



YURI KUPER

An exhibition of new, mixed-media paintings by Russian-born artist Yuri Kuper will inaugurate Serge Sorokko Gallery's new space located at 51 Grant Avenue, San Francisco. The exhibition will include a series of landscapes painted on glass plate negatives which Kuper has produced recently at studios in France and New York. The evocative scenes are achieved with the painted collage elements which Kuper, as a self-described "professional player with surfaces," has been experiencing with for many years.

The exhibition includes more than a dozen seascapes as well as photographs and mixed-media works on canvas, board and paper. The new paintings are intimate in scale. John You wrote in a recent catalogue essay, "In contrast to his still lifes, where something small is seen close-up, his seascapes transform the ocean's endless rocking into a portable, fragile object, something the sea itself would quickly destroy."

In his still lifes, Kuper applies paint and collage to worn, faced surfaces of old blackboards, rusty metal sheets, weathered wooden boards, or torn, corrugated paper. He often incorporated an actual object mounted in the center of the formal. As Anthony Haden-Guest has written, "The plain objects with which he makes some work – a spoon, a palette, a table – are not intended to carry a charge of shock, but are used with skill and a certain reverence, like the bottles and bowls in Chardin or Morandi. Like Jasper Johns, he works through a muted rainbow: dusty autumnal colors in greys, browns and greens."

Yuri Kuper was born in Moscow in 1940 and graduated from the Moscow Art Academy in 1963. In 1972, at the age of 32, Kuper emigrated to Israel, moving to London later that year before settling in Paris in 1975.

A major retrospective of Kuper's work is scheduled at the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg in the fall, 2000, and another major museum show will be held at Pont Audemer Museum in Normandy, France. His will is included in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, N.Y.; Metropolitan Museum of Art, N.Y.; Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin; Trekyakov Gallery, Moscow; the National Gallery, Oslo; and the Achenbach Foundation at the Palace of the Legion of Honor, San Francisco, to mention just a few.