

Art in America

REVIEWS December 8, 2017

Critic and curator Joseph Wolin on two New York shows

“On view at the same time as the New Museum’s show “Trigger: Gender As a Tool and a Weapon,” are a couple of exhibitions I’d recommend seeing by artists who, like those in “Trigger,” are expanding the concept of gender.”

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At Participant, Paul P. and G. B. Jones, two queer artists from Toronto, are having a show that comprises pieces by each artist with some collaborative work. Both artists have very well-developed individual practices, but looking at the work of each in relation to that of the other gives it a spin that is very specifically about gender roles and representation. The show includes gorgeously vaporous watercolors of G. B. Jones by Paul P., in which G.B. is this ethereal figure with Emma Peale red hair; she’s both dandyish and ultra-feminine. For her part, G. B. Jones is showing drawings from photographs of witches, from real-life occultists like Rosaleen Norton to fictional characters such as Endora from the TV show *Bewitched*.

There is also Ben Kress’s painting show at Callicoon Fine Arts. Kress is obsessed with fashion models of the 1980s and ’90s. He’s done things in the past like make a Kate Moss or Linda Evangelista mask and then take nude photographs of himself wearing it. For this series, he’s done the same thing, but with a more generic-looking mask. This time, however, he’s subjected the photographs to various effects. For instance, in one he looks as if he’s made of cellophane. He then rendered the photographs as paintings, which seem to explore a kind of science-fiction idea of gender and body in humans, and go beyond what many of the artists in “Trigger” are thinking about.

Joseph R. Wolin is a critic and curator of contemporary art based in New York.



Paul P., Untitled (G.B. Jones), watercolor on paper. Courtesy of the artist.