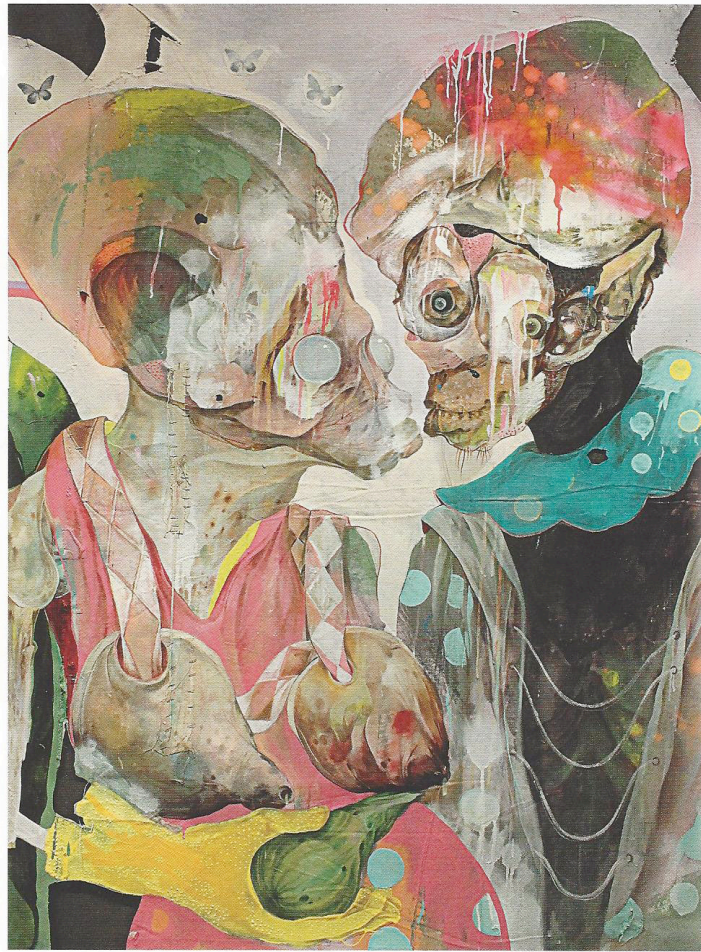




BLOUIN modernpainters

ART / ARCHITECTURE / DESIGN / PERFORMANCE / FILM

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ON OUR RADAR

UNCOMFORTABLE EXPRESSION A Caribbean artist's raw, figurative vision

"THERE ARE NO couches or cushioned seats in my studio," says young Bahamian artist **Lavar Munroe**, "because for me the studio is not a place to be comfortable." For Munroe, his studio in Washington, D.C., is a "sacred space," a place to turn off his phone, disconnect from the Internet, and delve deeply into a process that he trusts but can rarely predict where it will lead. Thus far in his brief career it has led to high places, including participation in the 56th Venice Biennale and a solo show earlier this year at the SCAD Museum of Art in Savannah. His mixed-media collages and sculptures are fabulous, grotesque, and exquisitely crafted, becoming more intellectually sophisticated as they expand on research Munroe conducts on subjects such as the historical spectacle of the "human zoo." His interests in anthropology and sociology—especially as they pertain

Lavar Munroe
Detail of *Never Again Human: An Empty Bliss Beyond This World*, 2016.

to the politics of representation—find expression in pieces such as *Never Again Human: An Empty Bliss Beyond This World*, 2016, which presents a kind of debased dinner party, with a macabre crowd smoking, eating, and drinking. The question at the root of the work, which runs like a current through his building oeuvre, is simple but profound: Who is looking at whom—and why, and how? —CHARLIE SCHULTZ