of pure color that resist blending, retaining integrity of hue.

Gallery hours are Monday through Friday from 11 a.m. until 5 p.m., Wednesday evenings until 8 p.m. and weekends from noon until 5 p.m. Located in the Whitehead Campus Center, the gallery may be reached by telephone at 610-896-1287.

*Marie Fowler lives on the Main Line and follows the local art scene closely.*