

ARTnews

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PRESS RELEASE

Mary Frank

DC Moore

Mary Frank's work is a striking blend of personal mythology, craftsmanship, and intuition. In this exhibition of paintings and portrait drawings, titled "The Near Far," Frank showed the breadth of her skill at figurative expression.

Flora, fauna, caves, earth, water, and air recur and take on symbolic meaning in the surreal, dreamlike paintings. The large *Cave I* (2007) shows three arched passageways: beneath one, a dark, faceless figure balances on a small boat, with a bluish green mountain in the background; the figure, with one arm raised, is imperfectly reflected in the water. Frank has created a space where reflection—here, a stand-in for memory—can face primary experience. The colors, a rich mix of cool and warm tones, particularly the oranges, have been applied in



Mary Frank, *Cave I*, 2007, oil on board with collage, 51½" x 49½",
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places with thick, impressionistic, and sensuous brushstrokes.

In other works Frank, who studied dance, throws viewers headlong into the action. *Did You Ever?* (2007), a small oil, encaustic, and charcoal on panel, captures the back of a nude figure, legs and arms bent, hovering above a stormy ground incised with thin black lines.

In the main room Frank installed portraits in charcoal and pastel on paper, spread over two walls. Her subjects varied from her children to figures in works by Velázquez, and here as elsewhere her work was infused with motifs from nature (the outline of an antelope surrounded one figure; flowers emerged from the mouth of another). Each portrait is a humble study of its subject and of its creator.

—Sandra Ban