



Louis Jansen van Vuuren, Rea Sembach en David Rossouw.

'n Nuwe kunsgallery, Die Sembach Gallery in Houtbaai, is op 'n geselligheid geopen.

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Mysterious moonlight encounters

VIOLETS or violence? There's no prize for guessing what most people would prefer to look at. Coincidentally, flowers — especially in exotic settings — are what Louis Jansen van Vuuren paints. And that he takes great pleasure in doing so, is evident in

surfaces animated by a light and lively brush loaded with pigment from his distinctive "blue" palate.

From the story point of view, Van Vuuren's paintings offer pure escapism. Mostly they speak of exotic locations (Morocco) and

mysterious encounters in moonlit settings (a subject that in less capable hands could turn mushily sentimental!).

It's as a voyeur that the viewer participates — and the artist makes things very inviting. Plump easy chairs beckon, ripe fruit tempts, and beyond the elaborate arabesques of balcony grilles, street activity and glimpses and of eastern architecture tantalise.

Colour is what strikes you most in Van Vuuren's paintings. It is colour (a mostly cool palate animated by a deep, rich turquoise-blue) that confers a distinctive "signature" — as with Frans Klein's IKB (International Klein Blue). It is dramatic colour — as with the exciting juxtaposition of deep blue and brilliant sun yellow. Colour functions as illuminator, as theatrical setting, as mood-maker, as animator and as storyteller. It is unreal colour, fed by senses and imagination more than vision — surely echoing the artist's response to his exotic lo-

cation.

Van Vuuren obviously owes a lot to Matisse (tilted perspective, ornamental balcony grilles, pattern-interest, etc). Colour too, is this artist's primary means of communication.

Quite unlike the French master's reductive approach though, Van Vuuren's expression is immediate, emotive and atmospheric. And rather than seeking to rea-

lise his own "little sensation", this artist goes all-out to have his audience share a personal, sensual experience.

We have to regret that Louis limits his visual report on encounters with the "other" to a sequence of rooms with somewhat similiar furnishings. Nevertheless, here's a sensuous feast the artist invites us to share.

BENITA MUNITZ