



Spring Show

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Watercolors shimmers in two spring displays



EXHIBIT | SHARON WEISS GALLERY



Valley Dog

Endearing paintings tell stories

By **Kaizaad Kotwal**
FOR THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Whimsy and wit are the hallmarks of Craig Carlisle's paintings. His new works at the Sharon Weiss Gallery present a cast of characters as colorful, quixotic and cuddly as ever.

The colorful images are always more than they seem on the surface. A cute creature might harbor a slightly sinister edge in the twist of his smile or glint of his stare.

Carlisle's meticulous technique is in full bloom, and his narratives seem to get stronger and stronger.

Fuzzy Dinosaur features a pink monster with a sweet smile. The day is bright with three white fluffy clouds overhead. The flowers below are of a scale to play with one's perception. If Fuzzy is a dinosaur of prehistoric proportions, then the flora are gigantically mutant, too.

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ABOVE: *Nature's Cathedral* by Gerry Goodan, at the Central Ohio Watercolor Society Spring Show

LEFT: *Reflections* by Fran Mangino, at the Ohio Watercolor Society exhibit

► The Central Ohio Watercolor Society Spring Show continues through May 10 in the Church at Mill Run, 3500 Mill Run Dr. Hours: 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sundays. Call 614-899-1198.

► "Dazzle Plus," works by members of the Ohio Watercolor Society, continues through April 21 in the High Road Gallery, 12 E. Stafford Ave., Worthington. Hours: noon to 4 p.m. Wednesdays through Fridays and 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturdays. Call 614-781-6454 or visit www.highroadgallery.com.



In *Fuzzy Dinosaur in the Big City*, she is out on the town with a crown of flowers and a purse secured in her lips. Here, she's not a pastoral princess but a valley girl prowling the urban landscape.

Valley Dog echoes themes of privilege and pampered existence. A rotund dog, with paradoxically spindly legs, lounges on a rug. Around her neck is a locket, which, according to Carlisle, holds a picture of her boyfriend. That tiny detail makes the viewer want to run with the narrative, finding out more details about this queen among canines.

Serenade Under the Fu-Fu Tree pursues themes of love and lust among the animals. A bird nests atop a lush canopy of blooms. In the grass below, another bird looks up with longing and desire. The cityscape in the background makes this natural oasis of love that much more alluring. In works such as these, where the urban coexists with the pastoral, one wonders whether Carlisle's move to bustling Los Angeles in 2002 has served as an influence.

Carlisle built his early reputation on his "big head" paintings, with several included in this exhibit.

In *Disco Boy*, a beautifully rendered male in all grays poses in front of a kaleidoscopic backdrop of colorful squares. Carlisle uses pop and op-art influences to capture the musical craze of the '70s.

Despite having left Columbus in 1997, Carlisle maintains a connection, especially with his annual show at the Sharon Weiss Gallery and in regular contributions to the Art for Life auctions, which raise money for the Columbus AIDS Task Force.

► "Works by Craig Carlisle" continues through April 30 at the Sharon Weiss Gallery, 20 E. Lincoln St. Hours: 1 to 4 p.m. Sundays, noon to 4 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays, and noon to 5 p.m. Saturdays. Call 614-291-5683.