

Derosia

Johanna Fateman, The New Yorker, July, 2020

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ART

“Noplace”

The five artists in this exhibition at the P.P.O.W. gallery work in the terrain between absurdism and speculative fantasy. Although the gallery offers an engaging facsimile on its Web site, the show’s through-the-looking-glass quality is best appreciated in person. Near the entrance, Devin N. Morris’s arborlike construction of found doors suggests a portal to the makeshift, queer world of his art, which is also represented by a second installation made of salvaged materials and a colorful, figurative painting. The collaborative duo Ficus Interfaith makes a striking impression with an elongated riff on the Stars and Stripes; the twelve-foot-long composition, fashioned from inlaid terrazzo, feels at once officious and satirical. Raque Ford’s gestural paintings on translucent polypropylene are suspended from the ceiling by chains; Joel Dean’s alphabet-themed symbolist canvases convey a strangely ghastly yet whimsical realm. Guadalupe Maravilla’s shrinelike mixed-media sculpture, titled “Disease Thrower #4,” which merges references to pre-colonial Central American rituals and personal mythology, is the show’s immersive climax.

— *Johanna Fateman*