

The Anchor

A Marymount High School student publication

Spotlight on the Arts (Gallery Shows around LA): Shattered Glass Review

[Paloma Maisonet '22](#)

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(image from Jeffrey Deitch website) (Alfonso Gonzalez Jr. "Stay Faded" 2019)

There is no greater feeling than being in a room full of People of Color (POC); I am constantly reminded of this when I hold my breath in a room full of white people. Shattered Glass' opening at Jeffrey Deitch Gallery, and the show itself, was rich with this amazing and comforting feeling. The focus on brown and black artists puts the priority on POC bodies, giving one the feeling of being in a room full of POC irregardless of their physical presence in the actual space. Despite the misleading title, this will not be a comprehensive review of Shattered Glass curated by **Melahn Frierman** and **AJ Girard**, but rather a focus on some of the individual pieces that particularly spoke to me. (instagrams [@jeffreydeitchgallery](#), [@melahn_cristalle](#), and [@_ajgirard](#)).

Alfonso Gonzalez Jr.'s 2019 painting, titled "Stay Faded," portrays a black and a brown man with fresh haircuts on a banner of sorts on the top left and right corners of a spackled popcorn wall with 'Stay Faded' and graffiti painted on it and one pull away paper flyer at the bottom of each left and right corner. Each of the men reside on two separate canvases, yet they are displayed together as one. The L.A. artist brings east and south Los Angeles to life through nostalgic banners that adorn businesses selling fruta, elote, and manguonada and painted walls that ornament businesses untouched by the predatory hand of gentrification. This sense of unity between the black and brown community is representative of our allyship that gives us an advantageous fight against systemic racism and the heinous repercussions of such an institution, as seen through the historic union of such groups like The Black Panthers and the Brown Berets (Chicanos) and Young Lords Organization (Puerto Ricans). Although we may come from different ethnic backgrounds, we're still facing similar struggles with segregation, food deserts, police brutality, and creation of unlivable, unhealthy, and overall dangerous conditions for POC, especially in such a racially segregated city like Los Angeles. Gonzalez's painting illustrates the complexity and pride of Los Angeles, while simultaneously unifying the black and brown community. (Alfonso Gonzalez Jr.'s instagram [@_alfonsogonzalezjr](#)).

Kezia Harrell's 2021 self-portrait, titled "Bliss: Americana Hot Momma," places her body in a fantastical space, lounging like a greek goddess waiting to be adorned with anything she so desires. Harrell takes ownership of her black, plus-sized body by painting herself through her own lens. This is a welcomed contrast to the capitalistic image of a "plus sized" (12-26) body pushed by corporations that commodifies the female body merely for profit, rather than representation. Furthermore, by putting herself in a magical setting, she places black, plus-sized women in a realm where they are severely lacking, while simultaneously upholding hallmarks of black culture with her long nails and braids. By exemplifying her majesty, Harrell provides a space in which one does not need to be white, skinny, nor speak with a British accent in order to be a part of a fantastical world. "Bliss: Americana Hot Momma" exemplifies true and wholesome representation of black women in art and media. (Kezia Harrell's instagram [@sugarygarbage](#)). Other notable artists in this show were **Mario Ayala** with his pieces "-" and "-" and **Kandis Williams** "-", who are both also currently in Made in L.A. 2020! **Rafa Esparza**, who just came off an outstanding solo show at Commonwealth and Council, with his acrylic on adobe piece titled "al Tempo" (instagrams [@lostbros](#), [@kandis_williams](#), and [@elrafaesparza](#)).

I beseech anyone in Los Angeles to see Shattered Glass in person at Jeffrey Deitch Gallery before it closes on May 22nd. There is no shortage of good artists in this show!