

ARTFORUM

"New Babylon"

ROBERTS & TILTON

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The two-by-four skeleton of a curious structure designed by architect Joakim Dahlqvist stands almost naked in the center of a modern white-walled and concrete-floored gallery. This half-built house has been painted in a bright hue that evokes the color of a blueprint and is cutely called "Safe Harbor" by its manufacturer, and work by twelve artists have been hung outside and inside its walls.

Organized by artist Michael Dopp, "New Babylon" follows his previous collaborative projects: the defunct club No Vex, the somewhat nomadic bar, Dopp's, and the most recently opened shed gallery *Arturo Bandini*, both of which posit social gatherings as artworks. Though such a statement might today be read as a truism, this exhibition makes manifest a distinct nexus of an increasingly complex patchwork community of artists in Los Angeles. It's hard to unite Edgar Bryan's zany ceramic spaghetti and meatballs in Plexiglas between two studs with, say, Sara Gernsbacher's ghostly skinned silicon painting or Nevine Mahmoud's play-set half slide plunked onto a shiny John McCracken-ish plank. That said, there's a nonhierarchical approach to materials and tastes: painters such as Bryan making ceramics, sculptors such as Isaac Resnikoff hammering out a painting from a copper sheet, or Bobbi Woods spray-painting a movie poster and to its back pasting a book depicting repeated snaps of Jerry Lewis with a brass doorknob bulging in his mouth alongside a sultry woman suggestively mouthing a banana in *Blowjob*, (made with Brian Kennon).

Like many good parties, the opening involved a signature cocktail, which was sipped from ceramic goblets crafted by Shoshi Kanokohata. Though individual works in the show may read as singularly authored, collectively they give a sense of a gathering worth lingering.

— Andrew Berardini



View of "New Babylon," 2015.

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