

THE RADAR ART

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN CLEMONS



From top: Wendy Red Star's 'Spring.' And/Or Gallery. Christina Rees, owner of Road Agent.

THE COLLECTIVE GOOD

A baker's dozen of the top contemporary galleries join forces with CADD, a non-profit on a mission

Whether you've noticed it or not, growth is in the air in Dallas' burgeoning art community. In the last few years, a handful of contemporary galleries have burst onto the scene, each with a unique program, focus and stable of emerging or established artists, from the region, nation and beyond.

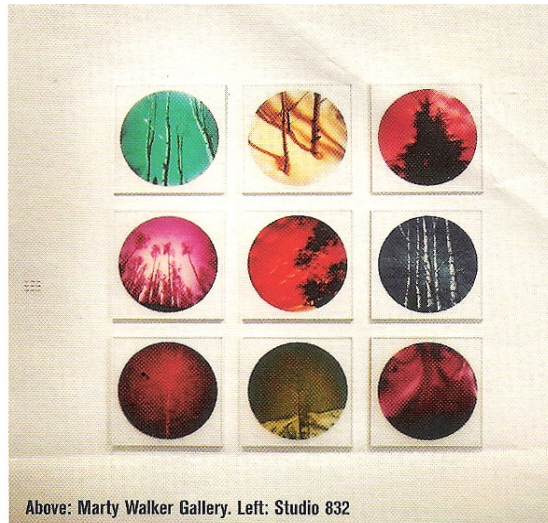
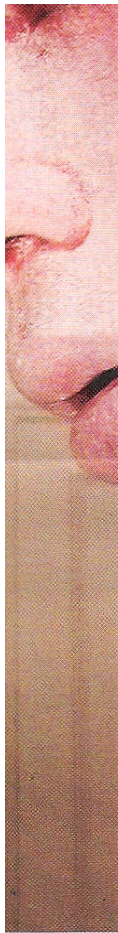
While every gallery has its singular fingerprint, there's a unifying sense of commonality, and similar concerns have owners turning to one another for support, camaraderie and visioning. Although the city already boasts a thriving dealers consortium in DADA (Dallas Art Dealers Association), the time felt right for a new organization to coalesce, one reflecting the infusion of energies that up-and-coming galleries are bringing to the local scene.

Say hello to CADD, Contemporary Art Dealers of Dallas, a 13-member non-profit organization of commercial galleries that's making great noise in the arts community. Barely a year old, CADD's impact is already being felt, and the Dallas art world has found a new friend.

"There's been a flurry of activity in Dallas in the last two years," Holly Johnson, the owner of Holly Johnson Gallery attests. One of the group's founding members, Johnson's namesake gallery on Dragon Street is barely two years old. (She worked previously with Pillsbury and Peters Fine Art and Gerald Peters Gallery.) As a commercial space representing living artists, with a focus on Texas art, Holly Johnson Gallery was a perfect candidate for CADD membership, though Johnson herself is a past president of DADA, a more inclusive group that welcomes qualified galleries, museums, non-profits, art centers, university facilities and art-related businesses.

"We're a very tight group," Johnson says of the new organization. "And I think one of the reasons that it seems to be working is that we have the same concerns. We all do anywhere from eight to 11 shows yearly; we all represent artists; we're not shops; we all have rotating shows...."

Christina Rees, owner of Deep Ellum gallery Road Agent and another key member of CADD, agrees. Open only a year-and-a-half, Road Agent reflects the diversity of CONTINUED...



Above: Marty Walker Gallery. Left: Studio 832

to do right by them." In an effort to highlight differing perspectives, Rees often pairs local artists and out-of-townners for shows, citing a recent exhibition featuring Dallas' Lizzy Wetzel and Kirsten Deirup of New York and California. "Kirsten's paintings and Lizzy's sculptures kind of speak to each other in a really nice way; there was a very good dialogue there," Rees notes. With the downtown arts explosion underway, the gallerist hopes that Deep Ellum could eventually re-brand itself as the Williamsburg of Dallas. **NOW SHOWING:** The paintings of Brooklyn artist Eric Trosko, whose figurative scenarios and appealing palette seem to invite the viewer to create accompanying narratives, Dec. 9 through January.

"I don't think there's a name for this part of the city," **AND/OR GALLERY'S** Paul Slocum confesses with a laugh. Situated about a mile northeast of downtown, 4221 Bryan St., Ste. B, 214.824.2442, the gallery opened last January, with emerging artists from around the country to Dallas, with New Media being a particular focus. (Another recent addition to the area is Dahlia Woods Gallery, 600 Cantegral St., near the Latino Cultural Center.) Slocum, himself a celebrated artist and musician, suggests that the word "new" is essentially code for "computer."

"The subject and the medium are both computers," he explains. "It's not just done on computers, it actually has to do with computer culture." With his background in computer science, Slocum and And/Or partner Lauren Gray, (the two also comprise the music/video group Tree Wave), are uniquely qualified to bring in the artists they present, since the gallery is a virtual elephant graveyard of high-definition screens, video projectors, flocks of PCs, Mac Minis, and stacks of DVD players, not to mention access to antiquated technologies. Slocum sees the downtown art scene as relatively secure, with change as a fulltime operative. "It's like a constant rolling beast," he says, "galleries going away, and coming back. Sometimes you think the scene is falling apart, and then something new comes along." Up until now, And/Or Gallery's shows have all presented artists from out of town, but with #7, opening Dec. 2, guest curator Vance Wingate, late of Gray Matters Gallery, has put together a local group show of edge-oriented work. **NOW SHOWING:** Exhibit #7, featuring works by C.J. Davis, Garland Fielder, Brian Jones, Jessica McCambly and Noah Simblist from Dec. 2-23. ■