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The future is now in must-see Tamarind exhibit

[By Wesley Pulkka](#)
For the Journal

The June Wayne Gallery in the new Tamarind Institute building is hosting "Fast Forward: Four for the Future," an impressive multimedia installation featuring work by Anna Hepler, Fay Ku, Mark Licari and Ethan Murrow.

The exhibit offers lithographs, sculpture, a one-off wall mural, drawings and a wonderful film.

Hepler hails from Maine, where she has been producing inflatable sculpture, prints and large drawings for the past nine years. Her work is based upon geometric crystal patterns found in nature. The show features two large inflatable sculptures, six small inflatable sculptures and a series of lithographs.

Her work is reminiscent of Claes Oldenburg, Eva Hesse and Sol LeWitt, in a good way. The small sculptures are the most appealing and can be fully inflated with attached soda straws. Not a great idea during flu season, but a nice gesture toward viewer interactivity.

Ku is a rising star who was born in Taiwan and now lives in Brooklyn, N.Y. Her cross-cultural drawings, watercolors and prints have been widely recognized for their delicacy and narrative content.

In "Sea Change," Ku tells the story of an underwater metamorphosis of a woman who is evolving from fish to bird to human as if in a dream. The masterfully executed image is in one breath beautiful and unnerving. The flowing lines and carefully rendered tonality celebrate the origins of life and human sensuality.

Licari, of Los Angeles, is a watercolorist and printmaker who transfigures vacuum cleaners into "Road Warrior"-style mechanical monsters and can make a bathrobe into something a bit scary.

His "Mobile Home" one-of-a-kind wall mural is a wild and crazy study of a propeller-driven house on steroids. The beautifully drawn and painted image is part house, mostly monster and a strange combination of joy and terror.

The whole rig seems to be powered by two barbecue grills matted upside down to one another. There is, however, an anxiety-producing break in the umbilical cord that connects the grills to the rest. A dangling telephone handpiece spewing an incoherent message adds to the fray.

Too bad the whole thing will be hidden by a coat of paint when the next show is installed. I imagine a future archeologist's great delight when they discover "Mobile Home" under layers of old paint.

Murrow, of Boston, is the grandson of newscaster Edward R. Murrow, once touted as the most trusted man in America. The young Murrow is a master draftsman and filmmaker whose work is a combination of imagery that could have been extracted from Robert Park-Harrison still photographs and Odd Nerdrum's post-apocalyptic paintings.

Whatever the source, his luscious short film, titled "Dust," is very well executed and well worth the viewing time of less than 20 minutes. Murrow's photo-realistic drawings and

lithographs are taken from his photography. Watch the film first and you will recognize scenes and characters that live in a nightmare world that's uncomfortably like our own.

The Tamarind Institute has grown since its sole proprietorship under lithographer and educator June Wayne in Los Angeles during the 1960s. Her Tamarind Lithography Workshop was reborn in 1970 as the Tamarind Institute within the University of New Mexico College of Fine Arts.

Now housed in its new digs in the completely renovated former School of Architecture building, the Tamarind Institute has truly arrived with a must-see exhibition in a nicely designed gallery.

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