

artillery

Serious Topics: : Dreamhouse Vs. Punk House (plus Cat house)

by Shana Nys Dambrot | Apr 10, 2019



All Photos: Shana Nys Dambrot

For “Dreamhouse Vs. Punk House (plus Cat House),” nearly 200 artists made works averaging 4 x 4 inches to be shown in three thematic multi-story dollhouses. It may sound like just so much whimsy, but this delirious exhibition/installation hybrid is an impressive and imperative total work of art. Organizers Kristin Calabrese, Joshua Aster and Torie Zalben achieve a delightful presentation whose ebullience belies the months of planning and weeks of construction that went into it. After all, six-story dollhouses in

which each floor's apartments are conceived, decorated, lighting-designed, transformed into micro-installations and/or curated like proper individual salons don't just happen by themselves. Much less three such structures, each with a curated theme of its own.



Literally every single piece, individually inside every room, as well as each instance of an overall “room-size” installation, every transitional sequence, and every overall take, angle, cross-view, exterior piece, and view through a window is heavenly. Full of surprises in innovatively repurposed materials but largely recognizable in artistic styles, expressive of an uncanny sensitivity to the dioramic space and even intervening in it on what would be a massive scope in 1:1 scale, it’s hard to overstate the smarts and charm of this experiment. It’s also impossible to single out every deserving work.



However, highlights must include: Hilary Baker's rat in the attic of the Punk House, and below it the convincing installation of fire damage by Kelly McLane and Pared Pankin with a painting by Patrick Braden Woody hanging clean like nothing is amiss, and below the room designed by Jay Erker with its tiny crappy studio furniture. One Dreamhouse room is covered in a mural by Nikkolos Mohammed, and its exterior cradles a geode-like niche with a lusciously intricate work by Mike Reese. Inside find a creepy confectionary environment in pink stucco designed by Katie Grinnan.



In the Cat House a room containing paintings by Logan Madsen and Forrest Kirk, and a small large-scale sculpture by Alice Konitz; its blue sky and fluffy clouds "wallpaper" appears on occasion throughout some rooms. The cat on the roof (Calabrese's addition to the roof) and its attic painted black like a place where teenagers go to get stoned, with Cole Case's portrait of the late Sarah Cromarty... And all throughout, the whole is tied together by the range of luminous solid colors across the rooms, the delicate lighting used to great effect at sophisticated intervals, and the functional sparkle of mirrored floors.

