

HYPERALLERGIC

Art **Reviews**

An Ode to California Architecture in Paint, Pencil, and Ceramics

In welcoming warm hues and tranquil blocks of color, five artists share their visions of California.



by Renée Reizman
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Installation view of Sylvia Frago in *Architecting California* (all photos by the author for Hyperallergic)

LOS ANGELES — The dwellings are a little off-kilter, the beams sagging, the symmetry imprecise. Artist Sylvia Frago has created a number of colorful, glazed ceramic structures — skeletal frames of what could eventually be houses or shopping malls — built on a small scale and displayed on pine tables like models in a showroom.

Frago is one of five artists in *Architecting California*, now on view at Tierra del Sol, an arts organization and gallery that provides studio space and exhibition opportunities for adults with developmental disabilities. Evelyn Reyes mirrors Frago's caged sculptures with her iterative drawings of fences. Dan Hamilton and Michael LeVill draw bright block buildings with colored pencils, and Maria Kim riffs on Basquiat to depict pastoral landscapes.



Installation view, left to right: Dan Hamilton, "DH 67" (2019), acrylic on paper; Maria Kim, "Untitled (Eiffel Tower)" (2019), acrylic on paper; Dan Hamilton, "DH 68" (2020), colored pencil on paper

All the artists, who live in different cities, take inspiration from their surroundings in Northern or Southern California, but they've found individual ways to portray their environments. Hamilton draws with precise straight lines, whereas LeVill's skylines are rounded, sketched freehand. Kim's acrylic paintings are layered, crowded, and chaotic, even though their settings, like a Buddhist temple, are typically portrayed as tranquil spaces.

These structures could be the cookie-cutter homes lining suburbs in the Valley or the long fences defining ranch land stretched between Los Angeles and San Francisco along the Interstate 5 Freeway. The welcoming warm hues evoke the famed Painted Ladies in Hayes Valley or the iconic Victorian homes in LA's Angelino Heights. These artists distill California's colorful architecture, abstracted to its essence, vibrant and imperfect.

Architecting California continues at Tierra Del Sol Gallery (945 Chung King Road, Chinatown, Los Angeles) through September 4.