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Portraits by Providence artist Bob Dilworth on display at RIC gallery

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PROVIDENCE, R.I. -- According to the calendar, winter is just around the corner. Yet you'd hardly know it from the springlike colors and patterns that dominate "Memories of Inhabited Spaces," a traveling exhibit of work by Providence artist (and longtime URI professor) Bob Dilworth.



"Margaret," a mixed-media work by Providence artist Bob Dilworth, is part of an exhibit of Dilworth's work at Rhode Island College's Bannister Gallery, through Nov. 13. Courtesy of Bannister Gallery

Though the dozen or so large paintings that make up the bulk of the exhibit are technically portraits, Dilworth has filled each one with so much visual detail — spray-painted zips and dashes in bright Pop Art hues, gestural swirls and zigzags that hark back to Abstract Expressionism and, most notably, a dizzying array of floral patterns, some of which have been clipped from swatches of iridescent fabric — that the whole exhibit has the look of a May garden party in full (and slightly delirious) swing.

Interestingly, the only areas left more or less undecorated are the sitters' faces, many of which appear to be taken directly from black-and-white photographs of Dilworth's friends and family. The result suggests an old-fashioned photo album embellished in a way that's both deeply heartfelt and more than a little obsessive. Through Nov. 13 at Rhode Island College's Bannister Gallery.

By Bill Van Sielen
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