

PHILADELPHIA
STYLE
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Art Attack

New, But Hardly Rookies

BY R.B. STRAUSS



Rebecca Rutstein's "Joy Ride II"

Since last June, a handful of galleries have sprung up, each offering their own flavor to spice up Philly's ever-expanding art scene. Though some are first-time endeavors, two are guided by experienced hands.

Bridgette Mayer has been involved in all aspects of art promotion here in Philly, so it was a natural step for her to open her own place. Focusing on local talent, **Bridgette Mayer Gallery** (www.mayerart-consultants.com, 709 Walnut Street) started things off with a group show last June that featured half a dozen artists. Two of them are now in solo exhibitions guaranteed to get people talking.

"Shifting Images" features paintings by Rebecca Rutstein and runs through March 23. Maps, figures and language collide to create an entity beyond a mere exhibition, thanks to a bright palette layered in grids that are not so much geometric as organic. Her work is charged with energy and possesses an immediate impact. Corey J. Willis follows with "Jumping Through Hoops," from April 3 to May 25. One look at this guy's work will win you over—and then its dark implications will send a shiver down your spine. Portraits of clowns come across as mug shots of the damned. These characters aren't Bozo by a long shot, but they aren't in Gacy territory either. Instead, they are the souls of the cogs of corporate America pulled to the surface.

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