

VISUAL ARTS

Show Offers Slices of Daily Life

By Mary McCoy
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The silhouette of a lone man walking across Key Bridge. A glass wall creased like an accordion beside the old Franklin School. Swirling clouds that seem to mimic the curves of the Watergate.

In the rush of daily life, it's so easy to miss some compelling details of our everyday lives and neighborhoods.

But six local artists with eyes and hearts for this city have done some noticing for us, and the result is an inviting show of work titled "DC Scenes" now at the Adams National Bank on K Street NW.

Part of a conscious effort by this women-owned bank to create a business environment less imposing than most financial institutions, the show is one of four a year put up in

the bank lobby by Zenith Gallery on Seventh Street NW.

This latest show presents familiar scenes, but the artists, all from the Washington area, offer up their images in surprising and distinctive ways.

An artist in the District who goes simply by the name Zinnia, for example, makes photographic collages of downtown buildings such as those outside the bank's K Street windows, capturing the city's architecture in miniature.

Federal landmarks appear in unusual angles and poses in this show, too, as in the psychedelic serigraph of the Jefferson Memorial by Adrienne Beck and a festive lithograph of traffic along Pennsylvania Avenue NW by Chevy Chase artist Marianne Reilly.

Beck's rainy night in Adams-

Morgan and an oil painting of the old Whitlow's Restaurant on E Street NW by Joey Manlapaz offers up some of the flavor of city neighborhoods.

Another scene by Manlapaz is a crisp realistic painting of that wonderful intersection of Connecticut Avenue and Calvert Street NW with its huge mural of Marilyn Monroe. Abuzz with colorful signs, architectural details, traffic lights and blossoming cherry trees, hers is a lively scene of this city in spring.

She is not the only artist in this show to find something magical about that intersection. Reilly, a pointillist painter, shows it on a summer's day, with delivery vans pulled up under trees whose leafy shadows, made of thousands of blue and purple dots, dance lazily across the street.

And Beck takes a more fanciful view with three Marylins perched on buildings and in the sky.

Richard Fischer, a District photographer, uses time exposures to capture the city's colorful night lights and traditional Fourth of July fireworks. More memorable, however, is his intimate shot into an old parked Volvo with abstract reflections playing across its window.

The grittier side of Washington is portrayed in photographs by Zinnia of litter-strewn alleys and offices rising next to vacant lots. And these black-and-white photographs lead to her unusual collages, in which she has rearranged buildings by type, creating new skylines for the city.

In "Washington Vanished" three stately row houses, a bank and a turn-of-the-century office building represent beloved buildings demolished over the years.

"Washington Constructs" shows cranes clustered around the skeletal beginnings of other buildings. By sorting structures according to their place in the "lifecycle" of the cityscape, Zinnia has isolated trends in the recent history of District architecture.

Hushed drawings by District artist Scott Ivey, including a dusky view looking under Whitehurst Freeway, show the mystery and loneliness of this city when it is minus all human activity. By contrast, his rich oil painting of a shadowy residential street bordering a warehouse area shows a more human side of the city. Under a luminous purple sky, his darkened row houses reveal the city as a home where people settle comfortably in for the night.

INSIDE



In "DC Scenes," an exhibit at the Adams National Bank on K Street NW, six artists reveal the beauty of the city's everyday life. See story on Page 2.

Joey P. Manlapaz