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Brenna Youngblood

Spanning Time
January 17 - April 6, 2013



Press release

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The Galerie Nathalie Obadia is delighted to present the work of Brenna Youngblood in Brussels, in her second solo show in Europe.

Brenna Youngblood, who was born in 1979, in Riverside, California, has lived and worked in Los Angeles since 2006. She graduated from California State University in 2002 and the University of California in 2006, and has spent a very prolific ten years using all the resources of photo collage, her favoured medium.

In both form and spirit, her kaleidoscopic compositions reflect the multicultural layers of meaning in the City of Angels, which she melds with her Afro-American roots and the mixed culture from which she comes. Her works, across a range of media and techniques, mirror the urban mosaic of Los Angeles. From the chaos and drunkenness of the city, the artist isolates some powerful images which she shapes into portraits or landscapes, the composition being dictated by a scenario.

Brenna Youngblood creates hybrid structures reminiscent of Robert Rauschenberg's 'combines', deploying a formal vocabulary which also evokes the photomontages of David Hockney, which in a way that is both narrative and formal, depict the Los Angeles of the 60s and 70s, and more recently, the landscapes of the Great American West.

Faced with a permanent flow of media, the artist makes use of extreme compilation of images. By mapping the contours of one or more stories, Brenna Youngblood offers viewers different perceptions of her work: up close and personal, the viewers can see the infinity of the details imprisoned in the random framework of the photographs cut up and then reassembled, just as they can experience en masse all the images placed end to end, which become coloured stitches in a narrative weave.

Reading her pictures, which involves a subtle game of fragmentation and then rebuilding the images, makes contemplating her works a dynamic affair. This playful interactivity with the viewer, who sometimes looks without finding, has its origins in the dialogue between the rhythm of Los Angeles and the artist's internal melody, echoing the contemporary speeds of society.

Unlike many other artists on the Californian scene, Brenna Youngblood employs images which, whether they come from the street or her own domestic intimacy, are not chosen from among the icons of American culture or counter-culture. This releases them from the stereotypes of realistic chronicles or anecdotes and gives Brenna Youngblood's work an unequalled relevance and originality which means that what it sacrifices in terms of naturalism, it gains in pictorial intensity.

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