

Excerpt from "Visions of Hope" by Andrea K. Hammer:

The Bulletin

PHILADELPHIA'S FAMILY NEWSPAPER • RES IPSA LOQUITUR

Visions Of Hope

Bridgette Mayer Gallery Inspires With Art

BY ANDREA K. HAMMER, FOR THE BULLETIN

PUBLISHED: WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2009

According to Ms. Mayer, the next show, titled "Wilderness" has a different focus. Philadelphia painter Keith Crowley works with photography to capture local environments.



Keith Crowley, *Nomads*, 2008
Oil on Canvas, 44 1/2 x 32"

"He then takes the photographs back to the studio and uses them as departing points for creating beautiful oil paintings that float between abstraction and realism," she said. "He is working on a new series of works on aluminum panels that 'float' off the wall and add a whole other element to the works."

Mr. Crowley's paintings focus on a modern-day wilderness. Daily commutes become adventures as cars become nomads, digital signs become oracles and truckers become guardians of ancient tombs. The artist's layering and color create an ethereal quality in his blurred landscapes.

"The repetitive cycles of haste produce meditative stillness. This contradiction is the basis of my exploration of color and its relationship to the familiar yet elusive landscape," Mr. Crowley said.

In addition, he explained that wilderness "refers to more of a perceived state than a literal, physical place. There is a great tradition of the subject of wilderness in western painting — St. Gerome, John the Baptist, John the Mystic and Prometheus — and it always is portrayed as a contemplative, melancholic place of toil and transformation. I enjoy intentional contradictions when making paintings," he said, noting that he grabs snapshots along the interstate for source material, with an interest in transmitting a sense of stillness and solitude. "My feet have never actually touched the soil of any of these places that have become the subject, but the idea of these places is very familiar. Ideal, pristine landscapes do not often provoke me to paint. Instead, familiar routines and cycles that are more commonly experienced seem to have the most potential," he said.