

Miranda, Carolina A., "By Popular Demand: The Critics' Table Presents Its First Los Angeles Edition," *CulturedMag.com*, April 9, 2025

CULTURED

IN BRIEF THE CRITICS' TABLE ART

By Popular Demand: The Critics' Table Presents Its First Los Angeles Edition

California art writers Carolina A. Miranda and Gracie Hadland contribute our first West Coast trio of reviews.

Carolina A. Miranda
Gracie Hadland

April 9, 2025



Maia Cruz Palileo, "SATOR ROTAS" (Installation View), 2025. Image courtesy of the artist and David Kordansky Gallery.

Maia Cruz Palileo

David Kordansky Gallery | 5130 Edgewood Pl., Los Angeles

On view through April 26

Peer into the electric landscapes of Maia Cruz Palileo and you will start seeing things. Perhaps the ghostly outline of a human body dissolving into the brush. Or, perhaps, the contours of a dog, or a woman's body sailing through the air. In other paintings, you'll find scenes that mirror themselves—such as in *Revir*, 2024, which shows a pair of figures in a small boat navigating across a body of water that catches their reflection below. But is that a reflection? Or an alternate world?

Palileo is based in Brooklyn, but was born in Chicago to immigrants from the Philippines—the work in "SATOR ROTAS," the artist's first solo show at David Kordansky Gallery, is broadly inspired by the landscapes of their family's native land. On view are small gouache-and-collage compositions that serve as studies for larger paintings, and charming stoneware sculptures of dogs—an animal Palileo associates with their forays around the Philippines—but the main attractions here are the large-scale canvases, bursting with lush forests rendered in vivid colors that feel uncannily alive.

Palileo isn't simply rendering landscapes; they are also engaging the more complicated concept of *homeland*. As a second-generation immigrant, the artist's view of the Philippines is shaped by the narratives of their parents, along with their own visits to the country. Also playing a role are "official" accounts produced by historians and anthropologists who invariably exoticized the country: The spectral human silhouettes that appear in the paintings are drawn from the artist's extensive historical research in photographic archives. Palileo splices together these competing visions of the Philippines to generate surreal reflections on landscape, striking images that fuse the homeland of the imagination with that of this world. —*Carolina A. Miranda*