

ARTFORUM



Esteban Jefferson, *Chambre Parentale* (Parental Room), 2019, oil on linen, 72 x 50".

NEW YORK

“Vernacular Interior”

HALES GALLERY | NEW YORK

547 W 20th St

June 6–July 20, 2019

Houses and their insides are one thing, but *homes* are fickle and fluid; they are made and remade, found or not, in unfixed images and half-formed memories. In “Vernacular Interior,” a group show curated by Adeze Wilford, home is both a problem and a product of vision. Genevieve Gagnard’s *Dynasty*, 2018, is a golden-hued photograph of a spiritless woman reclining on a leather couch; beside her is an end table overwhelmed with framed family snapshots. *Chambre Parentale* (Parental Room), 2019, an oil on linen by Esteban Jefferson, depicts pictures on walls that are wrapped and

taped up—their crinkly paper coverings are realistically painted against a faint, impressionistic backdrop.

Home life is a fragmented, ruptured snapshot in Devin N. Morris’s *12:44 pm; And Then A Breeze Swept Across the Floor, Stirring Out The Window In Disbelief*, 2019, a diptych mixed-media painting that’s all impossible sight lines. Here, inside and outside are visualized and occupied at once, with windows in miniature showing drawings of even smaller domiciles within. The painting at right is a sort of window, with each quadrant of the “pane” revealing (or obscuring) a different place or thing. At the top left corner of this panel, there’s a room, sketchy like a child’s drawing, with collaged photos of the sky where the ceiling should be.

In Tajh Rust’s oil-on-PVC painting *Idowu I*, 2019, a woman, maybe a mother, kneels on a kitchen floor with her back to the viewer, wrapping herself around a young girl. At once accepting and rejecting the woman’s sacrifice of protection—or shelter—the girl sneakily peeks around her with a lone eye looking directly at the viewer. We come to inhabit her gaze. Rust’s piece, like each work in this show, functions like a camera, which etymologically and technologically originated in, of course, another kind of vernacular interior, the room.

— Drew Zeiba

Artforum, July 2019