

# Oaktown Art | Oakland Art, Public Art, Murals, Graffiti, Culture, Oakland

an exposé of cool public art & culture in and around oakland, california

## Vessel Gallery

I mentioned in yesterday that new galleries were springing up in Oaktown like mushrooms. Today's post is about one of these... Vessel Gallery.

Though new to Oaktown – **they literally just opened and their big gala opening reception is this Saturday** – this gallery was previously located in Berkeley, established in 2004. Which makes sense. Because it doesn't *feel* like a newbie start-up...

For one thing, their space is huge. Contrast this with next door neighbor FM gallery (also new, or at least new to me) which has several artist workstations *and* a gallery all squeezed into one narrow story, and it seems positively gargantuan.

Housed in an old livery (there are several of these in the East Bay including one near me on San Pablo, which forced me many years ago to look up the term – it means a stable where horses and vehicles are cared for or rented out for pay – *picture horse-drawn carriages running up and down Telegraph*), the building dates to 1906 when the **“Joseph E. Silva Livery Stable cared for, boarded, and transferred Oakland Fire Department horses at this location.”**

Owners Matt and Diane Iglehart worked with architects and designers to renovate the building specifically for use as an art gallery, while maintaining some of the interesting historical details, like the original floors (see below).

A small gallery space greets visitors on the ground floor, but upstairs is a different story. The second floor is expansive, and each piece of art is given lots of breathing room. Additionally, instead of packing several artists' works into their space, they focused primarily on just one artist, whose pieces filled both floors. It was a somewhat refreshing viewing experience, almost restful compared to the chaos of smaller more eclectic galleries.

**The current exhibit is titled “A Place In-Between” and features sculptures and drawings by Cyrus Tilton, and jewelry by Eric Silva.** Silva’s pieces occupy a display case upstairs and were not easy to document so you’ll have to go see for yourself. And you should, because these one of a kind pieces are quite stunning. He works from found, recycled, or reused materials, fashioning them into “wearable sculpture”.

Pictured below are just two of the works of Cyrus Tilton. As I mentioned previ-

ously, his works dominate the exhibit occupying both floors of the gallery. His body of work is extremely cohesive, sculptures upstairs echoing the drawings that are first encountered downstairs.

**Many of the pieces seem to be about the complexity and changeability of identity and persona,** and incorporate interactivity to convey these ideas. For example, the arms of the figure (below right) are movable and if patrons aren’t too afraid to actually touch the art, you can spin different “masks” into place.

Another piece that seemed quite popular had a figure sitting on a chair, with something akin to a small paddle-wheel for a head. Each “paddle” had a painted head in some configuration, and the whole wheel had a crank attached to it... if you spun the hand crank, the rotating paddles would create a small motion picture of a head gyrating, in seeming agony. It was slightly disturbing, but incredibly captivating.

**The title of the exhibit comes from Tilton’s artist statement:**



This body of work is a contemplation, an effort to be present on the journey and to acknowledge the path, the obstacles, and *the place in-between*.



I encourage folks to check out their opening this weekend. There'll be music and wine (of course!), and a portion of all proceeds benefit local charity First Place for Youth.

**Vessel**  
**471 25th Street**  
**Oakland, CA**  
**94612**

T 510.893.8800

#### *Gallery Hours*

Tuesday through Saturday 11AM – 6PM

First Friday's of the month 6 – 9PM

[map + directions >](#)



This entry was posted in First Fridays!, galleries, sculpture, uptown and tagged a place in-between, art gallery 25th, cyrus tilton, diane iglehart, eric silva, first place for youth, galleries on 25th street, joseph e. silva livery, matt iglehart, new oakland galleries, oakland art murmur, oakland livery, vessel gallery, vessel gallery berkeley, vessel gallery grand opening, vessel gallery oakland on May 11, 2010 [<https://oaktownart.com/2010/05/11/vessel-gallery/>] .

## 6 thoughts on "Vessel Gallery"



Lonnie

May 13, 2010 at 2:25 am

Your blog is spot on the scene. A much needed service to the Oakland community, and art enthusiasts. I might add you write beautifully – your prose is casual, approachable, and has an ease that is genuine which brings the art scene to a tactile level for the broader audience of art enthusiasts.

I notice you're a respectful writer, crediting content where deemed necessary. Thank you for creativity, energy and professionalism in this blog project.

Secondly, congratulations you got a sneak peek at Vessel. I have to admit, while not open that evening for the Murmur, I felt so unprepared for guests and was overwhelmed by the sneak in attendance. Soon I surrendered to what was unfolding and had a great time sharing the works of both Cyrus and Eric. Thanks for your coverage on Vessel. Feels great to be received per intent: as we've all worked so very hard on the re-opening of the gallery. I'm so glad you got to visit!

Apologies, I could not locate your name – but again thank you very much.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Lonnie Lee, owner / curator

Vessel Gallery

471 25th Street

Oakland, CA 94612

510 893 8800



Lonnie

May 13, 2010 at 3:55 pm

Hi Again Oaktownart.

I wanted to just add that FM Gallery is new. This special gallery is run by the dear Peter St. Lawrence – a dear friend and fabulous artist. First Friday's was FM's first open of their artist studio/gallery. This is a very special artist work space and gallery. I encourage you to go back for a visit on a day other than First Friday's so you can enjoy what the work better. This past Murmur was pulsing with attendance – so that may have added to the cramped feeling of the event.

Lonnie

**studiodeb333** Post author

May 13, 2010 at 4:32 pm

Thank for writing in Lonnie. And for the nice feedback and great info about FM gallery... I *thought* they were new. I love how the art scene just keeps expanding. I'm looking forward to more shows at both your venues, and yes, you're right, I need to go when it's not First Friday! (too crazy)

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**Dennis Seide**

May 20, 2010 at 12:33 am

Wow! Thanks for bringing Cyrus to my attention. Great stuff. Would love to se him to a show i Denmark!

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**harriet love**

May 21, 2010 at 5:03 pm

diane and matt have created an extraordinary place to view art.....their opening was a breath of fresh air with wonderful wine and food. they are warm and welcoming, interested in what others have to say about about the space and art..we were stunned by the beauty of it all in such an unlikely place...thank you ..thank you for invinting us to join you.

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**Lonnie**

May 23, 2010 at 11:39 am

Thanks for your kind words Harriet. Great to see you again. Loved your favorable comments about how you felt the place reminded you of early Soho days. Others have commented they felt like they were back in Chelsea in the beginning days.

I also appreciated Matt and Diane; they allowed me to execute my vision for creating the gallery space. It was a perfect partnership.

Come back again,

Lonnie Lee

Comments are closed.

