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A Five-Artist Exhibition Goes Sci-Fi at Mitchell Algu

By KEN JOHNSON NOV. 12, 2015

More than the sum of its parts, this five-artist show exudes a tantalizing sci-fi vibe. Its title, “The Description of a New World, Called the Blazing-World,” is taken from that of a utopian tale by the 17th-century writer and philosopher Margaret Cavendish.

The sculptor Cajsa von Zeipel makes bigger-than-life representations of tall, skinny, exquisitely hip people who could be denizens of a cyberpunk underground. Her eerie metallic-blue portrait called “Faye Valentine” represents a character from the Japanese animated science-fiction series “Cowboy Bebop.” In Anna Uddenberg’s sculpture “Jealous Jasmin,” a life-size blond woman wearing athletic tights, a puffy jacket and Ugg boots is trying to climb into a fancy baby carriage. The tableau has something sinister about it, as if she were a zombie intent on eating her child.

Paintings in this context suggest otherworldly connections. Composed of luminous, angular planes with the illusion of visceral, organic material leaking out at the interstices, Magalie Comeau’s spacey abstractions evoke a cosmic reality inaccessible to ordinary human perception. Tillman Kaiser produces a kind of psychedelic Cubism. His optically hypnotic painting “Fever” has multiple triangular canvases, bearing vibratory patterns, surrounding a

diamond-shaped opening, which you might imagine to be a portal to the future or another dimension.

“Double Drip,” a colored-pencil drawing made in 1971 by Betty Tompkins, who was later known for her photorealistic copies of pornographic imagery, has a disc of concentric circles from which streams of colored liquid flow around the image of a grinning mouth. Hinting at some comical metaphysical secret, it nicely punctuates this trippy exhibition.

‘The Description of a New World, Called the Blazing-World’

Mitchell Albus Gallery

132 Delancey Street, near Norfolk Street, Lower East Side

Through Dec. 13

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