

Anacostia Artist Makes The Old New Again



Emily Friedman

"Every Fiber of My Being" is a solo show by Amber Robles-Gordon, 30. It runs at the Honfleur Gallery through April 27, 2012.

When Amber Robles-Gordon was a young girl, growing up in Northern Virginia, she was one of those kids that always found something.

"The pretty one earring, or the bracelet that broke," she says. "I remember thinking, I'm lucky!"

Robles-Gordon could tell that these things were still valuable. And as she got older and started doing mixed media work out of her studio in Anacostia, those sorts of trinkets found their way into the canvas.

Her home-studio is filled floor to ceiling with stuff. There's fabric in every color you can imagine, ribbon, gimp, beads, wires, curlers, marbles, and miniature toy ducks. For the most part, Robles-Gordon says she remembers where everything came from. Whether it was from a thrift shop, or her closet. Take, for example, a piece from her current exhibit at the Honfleur Gallery called "Every fiber of My Being."

Robles-Gordon points to one strip of leopard print fabric, "I used to have a jacket that was printed like that." She points to another piece, and recalls "this is part of a pair of sweatpants I used to have and wear."

In the same way she remembers where every piece came from, Robles-Gordon also remembers why she bought it, where she wore it, and the feeling she had while wearing



it. Though the viewer doesn't have a relationship with that same pair of sweatpants, Robles-Gordon says, the suggestion of a specific garment "taps into [the viewers] own memory... of a bracelet, or this belt looks like one I had that had Strawberry Shortcake on it, or it reminds me of that best friend I had."