

ARTILLERY

Pick of the Week

LIFE DURING WARTIME: SADIE BARNETTE, AARON FOWLER, FARRAH KARAPETIAN, SHIRI MORDECHAY, TSCHABALALA SELF



Farrah Karapetian, Moving Relief, Pacific, 2016

by Ezrha Jean Black |

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“The sound of gunfire, off in the distance, / I’m getting used to it now....” The words are from a 1979 **Talking Heads** song, “**Life During Wartime**,” which inspired the title and concept for this group show of five artists – **Sadie Barnette, Aaron Fowler, Farrah Karapetian, Shiri Mordechay and Tschabalala Self** – with a freshly ironic resonance here. The fire is closer this time. Whether we get “used to it” or not, we certainly accommodate it. Each artist here, in very distinctive ways, addresses aspects of conflict, confrontation, aggression, violence, trauma, or their sequellae (or alternatively, a ‘cordon sanitaire’ imposed to sequester or compartmentalize it). Self’s *Pussyfoot* evokes both magical projection and reticent retreat; while, in Mordechay’s sculptural-painting-installations, cats, rats and birds alike cavort boldly in arabesques of violence and carnage. Karapetian has deployed one of her trademark ‘constructed negatives,’ this time a life-jacket –in ice – filmed melting away to its black plastic strips, in a moving, elegiac video installation. Barnette and Fowler both inventory the random souvenirs of our chaotic trajectory through this fraught polity and our ‘visas’ to convey them. Or, as Byrne, et al. put it in 1979 – “Transmit the message, to the receiver, / Hope for an answer some day.”

ARTILLERY will host (and I will moderate) a panel discussion on this show, with Sadie Barnette, Farrah Karapetian and Shiri Mordechay, at Diane Rosenstein Gallery, this coming Saturday, October 29th, at 3:00 p.m.