

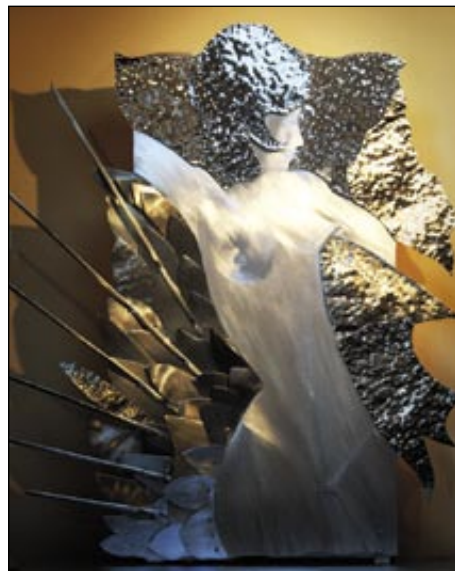
Jacques D'Auteuil @ Divine Inspiration Gallery of Fine Art

## Thinking Outside of the Box

By ERIN J. SMITH / CASA

**B**Y SENDING BOLTS OF EMOTION THROUGH HIS ARTWORK, Jacques D'Auteuil attempts to break through the conventions and blur the boundaries between the high and the low. More than fifty pieces of his most recent work, including paintings and sculpture, can be seen in the show *Synapses Qua Non (Thinking Outside the Box)* at the Divine Inspiration Gallery of Fine Art through the end of December.

"I have a very strong belief that art



JoBa by Jacques D'Auteuil

should strike a chord and vibrate with emotion," said D'Auteuil. "I drive my art, and I am driven by it. I never create art for the sake of creating art. It should be an organic experience."

As a child growing up in Péronne, a town in Northern France, D'Auteuil was inspired to become an artist by his father, a veterinarian with a talent for painting.

"I remember I was a kid, about eight or nine, and my father showed me his sketch book," said D'Auteuil. "He was a very good artist — like da Vinci really, with a very classical style. I was so awed. It touched my heart very deeply that he could create such beautiful work."

D'Auteuil was taking a drawing class in school at the time — not because he wanted to, but because he had to. "I had to draw a rooster. I was ghastly at it, so my father took pity on me. He sat me down, took out his colored pencils, and drew one from memory. He said, 'This is how it is done. Now you do it.' I did and he corrected me along the way. The experience launched me into wanting to be an artist." D'Auteuil also remembers his father taking him up to the attic and showing him a trunk filled with art supplies, including colorful tubes of oil paints, painting knives, and canvases.



Jacques D'Auteuil

"He said, 'Don't touch it,' but it was more like he was urging me to. One afternoon, I stole a few tubes of paint and a blank canvas and took them to my room. I hid the painting in the lid of a cabinet, so I could hide it easily if someone found me," said D'Auteuil. "I did get some paint on the curtains, but my mother protected me. That was my first painting."

D'Auteuil eventually moved to Paris to further his studies in art. But he soon tired of Paris and moved to New York in the 1970s. While there, he attended the School of Visual Arts and studied with Jack Potter, a New York-based artist and illustrator. "He was very demanding. He pushed us to break through the normal conventions," said D'Auteuil. "He was harsh as a teacher, but I've found his lessons very rewarding down the line."

After finishing his studies, D'Auteuil went back to France, but found himself unhappy with a life working as a commercial artist. He moved back to the states and made his way out west to San Francisco, eventually settling in Los Angeles. He moved to Santa Barbara from Camarillo at the beginning of 2009. "My life has changed completely after moving to Santa Barbara," said D'Auteuil. "I've found it very open to art and artists,



Eye Infinity by Jacques D'Auteuil

like San Francisco used to feel." Despite selling much of his artwork over the years, D'Auteuil has depended on his abilities as a graphic artist to make a living. Since moving to Santa Barbara, D'Auteuil has made the transition to become a full-time artist.

In addition to D'Auteuil's artwork, twelve small works by Kathleen Elsey, including landscapes and still lifes, are on display at the gallery through the end of the month.

Divine Inspiration is located at 1528 State St. Hours are 11am-5pm, Tues through Fri; 11am-2pm, Sat and Sun; and by appointment. For more information, call 962-6444 or visit [www.divineinspiration.us](http://www.divineinspiration.us).