

PRINGLE'S NEW ANGLE

If the Old City art scene can be summed up in one word, it's "equilibrium." Aside from the galleries that have become institutions over the years, there are many that appear one day, only to be gone the next. Somehow the two extremes are balanced when a new, exciting venue like **Pringle Gallery** (323 Arch St., www.pringlegallery.com) comes along to fill the void.

After a successful five-year run in Princeton, Pringle Gallery opened in Philadelphia last fall. The gallery staked out its territory in record time — and went even further than its original intentions. The mission was to offer the best in representational painting, yet abstract work and photography have also adorned the walls.

To mark Pringle's first spring in Philly, the gallery expands on and cements its already impressive reputation and roster of talent. March brings "After Ecstasy, the Laundry," a two-person show featuring Fay Sciarra and Karolina Larusdottir. April features Scott Yeskel with "Two Roads," and an artist's talk with Sciarra on Sunday, March 23, from 1:30-3 p.m.

Deeply personal and just plain fun, **Fay Sciarra's** work goes well beyond Pringle Gallery's original emphasis on pure realism. Folky and funky, from subject to composition to materials used, this art is born of a natural talent that resonates in every piece. On view are acrylic paintings on canvas and various found objects, such as a scene worked on a washboard and another on a window. A high mystery quotient runs throughout Sciarra's oeuvre. She offers a dizzying array of images with a colorful, dreamlike confluence that draws you in immediately to a world that is familiar, yet strange. On the flip side, some paintings are filled with a honey warmth that even the most jaded aesthete would surrender to on sight. There is also a nod to Outsider Art in



"Studio Hoosier," by Fay Sciarra



the sheer intricacy of every scene Sciarra offers and the mythic, private atmosphere of even her most domestic works. Yet there's a wink, as her humor is filled with innocent joy rather than any obsessive disconnect with reality, as is the case with so much Outsider Art.

Inland horn and hred, **Karolina Larusdottir's** art is anything but chilly. Her medium in this show is the etching, and she offers the truest sign of being a master by making her art look as effortless as it is inspiring. She allows the humanity of her figures to take precedence over all else as they interact with angels. A narrative focus creates an ongoing suite composed of the various pieces. The interface between fantasy and reality in Larusdottir's work is a kind of magic realism, yet the faith implicit here holds hope out as a given, even deserved, presence.

Pure Americana is at the core of **Scott Yeskel's** paintings. He makes L.A. come alive in revealing detail, yet offers a bit of tough, yet painterly, poetry by dropping a noir gloss over the work. He tweaks his focus just so to shake the city's tough exterior free of its weathered soul. These streets are the classic, hardboiled mean streets. The kinetic, frenetic pace is manifested with brief brushwork that lends the proceedings an uncanny and off-kilter power. Yeskel's use of light is impeccable, and is strengthened by the fact that he could care less about chiaroscuro. Instead, he opts to mess with the outlines of buildings, leaving his structures a hazy maze, a sleepwalker's paradise of an urban vista. Yeskel's work is a sensory smorgasbord. He surrounds us with sounds and smells along with the sights that he creates. And you can't help but wonder who's behind the wheel of all those cars he paints. What kind of lives do they lead? Sure, the artist knows, but he isn't telling. Another plus is the absence of any claustrophobic atmosphere. This is, after all, the wide-open spaces of the West.

With such diverse talent on display, the future of Pringle Gallery is certain to be a rewarding success with an artistic direction that continues to surprise. — R.B. Strauss



"Diner," by Karolina Larusdottir



"Tower Market," by Scott Yeskel



"Local Corner," by Scott Yeskel