

LabourLove makes Golden Belt home

If youth, optimism, Internet technology, a business plan and love of art are enough to launch a new art gallery in this economic climate, then Kelly Dew and John Pelphrey are on a trajectory of success. Dew and Pelphrey have opened in Building 2 on the Golden Belt campus.

In the beginning Golden Belt processed cotton and produced pouches for Bull Durham tobacco. When the demand for the little bags waned Golden Belt made other

and printed packaging for cigarettes. The building closed in 1996 and for almost 10 years sat as an empty blight on lower Main Street. Three years ago Scientific Properties bought the building and restored it with loving care.

The high ceilings, exposed brick walls, heart-pine beams and floor-to-ceiling windows glisten and make an impressive backdrop for art or any number of diverse businesses. LabourLove, with its 1,800 square feet of space, is the first tenant in Building 2 and makes a vibrant first impression.

Beginning with a combination of pop art, realistic collages and children's fantasy art, the inaugural exhibition promises a zippy addition to the local art scene. Kevin McGoff, whose work pays tribute to Andy Warhol's pop icons, has recently moved to the Triangle from Brooklyn, New York. This is his first Durham show.

The show stopper is McGoff's version of a much reproduced image of Barack Obama eating



Artist Kelly Dew is seen with her paintings on May 21, at the LabourLove Gallery in the Golden Belt building in downtown Durham.

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an ice cream cone. The gallery twist is while there may be only one unique original, first edition prints are available for \$50. If you happen to be a T-shirt aficionado you can take home a McGoff image printed on an eco-friendly shirt.

Pelphrey's rationale for the popularizing of original art is that "fine art is intended for general consumption." His philosophy is that original art can be displayed and sold along with prints and derivative works inspired by each unique piece. A print of a good painting is the beginning of a love affair with art. Keep it, look at it, read about other works of art that look like it and one day you will be ready to buy a unique original.

Luke Buchanan has been showing in the Triangle since he graduated from N.C. State a few years ago. He focuses on the man-made world with images of architectural spaces that were once vibrant places now left neglected. Buchanan has an uncanny sense

IF YOU GO

"LabourLove Gallery, Grand Opening: Luke Miller Buchanan, Kevin McGoff, Kelly Dew," Golden Belt Building, 807 E. Main St., Durham. For information, call (919) 373-4451.

of how to bring reality to the surface of the canvas. In his version of Hillsborough's Colonial Inn, tiny bits and pieces of the detritus found on the grounds of this grand old ruin end up embedded in the picture's paint. Added to this mix of pop and assemblage are Kelly Dew's mixed media and collaged images from children's books.

Dew and Pelphrey dreamed of owning an art gallery almost since the day they met at Belmont University in Nashville, Tenn. He was studying economics with an eye toward going into the music business; she was aiming for the

Chicago Art Institute and a degree in art. Later he moved from music to pharmaceuticals, experience that he believes will help him make the gallery a financial success. According to Pelphrey, Golden Belt is the perfect place for his gallery, especially with the neighboring community of 36 artists in Building 3.

LabourLove begins life as a product of the new age of technology. Invitations to the gallery openings no longer have to be sent snail-mail; hundreds can whiz through cyberspace in the blink of an eye. Pelphrey's familiarity with Face Book, My Space, Twitter and other online social networks enables rapid and widespread exposure. In the gallery world, this hip, hot and high-tech couple has hit the ground running.

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