

# Palm Beach Daily News

## SEEKING NATURE'S SOUL

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'Salt Lake,' by Diane Tuft, is part of a group show, 'Land-Sea-Sky,' at Liman Studio Gallery.

## Artist goes beyond the naked eye

Diane Tuft's photographs focus on the effects of ultraviolet light on Utah's Great Salt Lake.



*I believe that nature has its own soul and we can't always see it.*

**DIANE TUFT**  
Artist

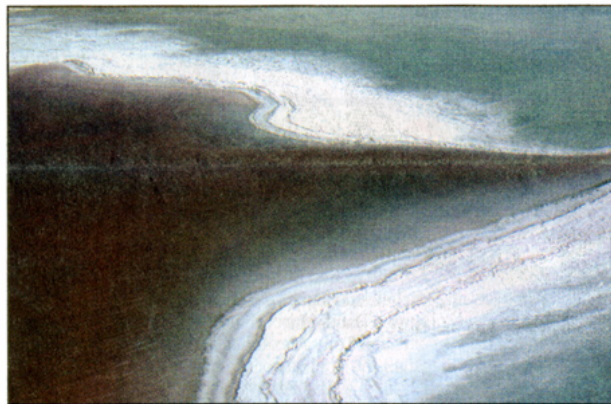
By M.M. CLOUTIER  
Special To The Daily News

**T**his past summer, while flying in a helicopter over Salt Lake City, Utah, artist Diane Tuft witnessed an astonishing natural mosaic 700 feet below — a vast island- and wetland-dotted lake bursting with ever-changing color patterns.

She was there to photograph artist Robert Smithson's man-made earthwork, *Spiral Jetty*, on the lake's northeast shore. But what she observed along the way was the lake's abstract art-like phenomena brought about by salt, ecosystems and a prodigious amount of the sun's ultraviolet light thanks to clear skies, a high altitude and other factors.

And that floored her — "I thought, 'I have to go back.'"  
She did. The result is a series of large-scale color photographs of the legendary saltier-than-the-ocean Great Salt Lake, the largest saltwater lake in the Western Hemisphere. The lake, which is 75 miles long by 35 miles wide, has a highly varied aquatic makeup — from phytoplankton and brine shrimp communities with different colorations to wetlands and marshes.

With an eye toward recording the results of ultraviolet light on the lake at different times of day, Tuft's images reveal colors not always perceived by the naked eye — reds, greens, purples and shimmer-



'Red Tide,' expresses Tuft's exploration of nature, "Because there's so much ultraviolet light, the lake has different colors at different times of day. . . . The ultraviolet light changes or intensifies the color you really see."

ing blues intensified by sunlight. Six of these images — plus four of Tuft's earlier black-and-white images, including three taken in the Tunisian desert — are part of a current group show, "Land-Sea-Sky," at Liman Studio Gallery, 139 N. County Road.

They speak to the artist's longstanding curiosity and wonder about the complexity of nature, and a desire to explore and present its soul. "I believe that nature has its own soul and we can't always see it," said Tuft, who's based in New York, where she sits on the board of the International Center of Photography. "It's the mystery of what exists outside if we open

our eyes and look hard."

Two images by Tuft — who's also a painter, printmaker and sculptor — are in the sizable photography collection of Palm Beachers Doug and Dale Anderson. "Everything she does as an artist — whether it's 2D or 3D, color or black and white — has a progression," said Doug Anderson. "She's not chasing after the latest art trend. She is working out something in her own mind. . . . There's a continuity in what she sees and explores in her art."

For Tuft, a world traveler who holds a master's degree in fine art

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# Former Norton curator praises artist

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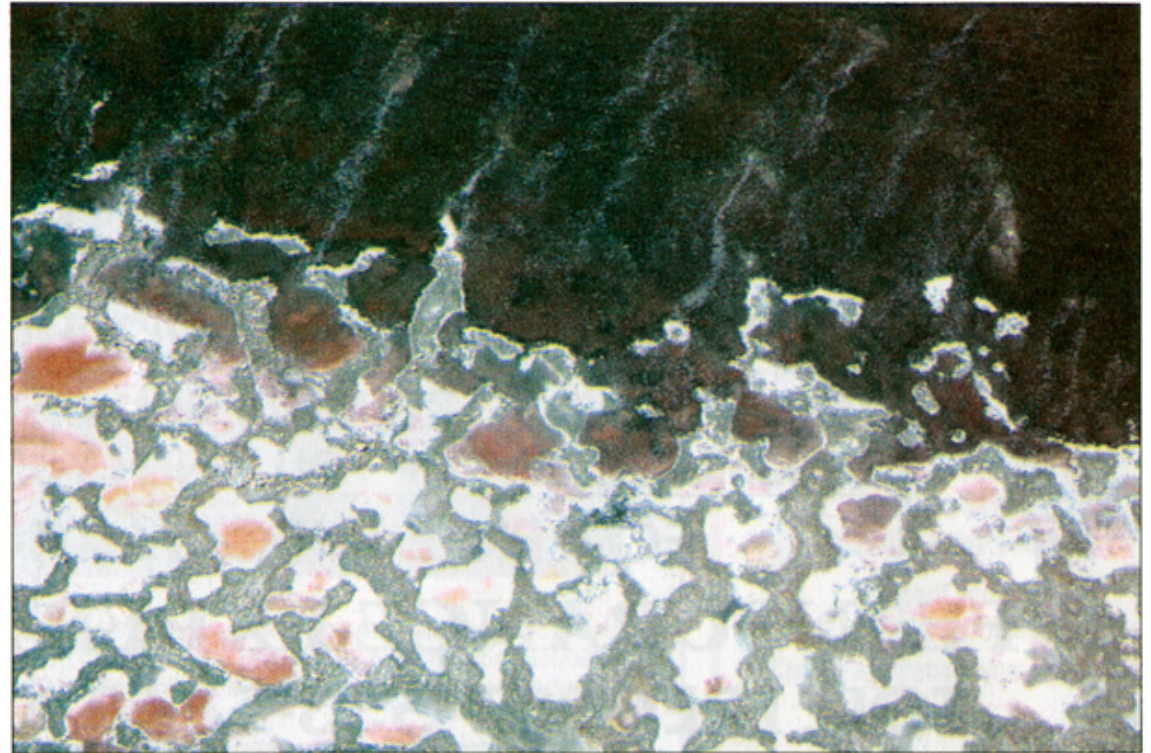
and a bachelor's degree in mathematics, that continuity is nature around the globe, whether in an American back yard or glaciers in Iceland. For a decade, she has photographed black-and-white images of the natural world using infrared film, which captures a light spectrum invisible to the human eye, and employed a printing process that enhances details. In these, one sees flowers lit by an inner glow or snow fluorescing like an aurora.

Tuft's Great Salt Lake pictures — shot in color with a digital camera — are a departure from her infrared work. They offer straightforward images of areas of the relatively shallow lake with sections dominated by a blue-green alga tint to other areas whose ecology results in a reddish-purple hue.

"Because there's so much ultraviolet light, the lake has different colors at different times of day," said Tuft. "It was one of the most amazing things I have ever seen. The ultraviolet light changes or intensifies the color you really see."

Neil Watson, former curator of contemporary art at The Norton Museum of Art and now director of the Katonah Museum of Art in Katonah, N.Y., where one of Tuft's recently executed sculptural installations will be exhibited in June, said of Tuft, "Her black-and-white platinum prints are gorgeous . . . and the new digital color work is also stunning. She has a very painterly approach to her photographs."

Tuft's photography will be on view through Saturday at Liman Studio Gallery.



'Unrestrained,' above, and 'Beyond My Ken,' left, offer images of areas of the Great Salt Lake in Utah. Tuft's photography will be on view through Saturday at Liman Studio Gallery, 139 N. County Road.