

In the Galleries: Ram Brisueño- Young Mornings



Review by Mark Jenkins

November 3, 2023 at 6:00 a.m. EDT

Although they're set in a universe in flux, Ram Brisueño's collage-paintings have an enduring sense of self. The works in "Young Mornings," the Baltimore artist's show at Zenith Gallery, are usually centered on a single heroic figure who appears to be either emerging from or receding into a teeming environment.

Blossoming plants envelop many of the people, some of whom may be transforming into other life forms. In "The Warm World," a rare composition that includes two figures, one appears to be a centaur and the other has a blossom for a head, flowering atop an ornately body-painted Black frame. Also common are arrays of concentric dots, usually rendered in blotchy white or yellow, that surround a person like a halo, or a personal Milky Way.

Brisueño is self-taught, and his primitivist style can show more exuberance than finesse. Sometimes working from found photographic images, the artist seems to assemble his pictures intuitively. But that spontaneity suits his anything-goes scenarios, in which people can grow wings or stand in houses that sprout trees. Brisueño's heavily layered tableaux approximate the unceasing fecundity of nature.

Ram Brisueño: Young Mornings Through Nov. 25 at Zenith Gallery, 1429 Iris St. NW. zenithgallery.com. 202-783-2963.



"The Warm World," by Ram Brisueño, included in his exhibit "Young Mornings" at Zenith Gallery. (Ram Brisueño)

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