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Weekend Arts

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CAMERON WELCH AND YOSSEI MILO GALLERY

Cameron Welch's "Fugue State" (2021), marble, glass, ceramic, stone, spray enamel, oil and acrylic on three panels.

Cameron Welch

Through May 7. Yossi Milo Gallery, 245 10th Avenue, Manhattan. 212-414-0370; yossimilo.com.

Cameron Welch's solo show "Ruins," at Yossi Milo, is a knockout — in almost the physical sense. It is full of large, ambitious, brilliantly executed mosaics with so many disparate cultural references, snarling faces and masks and intimations of violence that it can initially be hard to focus.

Such artistic confidence and artisanal finesse can feel like Neo-Expressionism all over again and is especially reminiscent of the art of Jean-Michel Basquiat, although Basquiat had a finer appreciation of empty space and breathing room.

Welch seems guided by an unwavering horror vacui. His mosaics carom from the Greco-Roman-African worlds to our own uneasy time, with many stops in between.

At the center of his mosaic "Fugue State," is a Pietà, with some role reversal: A woman in a Burberry plaid shroud lies across the lap of a probably male figure, perhaps Christ enthroned. To the left, a cherub and the Lamb of God. To the right, a prone female nude out of Modigliani, a devil wielding a brush and palette and a protester holding an anti-police sign who resembles Jordan Wolfson's demonic animatronic puppet, ambiguously titled "Colored Sculpture."

Welch, who is 31, was making painting-collages before taking up mosaic a few years ago. He has improved rapidly, enriching and updating his medium with pieces of marble, stone and several kinds of reverse glass imagery (abstract painting, photographs of ancient pottery, his handprints). To say that he might have discovered his artistic destiny is putting it mildly.

ROBERTA SMITH