

Paint it Black now on exhibit

BY VINCE MILLER
Staff Writer

A dozen artists from the New York and Philadelphia areas believe in the saying "black is beautiful," and are exhibiting their works to show why.

The show, sponsored by the Shore Institute of the Contemporary Arts, is called

LONG BRANCH Paint it Black, and runs through June 4 at the institute, 20 Third Ave., Long Branch.

Doug Ferrari, show curator and executive director of the institute, points out that in Western culture, black has long been associated with the negative — evil, sin, voids, depravity and the sinister. Paint it Black, he says, demonstrates that artists who use a predominantly black palette draw out of that void issues of purification, spiritual values and racial identities.

Participating artist Lars Strandh said the color black "slows things down in today's fast-paced world. It's simplistic . . . (it) represents stillness and peace."

Strandh, who was born in Sweden and lives in Oslo, Norway, is visiting in the area to take part in the show, which began with a reception attended by about 100 people April 29.

Other events include a Black Party at the newly opened McLoone's Pier House, Pier Vil-

lage, from 6 to 9 p.m. today. Dress for the \$50-per-ticket fund-raiser is "artfully black." Ferrari, whose organization will benefit from the event, explains that it doesn't mean formal, but perhaps an item or two of black clothing.

Strandh also is to be on hand for a panel discussion by participating artists at 7 p.m. May 19.

Strandh, 44, has been painting for 15 years. While he uses five or six other acrylic colors, Strandh prefers black to express his sentiments in a painting.

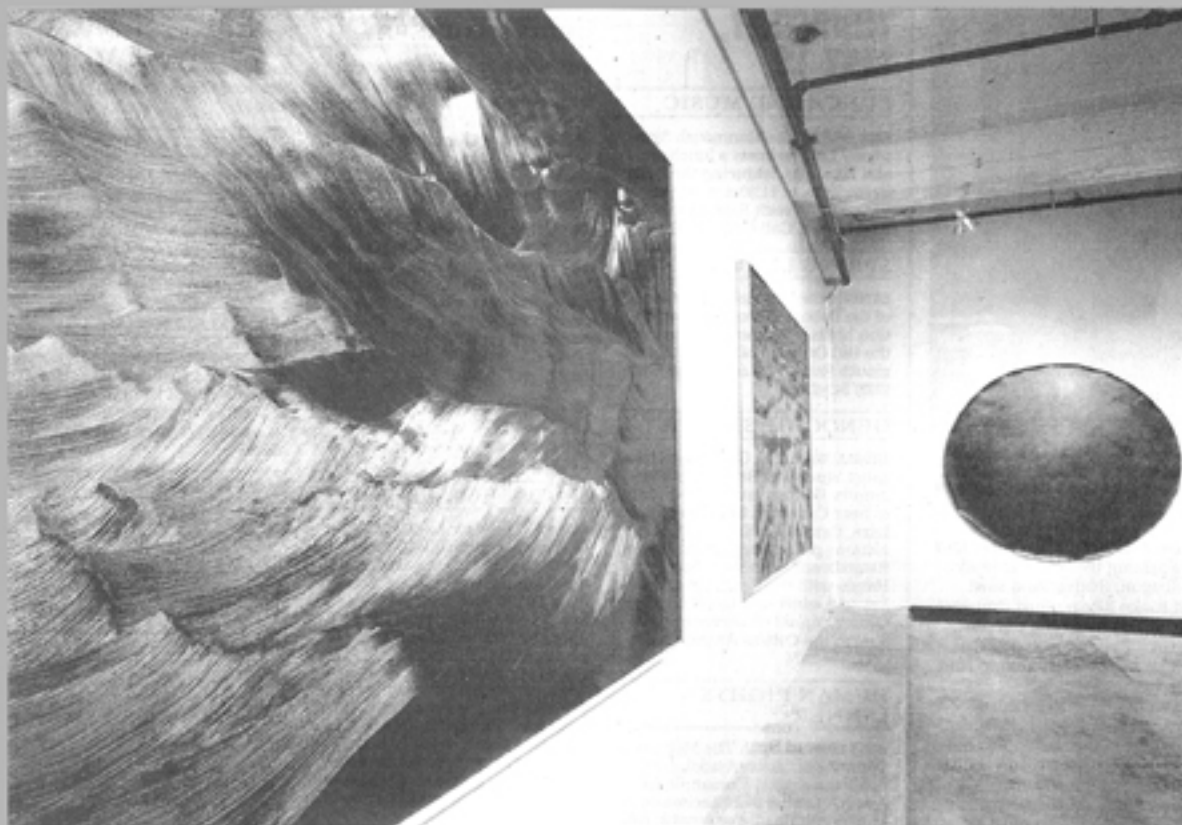
"It's almost like a haven for me — a retreat," Strandh said of the color.

His works are among the 24 on the walls of the art gallery, which includes four pieces in oil by Karen Gunderson, New York.

Two are called "Rounding the Cape." When viewed up close and without light, there is no doubt that the works are entirely black. With light shining on them, however, the light reflecting on Gunderson's deep brush strokes gives the appearance of whitecaps on the ocean.

Visitors may view the exhibit from 1 to 5 p.m. Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays, and from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays. The gallery is closed Mondays and Tuesdays.

Information is available by telephoning (732) 263-1121 or visiting www.sica.org on the Web.



In photo above, part of the Paint it Black exhibit sponsored by the Shore Institute of the Contemporary Arts, the work at left is part of Karen Gunderson's oil-on-linen "Rounding the Cape." The circular image at right is an untitled silk-screen ink-on-canvas work appearing courtesy of the artist, Quentin Morris, and Larry Becker Contemporary Art. Photo at left shows a work called "40th and 50th" by Chakaia Booker, made of rubber tires and wood.

