

ARTFORUM

Miami

Christina Quarles

DAVID CASTILLO GALLERY

420 Lincoln Road

December 5–January 31

Christina Quarles, *Yer Tha Sun in my Mourning Babe*, 2017, acrylic on canvas, 48 x 72".

About half of Los Angeles-based artist Christina Quarles's thirteen canvases here are horizontally arranged. All from this year, the works range in size from three to five feet in height and four to six feet in width, and each typically includes two largely abstract bodies, which seem to bend and



twist improbably around various forms. While the figures are not gendered or raced, an exploration of identity politics forms an undercurrent in the works, perhaps most evident in their titles, such as *Tell Me Tell Me Yull Be Alright*, *When Yer in Tha Shade*. Like that of the exhibition itself, the title alludes to a written and spoken vernacular and, by extension, issues of class.

Quarles's approach is to focus on the phenomenological, or the blurring of subjects and objects, but she never eschews tension or even violence, however implicit and muted. For instance, the works *Double Down* and *Flopped Over n' Bent Into Two* depict the performative actions to which the titles allude. In the former, two planar forms bisect the picture plane: One is solid white, while the other appears to be liquid, composed of brushes of gray-black acrylic paint suffused with different values of magentas and yellows. In the latter, a plane of earth and flowers, which appears in many pieces, separates the canvas. In both, figures' limbs seem simultaneously trapped by these forms and able to puncture them: Liberation and imprisonment blur.

— Alpesh Kantilal Patel