

PRESS RELEASE

26 February 2018 (New Orleans, LA): **JONATHAN FERRARA GALLERY** is proud to announce *Crow Valley*, the fourth solo exhibition of **Gina Phillips**. Following a recent residency in France, where she found herself inspired by landscape painting by modern masters, she unveils a series of landscape works ranging from paintings en plein air, created in France, to canvases and even her quintessential fabric works, created at home in New Orleans as well as her birth state of Kentucky. The exhibition will be on view from 26 February through 30 March 2018 with an opening reception on **Saturday 3 March from 6-9pm** in conjunction with the Arts District New Orleans (ADNO)'s *First Saturday Gallery Openings*.

The artist says of the inspiration in her latest work . . .

Last summer, I was awarded a residency based in Briant, a small village located in the Brionnais region of France. I spent a week in Paris before the residency began. I filled my days visiting museums, paying close attention to Impressionist, Post-Impressionist/Synthetist masterpieces; especially certain works by Paul Gauguin and Paul Serusier.

I rented a car and drove out of Paris, headed to Briant. My goal was to spend my time in Brionnais painting landscapes, en plein air. I had never driven in a foreign country before, so I was a bit nervous at first. But after a couple of hours, I veered off onto the back roads and was awestruck by the seemingly never-ending, breathtaking vistas. There were amazing compositions to be had just about any direction I looked. Before long, I was feeling one with the tiny Citroen I was driving, and I was thoroughly enjoying zipping around the hilly landscapes dotted with fluffy white Charolais cattle, stone fences and villages anchored by Romanesque churches.

I quickly settled into a routine; waking early, drinking tea with Julie (founder of the residency, Incident.res), and then heading out to drive around the nearby countryside to find a spot to paint. It had been a few years since I painted landscapes from observation, and I was worried I might be a little rusty. But as soon as I started painting, I felt a meditative attunement in the process of capturing the scenes before me.

I was surprised to find striking similarities between the farmland of Brionnais and the farmland surrounding my Central Kentucky home; the rolling hills, pastures divided by stone fencing and gravel lanes lined with gnarly trees growing into barbed wire fencerows.

Last fall, I went home to Madison County, Kentucky and continued the series. This was a bittersweet time for me, because my grandfather, Sterling Moberly, was in failing health. Pawpaw and I were motorcycle-riding buddies when I was in my early twenties. He would chart our course, traversing miles of backroads. The landscape was characterized by big black tobacco barns, creek-rock-studded streams and soaring vistas hugging the tops of rolling hills. We always made a couple of stops along the way. Pawpaw told stories about the people and places of his youth while we drank the RC colas he'd packed for our ride.

Upon returning to my studio in New Orleans, I elaborated on the imagery that began as plein air oil paintings on primed paper. Three works are textile pieces created using a longarm sewing machine. These pieces began as a washy, acrylic underpainting on muslin. Various fabrics, thread, satin cording

and yarn are then applied on to these surfaces. The works on canvas are also a hybrid of media and began with an acrylic underpainting on muslin. I adhered the muslin underpaintings to canvas and then applied multiple layers of Golden Fluid Acrylic paint to the surface using Fineline Precision Applicator squirt bottles. The line quality of these paintings bears a striking resemblance to the line quality of my textile work. Finally, one painting, La Goutte, began as an acrylic underpainting and was finished with oils.

While home last October, there was a particular stretch of road I wanted to paint, but I couldn't remember how to get there. I described the vista to Pawpaw and he immediately knew the spot I was trying to find, and was able to give me detailed directions. It's called Crow Valley. Pawpaw passed away six weeks after my visit back home. Crow Valley is dedicated to him.

Gina Phillips is a mixed media, narrative artist who grew up in Kentucky and has lived in New Orleans since 1995. The imagery, stories and characters of both regions influence her work. She started her career as a painter, but over the years, has increasingly incorporated fabric and thread into her work. She begins a piece with a simple under-painting in acrylic paint on canvas or muslin...then finishes the piece by appliquéing fabric and thread on top. Phillips uses a communal gathering process to source her fabrics, as neighbors, friends, family often donate to her artistic process. Phillip's work is characterized by a raw, narrative quality. The people and animals telling the story often embody a magical realism.

Gina Phillips has a BFA from the University of Kentucky and an MFA from Tulane University's Newcomb College. Her work has been exhibited in galleries and museums across the country including Pepperdine University, Ballroom Marfa, The Ogden Museum of Southern Art, the 21c Museum in Louisville, KY, the 21c Museum in Bentonville, AR, Mason-Scharfenstein Museum of Art at Piedmont College in Demorest, GA, the William Johnston Gallery at Florida State University and the Cornell Museum of Art in Delray Beach, Florida.

In addition, her work has been presented at numerous art fairs including PULSE LA, PULSE Miami, Texas Contemporary, VOLTA Basel, Miami Project for Art Basel Miami Beach, Seattle Art Fair, and Art Market San Francisco. Phillips' work has been featured in *Art in America*, *Oxford American*, *The Times-Picayune* and *ARTNews*, among others. She was featured in Prospect.2 Biennial curated by Dan Cameron. In 2014, Phillips' work was featured in a mid-career retrospective at the Ogden Museum of Southern Art in New Orleans, LA and at the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville, AR "State of the Art: Discovering American Art Now". In 2017, her work was featured at the Hilliard University Art Museum and University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

Her work is in numerous collections including: Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville New Orleans Museum of Art; Ogden Museum of Southern Art; 21c Museum, KY; the Drake Hotel, Toronto; The Frederick R. Weisman Art Foundation; Tulane University and House of Blues (various locations across US.); Josh Rechnitz, Thomas Coleman, Ellen and Cooper Manning, Lyn and John Fischbach, Dorothy Precious, Carolyn Wade and the collection of Marilyn Oshman.

For further information, press or sales inquiries please contact the gallery. Join the conversation with JFG on Facebook (@Jonathan Ferrara Gallery), Twitter (@JFerraraGallery), and Instagram (@JonathanFerraraGallery) via the hashtags #GinaPhillips, #JonathanFerraraGallery and #ArtsDistrictNewOrleans.