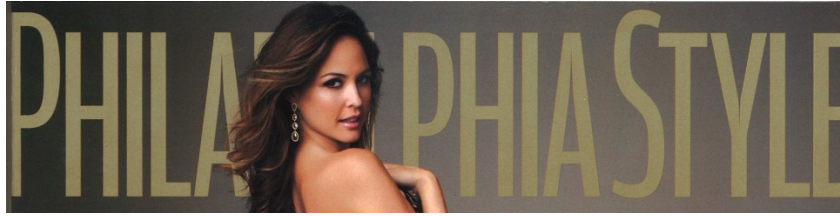


BRIDGETTE MAYER GALLERY



ART FULL



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ABSTRACT ARTIST ARDEN BENDLER BROWNING FINDS INSPIRATION IN THE CITY'S TERRAIN.

BY MARNI PRICHARD MANKO

Citing Mark Bradford, Corinne Wasmuht, Vincent van Gogh, and Édouard Vuillard as some of her favorite artists, Arden Bendler Browning has made her mark on the Philadelphia art scene with work that is intense, energetic, busy, disorienting, graphic, and deeply spatial. Using Google Maps as a guide, her large-scale abstract paintings offer a kaleidoscopic vision of urban sprawl; the city's detritus and beauty serving as inspiration in equal measure. Her latest collection of paintings and drawings will be on view at Bridgette Mayer Gallery this winter in the exhibition "Clickpath."

"Since Philadelphia is the city where I live and work, it is the place that fuels most of my inspiration and research," says the Tyler School of Art alum. "Living here means coexisting with a fair amount of ugliness and beauty. I am interested in the ubiquitous disruptions—a major feature of urban experience [that] changes the space, even for a moment: a gushing fire hydrant, a bright blue tarp covering the archeological dig beneath 95, drivers shouting at each other at an intersection," she says of her urban muse.

The most obvious features of her paintings—works that intentionally straddle abstraction and realism—are vivid color and gesture. She brushes, wipes, sprays, scratches, cuts, smears, and draws with paint, sometimes

gluing on dried bits of paint from her palette. "I describe form and then destroy it," she says. "The hints of recognizable forms provide some familiarity with the spaces that inform my work—and yet the way I handle the paint distances any kind of depiction of an actual place."

"Clickpath" promises to showcase her utterly unique point of view, presenting several medium-scale paintings on panels and a few supersize paintings on Tyvek, which has been her calling card. She is also teaming up with her husband, Matt Browning, on an interactive animation that involves capturing brushstrokes as she makes them and using them to create an illusion of marks appearing, aggregating, crumbling, and dissolving; the perspective shifts, depending on the location of the viewer in the room. The animation will take up one wall in the same space as the giant Tyvek paintings.

"Because of my history in this city—and the fascinating history of the city itself—I have an innate curiosity to uncover more layers and dig at what makes this city look and feel the way it does," she says of the inspiration behind her art. "Right now, my work is about the everyday journeys, not the tourist escape." *December 11 to January 19, Bridgette Mayer Gallery, 709 Walnut St., 215-413-8893; bridgettemayergallery.com* **PS**