



Christopher Knight, "At Park View gallery, a spellbinding trip into a world turned upside down," *Los Angeles Times*, Oct 9, 2017

Los Angeles Times

Review At Park View gallery, a spellbinding trip into a world turned upside down



Catharine Czudej, "Trap Piece," 2017, mixed media. (Park View)

At the Park View gallery, Dardan Zhegrova's big, stuffed pink love-doll lies sprawled across the floor in a corner, murmuring an unintelligible tape-recorded story. Overhead, Timothée Calame's pair of plastic world globes split in half are suspended from the ceiling, mirrors inserted within and reflecting the floor to turn worldly perspectives upside down and inside out.

Another globe is the scowling head of a cartoon figure in a red pastel by David Muenzer, its arms held up high above its head, either in acute despair or forced bondage. An anthropomorphic Confederate flag in colored pencil on a gold leaf background by Bailey Scieszka weeps copious tears as it is stabbed with a blade and set on fire.

Nearby, Catharine Czudej has cobbled together scavenged pieces of wood, plastic tubing and a fishing reel into a cruciform construction that looks like a cross between a musical instrument and a crude trap for unsuspecting prey. Picasso's Cubist guitar, tool of romance and seduction, has become an apparatus of anguish and distress.



"A Spaghetti Dress for World Peace," installation view. Park View Gallery

A big, luxurious, seemingly effortless 8-foot-wide painting by Paul Heyer shows branches of an apple tree obscured by radiant disks of bright, white light, its cobalt blue fruits and pink, orange and fuchsia leaves at once pastoral and eerily irradiated. Cezanne's symbolic apple, the biblical fruit of knowledge gone secular in a clear-sighted effort to redeem the fall from grace, here becomes uncanny. It's a painting for outer space.

Together, the tone of these disparate works, along with 17 others by an additional eight artists, is one of exhausted, conflicted hope.



The show's double-take title, "A Spaghetti Dress for World Peace," is borrowed from a newspaper story about controversial fashion designer Miguel Adrover and his sincere if frustrated desire to navigate dangerous, highly politicized experiences. (A garment by the designer hangs in a closet.) That things aren't going so well, bedlam at worst and turmoil at best, registers at every turn.

But carrying on is the only option. The show's signal work is Laura Owens' untitled nature video, playing on a loop, where a snail stares down a locust in a garden while a caterpillar cavorts nearby. An image of close but alien nature forever struggling to connect and transmogrify, its pathos is spellbinding. The emphatically terrestrial meets the seemingly extraterrestrial, face to face.