

The Boston Globe

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Cate McQuaid, "Recycling things, history into stories," *The Boston Globe*, Wednesday, March 28, 2012, G p. 4-5.



Mary Bucci McCoy's "Implicit" is in her show, "Manifest."

By Cate McQuaid
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

WILLIAM CORDOVA:
this one's 4U (pa' nosotros)

At: Mills Gallery, Boston
Center for the Arts,
551 Tremont St., through
April 15. 617-426-8835,
www.bcaonline.org

JOE WARDWELL:
Big Disgrace

At: LaMontagne Gallery,
555 E. 2nd St., South Boston,
through April 11. 617-464-
4640, [www.lamontagne
gallery.com](http://www.lamontagne
gallery.com)

MARY BUCCI MCCOY:
Manifest

At: Kingston Gallery,
450 Harrison Ave., through
April 1. 617-423-4113,
www.kingstongallery.com

Silence and surprise

Mary Bucci McCoy, who this year was awarded a Massachusetts Cultural Council fellowship for painting, makes remarkably subtle works in which perfectly calm surfaces suggest silence, and an occasional smear or glistening patch might be the sound of a gong rippling through that silence. She has a show-stopping exhibit at Kingston Gallery.

"Believer" is a great square panel of inauspicious beige, flat as flat can be, with hardly a mark or a brushstroke in evidence. Except there's a blush of hot pink just beginning to emerge on the right, and just the hint of a finger's trail dawdling down on the left, which suddenly digs deep, as if the paint were icing. That gouge is a luscious shock, interrupting all that flatness. There's also a small shadow of an oval, like a cameo. Each mark is

sly, suggestive, a sensual sigh in the midst of an otherwise quiet canvas.

Sometimes, McCoy goes too far. Her marks, set against such unobtrusive grounds, can trumpet, and it's more effective when they whisper, or at least when they build, like that finger streak in "Believer." "Toward (East)" is another delicious one. The picture plane is a demure lavender. On the right, a great, wet swipe of clear acrylic glistens and crinkles, throwing shallow shadows beneath it. On the left, along the edge, more icing — a painterly mash of white and lavender.

McCoy's uniform backgrounds don't only conjure silence; they suggest propriety, which makes her marks renegade. That's why they thrill.

Cate McQuaid can be reached at catemcquaid@gmail.com.