

**GALERIE NATHALIE OBADIA**

PARIS - BRUXELLES

## **Brenna Youngblood**

### ***Stairway***

**31 January - 28 March 2015**

**3, rue du Cloître Saint-Merri - 75004 Paris**



BRENNA YOUNGBLOOD: STAIRWAY, 2014 / MIXED MEDIA ON CANVAS / 182,88 X 152,4 X 6,03 CM (72 X 60 X 2 3/8 IN)

The Galerie Nathalie Obadia is very pleased to present the exhibition *Stairway* as its second exhibition of the work of Brenna Youngblood, after *Spanning Time* in Brussels in 2013. It is the artist's third solo exhibition in Europe.

Following a very busy decade, the L.A.-based artist Brenna Youngblood has emerged from the post-black generation as one of the unquestioned rising talents of the Afro-American art scene in California. Although her work was originally linked to photography and its different manners of presentation (in particular through collage and conceptual photography), for some years now she has engaged herself in painting and sculpture, producing a body of work that is resolutely tied to reality while moving in the direction of increasingly manifest and radical instances of abstraction.

Youngblood will present 12 recent paintings (all dated 2014) which take fragmented elements as the starting point for deepening her reflection on the notion of "recomposition". She produces paintings from dissimilar elements and materials, which she assembles on the canvas. To create powerful images, she combines pieces of paper (bank notes, vinyl paper, sticky paper, imitation wood, wallpaper, personal photographs, found photographs that she cuts out, photocopies, cardboard letters), objects (fan blades, shoe soles) and paint (acrylic, aerosol, pigments, stains, dripping, impasto, resin, transparencies, lumps, varnish). Visually complex and conceptually powerful, Brenna Youngblood's paintings make use of elements taken from everyday life. She makes these images and objects disappear beneath thick layers of paint, which she then scrapes away again to reveal a hidden image, in the same way an archaeologist removes layers of earth.

She takes representational objects and images from the reality around her and renders them abstract, all the while allowing them to retain their outward appearance from their previous life and primary function. What interests Youngblood in her compositions is to disrupt what is familiar to us in order to question the diversity of significances encompassed by images and objects in our everyday world.

The process of construction of each work is complex and not easily divined, but these hybrid and kaleidoscopic structures – sometimes rendered in low relief – are veritable narratives whose detail begs examination. Brenna Youngblood's inspiration for these accounts arises from her private life, her time, her life in Los Angeles, the grids of city and town streets, local communities and peoples from which she herself comes, those in crisis or difficulty and with marginal and multicultural identities. She also employs the country's temporal, geographic, cultural and folkloric artefacts – typical Americana – to question the given history of the United States.

Brenna Youngblood investigates the formal notions of history and art that she freely employs (Gestural Abstraction, collages, Color Field in her composite monochrome works, reminiscences of Robert Rauschenberg) in her portraits, landscapes, still-lives, interiors and abstractions so as to stimulate eminently provocative and political questions regarding issues of identity, colour, class and memory.

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**Born in 1979 in Riverside, California, Brenna Youngblood lives and works in Los Angeles, USA.**

She is a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) at California State University (Long Beach), graduating in 2002, where her studies were directed by Todd Gray. She then became a Master of Fine Arts (MFA) at the University of California (Los Angeles, 2006) where she studied under John Baldessari, Catherine Opie and James Welling. Brenna Youngblood is a highly recognized artist on the contemporary Californian scene.

She has had a number of solo exhibitions, in particular *Brenna Youngblood: Loss Prevention* at the Contemporary Art Museum in Saint Louis (2014), and is preparing another at the Pomona College Museum of Art (Claremont, California, 20 January to 17 May 2015). She will also have a solo show at the Seattle Art Museum (Seattle, 2015) having been awarded the SAM Gwendolyn Knight/Jacob Lawrence Prize in October 2014. She also won the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) Talent Award/Ahan Award in 2012 and has been included in many important group exhibitions, such as *Rites of Spring* at the Contemporary Arts Museum in Houston (2014), *Murmurs: Recent Contemporary Acquisitions* at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (2013), *Made in L.A* for the Los Angeles Biennial organized by the Hammer Museum and LA-Art (2012), *Fore* at the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York (2012), *Romare Bearden Centennial Exhibition* at the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York (2011), *With You I Want to Live* at Fort Lauderdale Museum of Art (2009), and *Half-Life: Twenty-Five Emerging L.A. Artists* at the LACE: Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (2008).

Brenna Youngblood's work is included in prestigious public and private collections, such as the Collection Jumex (Mexico), JP Morgan Chase Art Collection, Armand Hammer Museum of Art (Los Angeles), Blake Byrne Collection (Los Angeles), the Creative Artists Agency (Los Angeles), the Museum of Contemporary Art (Los Angeles), the LACMA (Los Angeles County Museum of Art), Eileen Harris Norton (Santa Monica), and the Studio Museum in Harlem (New York).

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**Galerie Nathalie Obadia**  
Bourg-Tibourg

**Jessica Stockholder**  
*Palpable Glyphic Rapture*  
22nd January - 14th March 2015  
Opening on 22nd January

**Ink Art**  
1st April - 31st May 2015  
Opening on 1st April

**Galerie Nathalie Obadia**  
Cloître Saint-Merri

**Brenna Youngblood**  
*Stairway*  
31st January - 28th March  
Opening on 31st January

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1st April - 31st May 2015  
Opening on 1st April

**Galerie Nathalie Obadia**  
Bruxelles

**Fabrice Hyber**  
*Mutations Acquisées*  
4th February - 4th April  
Opening 4th February

**Joris van de Moortel**  
22nd April - 30 May  
Opening on the 22nd April

For further information, please contact Maimiti Cazalis  
maimiti.cazalis@galerie-obadia.com — + 33 (0)1 42 74 67 68