

# Take a tour of Europe at Bert Gallery

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Like it or not, August is chill-out time in the art world. It's a month when many artists leave town, many galleries shut down and even museums seem to move at a slower pace, as though trying to conserve energy.

In a few weeks, the start of the fall art season will bring a flurry of new gallery and museum shows. For now, though, it's siesta time.

Fortunately, local art lovers who aren't on vacation this month still have some options. Providence's Bert Gallery, for example, is showing a

selection of travel-themed prints and watercolors. A blockbuster it's not. In fact, unless you have a rather obsessive interest in 19th and early 20th-century printmaking — Gari Melchors, anyone? How about Heinrich Riefferscheid? — you probably won't find a lot of familiar names on the walls.

Still, if you have a sense of artistic wanderlust — or if you just enjoy looking at some top-notch prints and watercolors — you can easily spend a pleasant hour or so gazing at these views of big cities (New York, Tokyo, Paris) and picturesque small towns (Barbizon, Sorrento).

Whether you want one or not, you'll also have a tour guide of sorts.

According to gallery owner Cathy Bert, everything in the show comes from a single collection. During a recent visit, Bert declined to identify the collector. But she did say he was born in Europe but lived most of his adult life in Rhode Island. She also said that he traveled frequently and collected art that often depicted places he'd visited.

Certainly, there's a cultivated, old-school look to many of the show's pieces.

French printmaker Félix Buhot (1847-1898), for example, is represented by several works, including a marvelous view of a rain-slicked Parisian street and an equally atmospheric view of travelers exiting a boat in the midst of a storm. In both cases, Buhot uses his etching tools to conjure up an array of weather-related effects — rainy, misty and almost ethereal in the

Parisian scene; dark, stormy and windswept in the boating scene.

Nor is Paris the show's only port of call.

"Pavement at St. Paul's," a 1905 work by the American printmaker Joseph Pennell, offers an Impressionistic view of one of London's most famous landmarks: St. Paul's Cathedral. Other works offer glimpses of New York Harbor ("Battery Park Ferry"), the Chicago lakefront ("Wharfside Chicago") and Tokyo's waterfront ("Tokyo Imperial Palace").

Also of note are a group of watercolors by H. Anthony Dyer (1873-1943), a Providence native who was something of a world-traveler in his own right. Though Dyer's career roughly coincided with the rise of European modernism, he clearly had little use for newfangled styles such as Cubism or Surrealism. Instead, his picturesque views of France (including the village of Barbizon) and Italy (notably the cliff-top resort of Sorrento) look back to older art movements, including 19th-century British watercolors and the so-called Barbizon School of French landscape painting.

Through Aug. 26 at the Bert Gallery, 540 S. Water St., Providence. Hours: Wed.-Fri. 11-5 and Sat. noon-4. Call (401) 751-2628 or visit [www.bertgallery.com](http://www.bertgallery.com).



"Matinée d'Hiver au Quai de l'Hôtel-Dieu," an etching by the 19th-century French artist Félix Buhot is part of an exhibit of prints and watercolors at the Bert Gallery.