ARTFORUM

Christina Forrer

Luhring Augustine | Chelsea | 531 West 24th Street
March 2, 2019 - April 13, 2019

By Tanner Tafelski



Christina Forrer, Untitled (green background), 2018, cotton, wool, linen, silk, and watercolor, 119 x 80".

Conflict—be it psychic, physical, or a combination of the two—is at the heart of Christina Forrer's exhibition. The tapestries and paintings on display are noisy, violent, and utterly absurd psychodramas full of dark slapstick. The artist seems to delve further into abstraction here: Take *Untitled (green background)*, 2018, a large, rough-hewn tapestry featuring a cluster of misshapen heads, torsos, and limbs; bulging, angry eyes; and wide-open mouths spewing blood and vomit. It's a formally complex work with an even more complicated bloodline—one can find relationships to Hieronymus Bosch's medieval hellscapes; Robert Crumb's horny, id-flooded

comics; and even the man-beast murals by Bodhi Wind from Robert Altman's classic film *3 Women* (1977).

The pair of watercolors in the show, *Woman on Pink Floral Background*, 2018, and *Two*, 2019, produce a slightly different effect. The softness of the paint contrasts sharply with the tumultuous scenes depicted. In the former, the titular subject is rendered as a multi-limbed, Janus-headed creature. She kicks the tumescent, pregnant belly of another woman to the right of her and bares her mangled teeth to a shocked figure on her left. In *Two*, screaming dark-skinned infants climb out of the heads of a couple of cheerful white ladies. The sickly children are about to come to blows while the mothers innocently look on, as if their terrifying offspring are merely roughhousing. In Forrer's universe, it's astonishing that so much ugliness can yield such moments of weird beauty.