

August 12, 2024

The Miraculous Arms - THREE POINT FIVE STARS

Karimah Ashadu, Mohamed Bourouissa, Salim Green, Senga Nengudi, Christelle Oyiri, Pol Taburet, Minh Lan Tran

Curated by Martha Kirszenbaum

François Ghebaly / July 27-August 24, 2024

This show has, maybe by far, the best video viewing room I've encountered. Plush rug, muted walls, 5:1 surround, crisp projection, near perfect darkness. (Kordansky had a black box viewing room built in 2020, I think, and that was good, too.) Karimah Ashadu's videos in here are absolutely the highlight of the show, especially *Machine Boys* (2024), a short, essayistic film about okada riders in Lagos. In that film, the artist's cinematography is aggressive and patient at once, and her editing (specifically the duration of her portraiture) allows precarity to bleed through the characters' hostile fronts. Salim Green's paintings are a nice counter to the noise and scale of Ashadu's video work. His small paintings on felt are like Robert Ryman with a Joe Bradley update, though there are moments of color and texture that are unique to him. I'm not sure if the Tetris-style presentation is effective, though: it feels a little too random, and I can't tell if it's one work, or nine, or twenty-six (if I counted correctly). I'd prefer something more serial to highlight his moves as a painter. Mohamed Bourouissa's photos are great and play with fashion aesthetics in a way that's resistant. Anyway, it's an exhibit loosely framed around post-colonial identity that's less didactic, more international, and to be explored, which makes it fresh in its approach.

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