

Lissa Rivera, *Cave Room*,
2013, from the series
Dioramas
Courtesy the artist and
ClampArt, New York

**If the past is any kind of indicator,
today's visions of futurity aren't
likely to turn out as blueprints for
lived realities.**

surround it. Al Qasimi's recent solo exhibition in New York was aptly titled *Funhouse*, an allusion to the image's potential to distort, disorient, augment, and distract: to incite ways of seeing that both trouble and avert attendant realities.

Indeed, on the other side of the world, through the looking glass, is yet another world, and collage can transport us there, too. The long history of photography as theater—the capacity of the medium not only to record but to imagine—underpins Lissa Rivera's more ominous *Dioramas* (2013–14). Her painstakingly hand-colored archival images, mounted on cardboard and lit by flashlight, mash up social history, portraiture, and set design. In one image, aristocratic colonists dine in a cave, while an androgynous masked figure reclines in the foreground, a mythical torso emergent at her side, dropping details from a geological survey providing a natural curtain. Rivera's hallucinatory scenes, deeply recessed in a cavern of psychosexual drama, reach back to the alchemy of early photographic techniques and forward to the possibilities of virtual and augmented reality. Far from an indictment, Rivera reminds us of the past's spectral presence and its transcendent potential.

The business of real estate capitalizes on such potentials. We now live surrounded by projections of our future environments on seemingly every corner in cities undergoing rapid development. Felicity Hammond draws explicitly on such computer-generated architectural imagery, renderings of realities that have yet to exist. The Contact Photography Festival in Toronto commissioned Hammond to make a site-specific mural, resulting in *Post Production* (2018), which was ultimately pasted amid the new condos rising up across the city with unrelenting efficiency. Hammond's amalgam inflects the homogenous sameness of urban gentrification with hints

