

The Arts

Journeying into the landscapes of one artist's mind

By Victoria Donohoe
INQUIRER ART CRITIC

Demetra Tassiou Panidis concerns herself with a rich strangeness of textures. It is the first thing we notice about her exhibit featuring abstract collagraph prints, mixed media etchings, monoprints and a wall installation at Rosemont College.

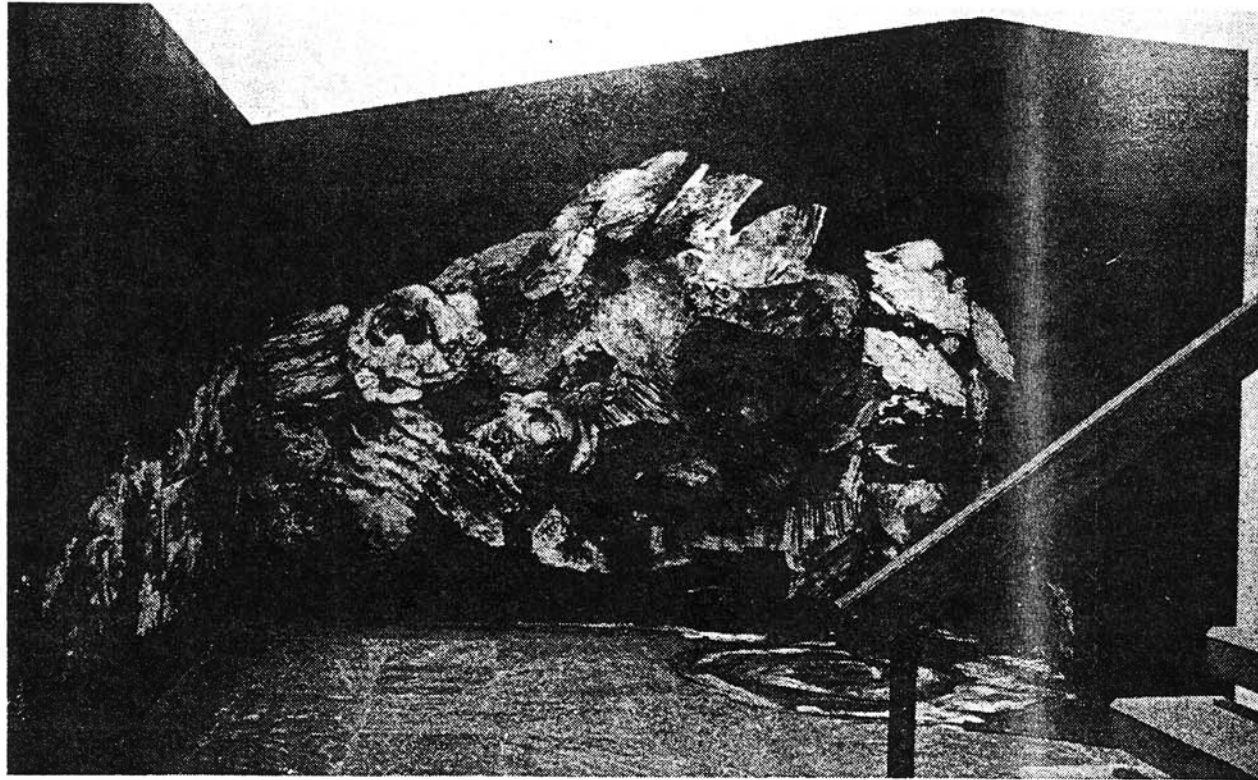
Moreover, in Panidis' work, a high priority is placed — for its own sake — on the preconscious, mythic voice of the artist. Like landscapes of the mind, these abstractions aim to represent the human spirit in shape and image and to lay bare human conflict, anger and hidden emotions. Panidis is presenting data of inner experience.

What is individual in the work of the Devon artist who hails from Thessaloniki, Greece, is the way she has managed her animating inflections of color and light in some of these otherwise dark pictures. Such works never involve us with the details of a precise location. Instead, they fix a spectrum of experience for us. They are like scenes that come suddenly to mind with an unaccustomed clarity in which everything superfluous to feeling is eliminated.

This artist seems to manipulate the timeless qualities of reverie to come up with a vision that has a kind of simplicity as its essence. Panidis is interested in bringing clarity and force to bear in dealing with detail.

Her large wall installation, which uses collaged pieces from Panidis' etchings and monoprints as well as parts in which paint is applied with a brush, is a summary of everything that is best in her art. Here the X-ray-like effect in some parts of the work brings the painted parts alive in filmy blue iridescence. Also we note a structural emphasis, which finds shapes reduced to the leanest, most decisive terms.

Panidis is, after all, from Greece, which has a tremendous classical art



Demetra Tassiou Panidis' solo show at Rosemont College includes a wall installation that combines etchings, monoprints and brush strokes of paint. It summarizes everything that is best in her art.

tradition. Trained there in art and living here since 1980, she soon returned to school, this time at Rosemont College, taking up printmaking — in which she earned a master of fine arts degree from the University of Pennsylvania this spring.

So, her landscapes of the mind can be grand, and several of them are mystical. It is as if each landscape had imposed its own will on the artist, thus affecting her emotional approach. If there is something heroic in this effort to recover and revitalize "tradition" — and I believe there is — there is also something about it that guarantees an air of tentativeness and groping by a tal-

ented artist feeling her way. Rosemont College's Lawrence Gallery, Rosemont. To Sept. 12. Mondays to Thursdays 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Fridays 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. (610-526-2967).