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Democracy Dies in Darkness

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Review

In the galleries: Where the celestial meets the nitty-gritty

By **Mark Jenkins**

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Pamela Crockett

The vivid colors and shimmering facets of Pamela Crockett's oil paintings are not meant to be glamorous. Not exactly, anyway. The Baltimore artist's Honfleur Gallery show, "The Dance of Decay," portrays the decomposition of organic matter, mostly vegetal. Yet the large, highly detailed pictures find beauty in rot.

"These delicate remains of life," declares Crockett's statement, "reflect both the fragility and the vitality of the earth and its oceans."

Despite that big-world perspective, the artist focuses on the small stuff, its dancing originally observed under a magnifying glass. Two ragged anchovies face away from each other, and the guts of a dying bloom droop toward the ground. While the depictions are largely realistic, Crockett emphasizes geometry and pattern. "Cartesian Vortices (Onions)" ponders vegetables past their prime but also highlights gleaming skins and parallel bowed lines. In these snapshots of messy metamorphosis, some forms appear eternal.

Pamela Crockett: Dance of Decay Through May 25 at Honfleur Gallery, 1241 Good Hope Rd. SE.