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## Part memory, part dreamscape at exhibit of Donnamaria Bruton's work

By Bill Van Sieten

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Just as some musicians have perfect pitch, some artists are blessed with perfect touch — the ability to render even complex shapes and images with an almost effortless ease. Donnamaria Bruton, a Providence painter and longtime RISD professor who died last year, had that kind of loose, free-flowing talent. Whether she was painting a realistic scene, such as a still life or a landscape, or (more often) working in a more abstract style, she rarely made a bad move.

All of which makes the current exhibit of Bruton's work at Cade Tompkins Projects a must-see event for local art lovers. A fan of Abstract Expressionist painters such as Cy Twombly and Willem de Kooning, yet with a strong realistic streak, Bruton often mixed recognizable images with more abstract markings and doodles. A good example is "Untitled Landscape IV," in which a series of small squiggle-filled "islands" appear to float on a shimmering pinkish-gold sea.

The result, like many of Bruton's works, strikes a Zen-like balance between inner and outer experience — part memory, part dream. (Through Oct. 26.)



*R-lily* 2010, acrylic and paper on board, 36 x 36 inches