

New York City

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Summer 2019 Highlights

By Emilia Dubicki, WTP Art Correspondent

Four times a year, WTP art correspondents from around the country will report back on the previous season, with images from exhibitions you otherwise might have missed, and their own insights into these varied venues.



A completely different take on nature and landscape was featured in *Plastic Garden* at Asya Geisberg Gallery on West 23rd Street. In the works of seven painters—Madeleine Bialke, Jennifer Coates, Sharona Eliassaf, Adrienne Elise Tarver, Joani Tremblay, Emma Webster, and Brian Willmont—the outdoors was interpreted in bright, saturated colors, and with synthetic materials and surreal themes. In contrast to the Kasmin exhibition, these artists imbued their works with a flatness and perfection not found in nature, and one intensified by florescent hues. This over-saturation seemed to manipulate the natural into something closer to the futuristic, or perhaps a parallel universe.

Two landscapes by Joani Tremblay featured domestic houseplants in outdoor “utopian backdrops,” with sharp-lined green plants emerging from moody gray clouds in the distance. In “A Room Of One’s Own” the plants are layered against stucco colored arch, a muted structural element reminiscent of Georgia O’Keeffe.



In Brian Willmont’s “Bio-Metamorphosis,” a collage-like work, three perfectly rendered tulips top blue stalks and three identical swallowtail butterflies take flight toward a hot pink, white-rimmed sun against a blue background. It’s interesting to note that there is not a single green shade in this painting.

Adrienne Elise Tarver’s latex caulk leaves painted in green acrylic are adhered to a piece of triangular- shaped mesh. On closer look, one can see within the leaves a pair of woman’s green legs. The piece was draped from the ceiling like a giant leaf. Madeleine Bialke’s “We are Meant to Change” suggests a post-apocalyptic landscape. A blue tree trunk with bare branches diagonally cuts across the picture plane. On the left is another odd spindly tree, behind which a dark rust cloud floats against a blue sky; on the horizon a blue and yellow cloudlike form rises—or is it a giant splash of water? Nuclear fallout? There is something cartoonish about the scene and its shapes, with its pinks, yellows, and bright greens, but yet the colors are off and the whole thing sort of sets the teeth on edge. In contrast to the East End landscapes, what unified these works was an alternative type of summer, or perhaps a new altered reality defined by global warming, pollution, nuclear disaster, fires, deforestation, and a growing reliance on computers versus human connection.