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event: Enoc Perez

Art

Info & Map

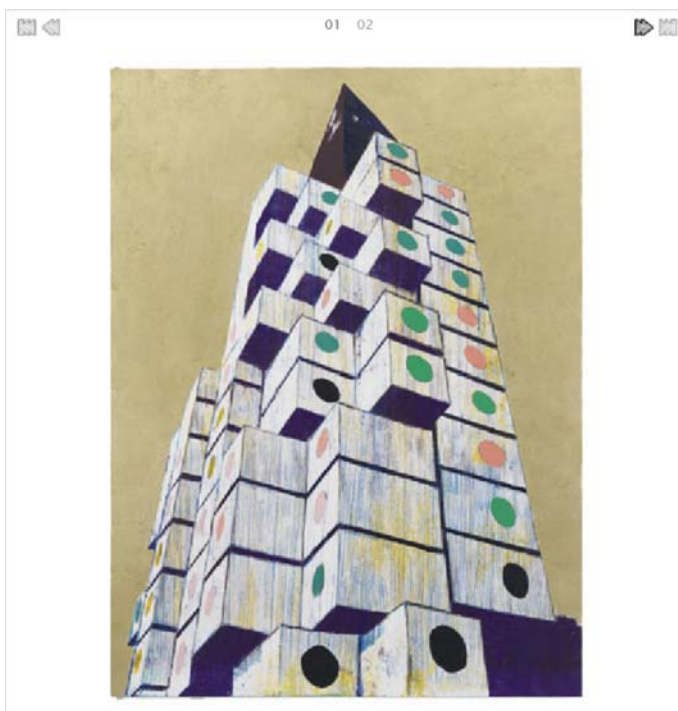
Review

Critic's Rating

Art review

Enoc Perez

Mitchell-Innes & Nash Gallery, through Oct 10



Enoc Perez has had a love affair with utopian architecture ever since he captured the fading glamour of mid-century hotels in his native Puerto Rico. Now, after two decades of working in New York, he's expanded his vocabulary to include a global array of futuristic structures, depicted in jewel tones and indigo swatches that convey a sense of loss and nostalgia.

Perez's subjects reflect a moment when architecture offered the promise of a brighter tomorrow, as in *Palácio de Justiça, Brasília*, which depicts a rectangular structure with curvaceous arches designed by Oscar Niemeyer in 1956. Working from architectural renderings, photographs and color separations, Perez punctuates his canvas with a heavily applied patchwork of purples and blues to serve as shadows dancing across the facade of the modernist building. In another image, *Pavilion of the Soviet Union, Expo 67*, Perez nails the impressive sweep of what was one of the main draws at Montreal's World's Fair—a monument to a global power that would collapse 24 years later.

Just in case you miss the romanticism of this enterprise, Perez adds human figures, matching them to the shapes and lines of the architecture. *Nude* turns the female form into a sensuous abstraction. *Lovers* depicts a man leaning over a reclining woman, a scene stolen from a vintage Salem cigarette ad.

The exhibit continues Perez's investigation of painting as a kind of time machine, but thanks to his increasingly sophisticated surfaces, it also shows the artist moving forward, making literate works that formally grab our attention.—*Barbara Pollack*

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