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Copy Gallery and Tiger Strikes Asteroid Get Political
Annette Monnier and Phillip Adams show artwork that matters at local galleries.

By Roberta Fallon

Posted Apr. 14, 2009 | Comments: 1 | [Add Comment](#)



Phillip Adams' charcoal mural of President Obama caught in a tidal wave
Photo by Roberta Fallon

There's plenty of art to see and enjoy this month, but don't miss two ambitious narrative drawings with tales for the times. Annette Monnier's wall-spanning ink drawing of City Hall at Copy Gallery and Phillip Adams' charcoal mural of President Obama caught in a tidal wave at Tiger Strikes Asteroid are marvels.

Monnier's delicate, whimsical piece shows our city's seat of power taken over by bicyclists, birds, the Clay Studio's infamous Clay mobile, some hippie vans, cats and young people (including a lineup of 10 Kiera Knightly figures). Black balloons float in the sky and a spaceship seems to be landing near a rainbow that's not far from a tornado. City Hall is the biggest single element in this *Where's Waldo*-like drawing, but the building is mute, stately and flat as a pancake, a mere backdrop for the swirl of activities around it.

Monnier, an artist, curator and co-founder of Copy Gallery (and its predecessor Black Floor) is an avid bike rider who also works at the Clay Studio. She's put aspects of her life in the drawing along with her fantasies about cats, birds, movie stars and fashion. She claims the city for herself and friends and asks you to reimagine the place with the energy and foibles of youth. Monnier's detailed and fantastical drawing calls to mind the works of Florine Stettheimer, the early American modernist, scenester and friend of Marcel Duchamp.

Adams' installation, drawn directly on the gallery's four walls, immerses the viewer in a dark sea with 10-foot waves just about to crash. It's a suffocating place to be—both literally and metaphorically. The one human element in this ominous drawing is our Hawaii-raised president, who is swimming in the trough before the cresting wave, his

Phillip Adams: "Spring Break 2009." Through April 24. Tiger Strikes Asteroid, 319A N. 11th St., fourth fl. Free. tigerstrikesasteroid.com
Annette Monnier: "Think Happy Thoughts and Good Things Will Happen." Through April 30. 319A N. 11th St., third fl. Free. copygallery.org

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head just slightly above water.

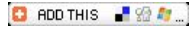
This drawing reminds me of Robert Longo's wall-spanning charcoal drawings of a surfer's ideal waves. But Adams' waves are threatening and not exalting, and with his tiny Obama, the drawing calls to mind Breughel the Elder and his wee humans in landscapes of sublime beauty.

The visions of Adams and Monnier express the anxiety and hopes of many young artists—and many viewers as well. Each is a uniquely perfect drawing that represents our current political climate.

For more on the Philadelphia art scene go to theartblog.org.

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1. **art said...** on Apr 15, 2009 at 07:58PM

"This was deleted by philly weekly ..."



Roberta Fallon is making me dizzy with this merry-go-round of venues. How many times can you review the same-old, same-old institutions and artists?"

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