



SHOP



November 21, 2023

Conceptual artist John Baldessari's memorable quote, "Don't look at things – look in between things," serves as the guiding principle for The Broad's latest exhibition. Using Baldessari's cut-and-pasted paper as its foundation, the LA museum presents a collection featuring 21 local artists spanning five decades, from Baldessari's early years to the contemporary era. By transcending generations and abandoning traditional techniques, the exhibition invites viewers to witness the unfolding narrative between idealized expectations and the gritty reality of the so-called city of angels.

Images courtesy of [The Broad](#)

Words by [Vilda Krog](#)

Is Los Angeles a phenomenon only appreciated from the external? That foreign notion of endless beaches, ever-gazing sunsets, and the residency of movie stars who hike the hills during the day and retreat underground at night. Beyond the glamorous facade lies a city with closed curtains, exemplified by the recent Hollywood Strikes, pointing towards a downward trend.

Curated by Ed Schad and Jennifer Vanegas Rocha, the exhibition titled "Desire, Knowledge, and Hope (with Smog)" explores contradictions by pushing boundaries and delving deeper. Joanne Heyler, Founding Director of The Broad, notes, "The show traces the influence of earlier generations of LA-based artists on later generations and spotlights numerous artists who illuminate deep-seated social inequities and contradictions woven into our city and its myths."

The various works on display, ranging from abstract and photorealistic paintings to

photography, sculpture, and political signage, reflect upon the city's growth as a nexus for talent and its complex urban landscape. The article cleverly suggests that the exhibition re-places the movie's main character with the paradox amidst the allure and absurdity.

Specific artworks are highlighted, such as Barbara Kruger's *I shop therefore I am*, which comments on the commercial formation of identity. Toba Khedoori's park benches and *Black fireplace* explore scenes of tranquility and isolation, balancing the thin line between being alone and feeling lonely — emotions often associated with the city's sprawling geography and complex social arrangements.

Patrick Martinez and Sayre Gomez will both be debuting their work at The Board for the first time. Martinez's work is a counterargument to capitalism while Gomez's pieces continue to focus on the devaluation of tangible matter against data.

Patrick, the prompt for your work is the material you find in the city, what immaterial value do you seek to provide these tangibles with, and at what point in the process is that realized?

Patrick Martinez— With the materials I sample from the city, I aim to insist upon and present an alternative perspective of aesthetic value that isn't related to or attached to fashion, advertising, movies, interior design, and everything that is dictated to us and what we download to be beautiful in this society. It's also about using materials that are disappearing from the landscape. I focus on utilizing materials that are disappearing from our urban landscape due to gentrification and development. When I incorporate these transient materials successfully into my work, I feel that I've realized this concept. It's also about the beauty people create when they aren't even trying via small business owners, city graffiti abatement workers, street vendors, food trucks, and graffiti writers just to name a few. I see this often in the LA landscape and my attempts to capture that is definitely embedded in my work. They are featured and frozen in a piece that may be on view in a museum. Art as artifact, aesthetic preservation, and representation of the time we are living in is the idea.

I'm curious about how the performative act of tourism interplay with your work, if at all?

PM— I honestly don't think about it much. Even though we live in a large metropolitan city with Hollywood being a big draw, I've never felt that the industry is my reality or a part of me. I believe that when people come to LA, they experience the big, notable landmarks seen in videos and movies, but I draw inspiration from aspects that few tourists might notice. I imagine some people might see my work as exotic, or that I'm exotifying certain aspects of the city, but I'm really approaching the work like a landscape painter of the past, using new and different mediums and materials.

A Warrior could be as much a product of tourism—put on a foreign field to fight—or just as much a defender of what once was theirs. What is your Warrior fighting for or defending himself against?

PM— I think of them as men I know or have known in the city. I feel like men are often in conflict with someone or even with themselves, being products of patriarchy, domination culture, capitalism, and ambition, especially in a big city like LA. This city can be like a battlefield to me, involving not only traditional physical violence but also subtle economic violence. I also consider the warriors as people who migrate here and imagine all the fighting they had to endure to arrive and establish themselves here.

Sayre, touching upon economic violence, I recently came across an interview with you where you claim data to be of much more value than, per example, oil; what are the evident effects of this shift of the capitalistic currency – from material to immaterial – in LA, and in your work?

Sayre Gomez— I read an article comparing the world's most valuable resources historically and data has in fact surpassed oil, which was the world's most valuable resource for over a century. I think it's interesting because I see it as a symbolic indicator, one that demonstrates that where the global population assigns value is increasingly immaterial. I think this shift away from the physical is quite palpable in a city like Los Angeles. It feels like people just don't have the bandwidth to care for it anymore.

Does the same apply to Diamonds and Pearls? Has their status been devalued against data?

SG— Ha Ha, I don't know if it's really comparable... So I had to google it, the global diamond trade is valued at around 94 billion USD while the global oil industry is valued at around 4.3 trillion. People love diamonds but you can't drive to work on your necklace, haha. As neither romance nor nostalgia is on the list to your party, what does the ban for these elements leave space for within your artworks? Hmmmm.. wow! I don't think they are banned at all. There's room for a lot in my work including nostalgia and romance (probably more nostalgia than romance).

Coming back to you Patrick, regarding nostalgia - Picture me rollin rings Grace Kelly smoking a cigarette riding an open ceiling car - what does it actually look like seeing you, seeing somebody rolling, in LA, is it a rocky road?

PM— I think about my brother and me cruising at night in his Cadillac or Cutlass, playing 2Pac's 'Picture Me Rollin' track back in the late 90s, driving into the future, contemplating all the pitfalls and bumps in the road ahead. Today, it's like watching the landscape as if it were a movie from my car—during the morning, afternoon, golden hour, and night. When I see people rollin' carefree, it brings me back to the 90s. I sense that everyone moves at a different pace now on the streets; everything moves so fast, and sometimes, I just want to roll. It feels like everyone is in a hurry to get to nowhere. I think the traffic has traumatized Los Angeles residents.

Talking traumatized, Savyre tell us more about your practical technique for *The Whole Wide World is a Haunted House*, what about this airbrushy-y effect of yours?

SG— Practically speaking the paintings tend to be pretty methodical and process oriented. There's very little experimentation happening here haha. They are all based on photographs I take or find or buy and there's usually some level of tweaking, altering or collaging then along with my studio team we render them on canvas as faithfully as possible. And the "airbrush-y effect" that you are referring to would be the atmospheric, softfocus aspects of the paintings, usually the backgrounds or parts of the paintings that are less focal. Airbrush as a medium works really well for this.

Coming back to that piece, has the word always been haunted?

SG— Ha Ha... Yes!

How do the two of you feel about LA as a city only existing from the outside?

PM— I prefer the experience from left to right as I navigate the city. When I'm indoors, I don't often encounter that same view. Having said that, many interesting objects and aesthetics draw people in, and they accumulate and arrange these in their homes. It's an intimate bio of where they've been and where they want to go. The paintings they choose to hang, the colors for their interior and exterior, all of it speaks to their individuality.

SG— I think this is a question more about LA as a commodity than as a geographical location...but I guess I would say LA exists from the outside in a very different way than it does from the inside...

Desire, Knowledge, and Hope (with Smog) reflects upon its past while encapsulating its collective present moment, and thereby functions as a beacon for alternative histories, states of minds, and possible futures.

The exhibition is open to the public as of November 18, 2023.

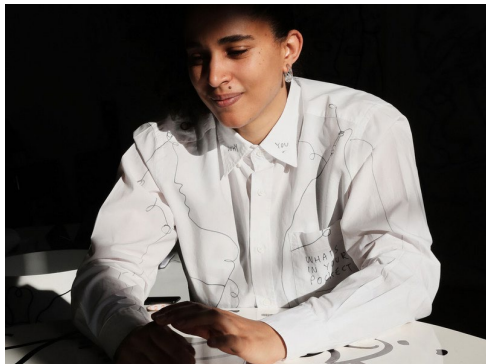
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Drawing With a Sonic Line

Shantell Martin wants to



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Kevin, the Apocalypse, &
Kevin

The curator and fashion designer collaborate on "BOND," a new exhibition at The Little House.

know, "who are you"?

This set is classic Dibeler: simple and wig-heavy.

X'ene's Witness: Justen LeRoy's Black Environmentalist Sonic Vision

— Art



November 20, 2023

Less than a year after his debut solo exhibition “Lay Me Down In Praise,” Los-Angeles based multidisciplinary artist and musician Justen LeRoy finds himself at another precipice in his artistic career. This past weekend, he premiered X’ene’s Witness, a contemporary opera conceived, directed, and co-composed by LeRoy in collaboration with Alexander Hadyn, featuring vocals and piano from the eponymous classical musician and performance artist X’ene Sky and choreography from movement artist Qwenga. Commissioned and presented by Los Angeles Nomadic Division, the performance utilizes the emotional nuances of vocal expression in the Black traditions of R&B and Soul to

evoke the anxieties and malaise of climate change through what LeRoy refers to as “Black environmentalist sonic vision.”

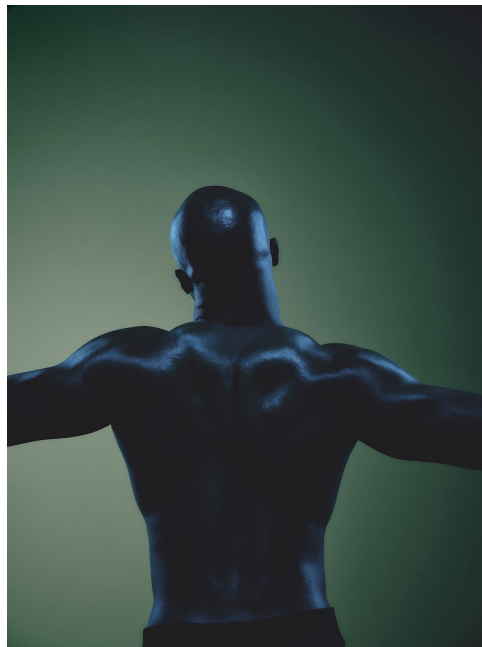
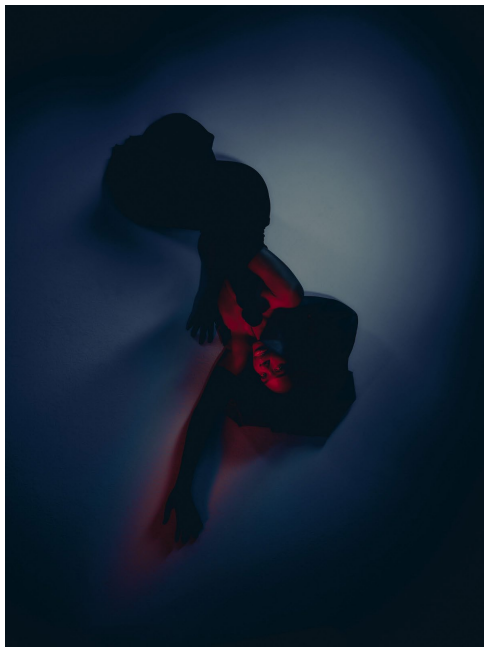
Words by Samuel Getachew

Photos by Micaiah Carter

“There are all these vocal nuances that happen in between a phrase – the notes, the runs, the melisma that connects the emotion from one word to another,” LeRoy explains. “But that note is carrying so much information, like how we can hear Jazmine Sullivan riff without saying one word, but we know exactly what she means. What is inside of that?”

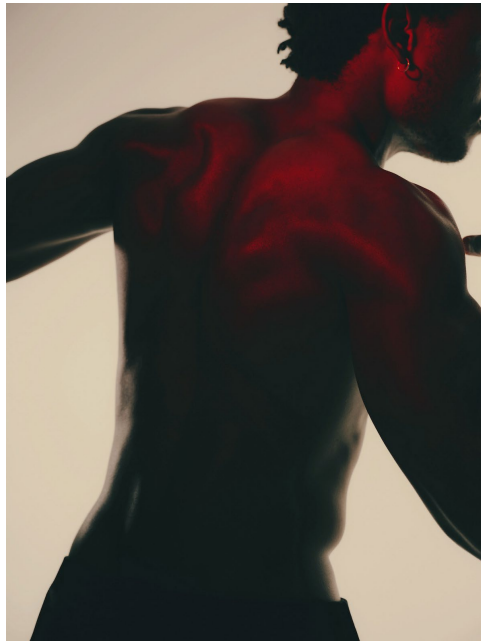
Thinking alongside renowned cultural theorist, poet, and scholar Fred Moten, LeRoy was struck by the concept of the “wordless moan.” In his essay “Black Mo’ nin,” Moten references *The Gospel Sound*, a text by gospel producer and writer Anthony Heilbut. “The essence of the gospel style is a wordless moan,” Heilbut writes. “Always these sounds render the indescribable, implying, ‘Words can’t begin to tell you, but maybe moaning will.’” “Lay Me Down In Praise,” which was exhibited as part of a collaboration between the California African American Museum and Art + Practice, drew connections between gospel’s wordless moan and the “moans” emitted by the earth amidst anthropocentric climate abuse, from the sounds of the ocean to the rustling of the trees.

Building on the foundations of his first exhibition, *X’ene’s Witness* sought to “build a portal” for LeRoy’s community to engage in conversations about climate change – conversations that Black communities are often excluded from, despite disproportionately bearing the brunt of damage from environmental forces like air and water pollution. “I live in South Central, and almost nobody here is thinking about climate change because they’re thinking about everyday survival, how to feed their kids and how to get to work,” he says. “I’m always thinking about their access to the message.” This resolve to foreground accessibility in his work is why it was so important for LeRoy to show “Lay Me Down In Praise” in Leimert Park, a predominantly Black neighborhood in Los Angeles.



LeRoy’s own introduction to the fine art world was rather unorthodox, as was his path to becoming a working artist in his own right. During his freshman year at UC Irvine, he discovered writer and curator Kimberly Drew’s “Black Contemporary Art” Tumblr blog. “She was just sharing her interests and her knowledge, and it opened up a pathway for me, a sense of possibility,” LeRoy recounts, “to know that this world existed, and that I could situate myself in it.” He subsequently enrolled in art classes, but was disappointed to find that he was still learning more from the bloggers he found online than he was in the classroom. In 2015, he visited his first contemporary museum at the age of 20; by September of that year, he was working as a gallery attendant at the Museum of Contemporary Art in downtown Los Angeles; soon after, he joined the now-closed Underground Museum, where he would spend six years working in various positions and interfacing with artists including Khalil Joseph, Deana Lawson, and Henry Taylor. “But I would definitely say that music came first for me,” he says. “I was a really obsessive kid when it came to buying CDs. I still love the tangibility of it all, the research and all the liner notes.”

In 2019, LeRoy finally decided to follow his own long-held creative impulses, performing at MoMA PS1 with British composer and playwright Klein, who he credits for the final push into pursuing an artistic career of his own. “I will thank her forever for opening that possibility for me in a moment where I wasn’t sure,” he says. “She really helped me see myself.” LeRoy continued to explore his fascination with R&B music and the tradition of Black sound, and his audio work “Leave A Message” was featured in the Hammer Museum’s 2020 exhibition “Made in LA.” Alongside creating his own work, he is now the Director of Public Programs and Community Outreach at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles.



LeRoy's years working for galleries and museums have left him well-equipped to deliver on his accessibility goals. "I'm thinking about the audience first," he describes. "I'm definitely making work for me, but I want to have a conversation, I want to make sure that the work can survive in a public programming setting, and that there are different pathways to interact with it."

"Having been on the other end of doing insurance reports and communicating with people about getting work shipped and interfacing with the public daily and seeing how things get funded and made – there's a lot that's at the heart of the success of an exhibition," he continues. "I'm working with a lot of dancers and singers, and I want to help demystify what the art world is and how it works by bringing collaborators into it who have never been centered in it, and help them navigate funding resources for their work too. Hopefully that sets a standard, for how we create a moment, how we create eras, how we usher new artists in."

X'ene's Witness, which held two free performances on November 17th and 18th, is the culmination of a decade's worth of collaboration and creative respect. LeRoy and his co-composer Alexander Hadyn have worked together since LeRoy was 18 years old. "We've learned so much from each other," LeRoy says. "He's my right-hand guy." He describes performance artist and classical musician X'ene Sky, from whom the opera takes its name and its voice, as his "sister"; costume designer Corey Stokes as "one of my best friends"; creative director Franc Fernandez as a "legend"; and

describes himself as a “longtime fan” of movement director Qwenga. “This piece is a combination of so much of our collective thinking and ideas,” LeRoy says. “I’ve never done anything like this before – my career as an artist is very young, and it’s a big leap. There’s a lot of surrendering taking place right now. I brought everybody into the fold because I have so much faith in what they do as individuals.”

Recommended articles



— Art

BLOCKBUSTER

Office issue 5 cover star, Harmony Korine, opens a new exhibition at Gagosian.



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Thalía Gochez Celebrates Latinx Heritage through Intimate Portraiture

office catches up with Thalía Gochez to talk with her about the inspirations behind her photography, her creative process, and what we can expect in the months to come.



— Art

Rafael Prieto's Debut Solo Exhibition "Together Over Time"

Prieto's latest exhibition at Emma Scully demonstrates the point at which something is born from nothing.



Michella Bredahl Rediscovered What It Means To Love

— Art

November 19, 2023

She left the wolfpack early in life, setting out on her own adventures. The camera became her journey's first companion, accompanying her through explorations and new forms of expression. Soon, she found herself no longer alone but surrounded by what she fondly refers to as family. Through her portraits of them, she paints a picture of herself.

Danish photographer and filmmaker

Michella Bredahl's debut book, 'Love Me Again', locates and reimagines the essence of femininity in domestic spaces and beyond with the aim of "teaching each other to seek love and to break the barriers within ourselves that we have built against it." We caught up with Michella to chat about how her mother has influenced her work, the power of the gaze, and what it means to reclaim one's feminine energy free of shame.

Words by [Vilda Krog](#)

Photography [Michella Bredahl](#)

Published by [Joint Loose](#)

Michella's "[Unmade beds](#)" is also currently on view at [Shoot the Lobster](#), New York, until November 25th.

Congratulations on your first printed publication. This has been a work-in-progress for the past decade, how have you matured, as a person and a professional, since starting? What have you learned?

Thank you. Yes, the oldest picture in the book was taken when I was in art school in 2012. My friend had just gotten pregnant and I was playing around with my camera that I bought online. I went around to her house and took her portrait with her boyfriend at the time. I was really nervous about what I was doing back then, but I didn't let that stop me. I think that's what this journey has taught me the most. That just because you can't put something into words when you start out, it doesn't mean it's not valuable or that you're not on the right path.

You start somewhere and by trying and making mistakes, it takes you somewhere else. You have a lot of bad days as well. It's hard when everyone else goes to school and gets good money jobs, and you still don't really know what you're doing, and on top of that no one hires you. It's like you're this wolf who has left the pack you were born into.

I don't come from any creative family so I had to find my own way and try it out for myself. In the beginning I would have so much sweat anxiety on my forehead even

when I photographed a friend, because I was sure they thought I was crazy for showing up at their house and asking if I could take their portrait. I had a heart but I let that lead me forward. I was curious and I didn't let it distract me when people tried to turn my passion for photography into something indecent or asked stupid questions like how are you going to make a living out of it.

I started by taking painting and drawing classes and that introduced me to photography and cinema. One day an older friend of mine who was a photographer handed me a photo book by Diane Arbus. I didn't know her. I was completely enchanted. Her pictures spoke to my soul. From there I started photographing every day. I discovered Nan Goldin. William Eggleston. I could see that all these photographers had something in common. They photographed their friends and people close to them. I had done that all my life, but I had always felt that I was not entitled to it. In their pictures and books I found a place where I belonged. I started to trust what I was doing. I feel that when you start out, it's like learning a new language or trying to teach other people your language. It takes time. To me photography is about time.

When I photograph today, I'm much more relaxed and really feel like I've come home, especially because people now welcome my photography much more and show joy in seeing them. For a long time it felt quite lonely to photograph and somehow it's now suddenly the complete opposite. It feels like I've found a big family.

“I feel that when you
start out, it's like
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To me photography is

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The photographs have this sense of stillness, but aren't exactly quiet.
What dialogue are they prompting?

I believe that the pictures show life and close moments in everyday life and that all those lives and moments are meaningful. That all feelings are welcome. My pictures are also self-portraits. I have a lot inside that wants to come out. I think that's what speaks most vividly through my portraits. But there is also a collective cry. Many in my generation of friends are angry and frustrated with the world. We want a world that is led by love and that there is room for everyone. And that the vulnerable are looked after and that it is a power.

I feel like I grew up in a world where my parents taught me that showing emotion was a sort of weakness. I feel that our generation and the next ones are in total revolt with that. We are reteaching each other to seek love and to break all the barriers within ourselves that we have built against it.





Love Me Again by Michella Bredahl is published by Loose Joints.©
Michella Bredahl 2023 courtesy Loose Joints

The work is titled Love Me Again, could you tell us when and where that love was first lost?

The title is very attached to my mother. That's photography for me in general. The love was first lost with her. My mother was the first to give me a camera when I was 7 years old. The first pictures I ever took were with her camera and of her. My mother was a haunted soul. The camera became a tool for me in all the chaos I grew up around. I think my mother used the camera to create a world she could endure being in. It was a dark time. We lost touch for many years, almost ten years. Everything I create, I create from that place and memories I share with her, but I feel like I'm creating something beautiful out of that dark place.

Perhaps you could say that I visit the dark places and step out of them again with light. The title refers to her love and desire to find each other again, despite all the bad things that happened. It also touches on all the different aspects that love can arise between us and those that I love in the book, and hope that the love is mutual.

You've also mentioned how dangerous a pair of eyes can be. When is the gaze a weapon? How does one reclaim it?

For me, the gaze is always somewhat of a risk, because you never know who is looking and what eyes they are looking with. I have modeled since I was 14 years old. I was very young. I feel adults capitalized on my beauty and vulnerability. They objectified me. I never saw the images of me before they were in a magazine. That disconnection is how the gaze can become a weapon.

The reclaiming you need to be human. You need to speak and connect with the people you photograph. This book was made in collaboration with many people with whom I feel I share the same thoughts and feelings about the world. I think the most important thing in my work is all the time I spend with the people I photograph and many of them are people who are very close in my life. They don't see my gaze as something dangerous, on the contrary, I feel they see it as a joint struggle to create and express ourselves as who we were born to be. But I don't want to come across as someone who figured it all out. I make mistakes and that's the way to growth. You take responsibility when someone feels unheard or misseen.





Love Me Again by Michella Bredahl is published by Loose Joints.©
Michella Bredahl 2023 courtesy Loose Joints

“Reclaiming an empowering space for this energy to express itself entirely for its own needs and reasons, without shame.” What did you mean by this?

I think shame is something everyone carries in different sizes. When we enter the world we depend on the adults in our lives to love and accept us and for them to look after us. Most people I know struggle with shame because of their parents or the adults they had around them as a child. An encounter as a child with a bad person can set off shame, a feeling that one is inherently wrong; I have struggled with a lot of shame because of my mother.

Shame for me was something that arose in my childhood home. I re-enter the domestic sphere to rebel against this feeling and to replace it with something beautiful and empowering through the camera. Shame can be described by a long chain of emotions, such as wrongness, inadequacy, embarrassment and lack of value as a human being. When you experience shame, the focus is primarily on the inside, and you may get the feeling of shrinking or that your body is distorted. You feel that you’re an object of another person's negative gaze. And even if we don't know what other people think of us, and if they even see the faults we think they see, shame grows out of the uncertainty and the notion of other people's possible negative assessment.

In my work when I photograph, for me it is about creating a transparent space. I want the person I photograph to feel beautiful, with everything they contain. I also look at myself when I photograph. I tell that little girl that she is not wrong. Photography for

me is a way to look at all these broken feelings and to talk about it together. It's a desire in my work, to create a space where those I photograph do not feel wrong through my gaze.

For you, what exactly is 'the feminine', the female spirit?

It's beauty. It's venus. It's the moon. It's both soft and it's rooted. My joy for femininity is something that comes out of my upbringing. I grew up with my mother and younger sister. My mother was incredibly feminine. She loved makeup, sexy underwear, clothes, and she set her hair every day. She moved elegantly around the kitchen, even when she was cooking. My mother also had many gay friends. The way everyone held a cigarette was a scene. I was very fascinated by this way of being. The way they laughed. Danced around our apartment until the morning. High heels they all walked around in. I always felt most comfortable in that energy. My home was full of friends from different backgrounds and different shades of femininity. My best friend's parents were from the old Yugoslavia and my other friend's mother was from Poland. We got ready in my room. Just like my mother did with her friends. We put on makeup, did each other's hair.

When I watch films with Zoe Lund, it reminds me of my mother. My mother had this insane feminine attraction. My own relationship with femininity has been a long journey. I worked as a model where I felt that people capitalized on my femininity and fragility. Therefore, for many years after I stopped being a model, I downplayed my femininity. Since I moved to Paris, I have gone through a transformation. Here I have allowed myself to explore my femininity. It's many things. I think it is very individual what it is for each person. For me it is an essence. Femininity doesn't only belong to her, it's an energy that everyone can carry.





Love Me Again by Michella Bredahl is published by Loose Joints.©
Michella Bredahl 2023 courtesy Loose Joints

To what extent do you consider ourselves a reflection of others? Is there any such thing as a core identity or are we rather fragments of our surroundings?

Well, I don't think that there is a core identity per say. I think people are much more alike on the emotional level then we walk around expressing ourselves. Other artists have expressed that there is this one love. I resonate with that. We are conditioned by society. I think we have been assigned different tools to express ourselves, for example, when it comes to love. I think most people basically just want to be loved, and so we have learned different ways of showing it or not showing it at all, depending on our lives.

The photographs invite us to put our guard down, talk to ourselves when greeting her gaze. What do you wish for us to reflect upon once we put the book down?

I hope that the book can remind us to look after each other and show love and compassion every day with one another.

Looking ahead, is this narrative a closed chapter or something you'd like to continue expanding upon throughout your practice?

When I photograph, I don't have a narrative hanging over my head. It is something that my publishers have also helped to create. I'm sure if we looked through my archive we

could choose many different narratives to build a book around.

I intend to continue taking photographs, and especially of those that are in the book. This is just the beginning for me. Again as I said early on — you start somewhere and it takes you somewhere else. I look forward to seeing where this book takes me. I have already started a film project that I will shoot for next year. I hope that I can find the right publisher to publish my book about my mother. For me, it's mostly about doing it and not quitting. And to learn from all your discoveries, mistakes, to develop and grow. That's a part of what living is.

“Well, I don't think that there is a core identity per say. I think people are much more alike on the emotional level then we walk around expressing ourselves. Other artists have expressed that there is this one love. I resonate with that.”

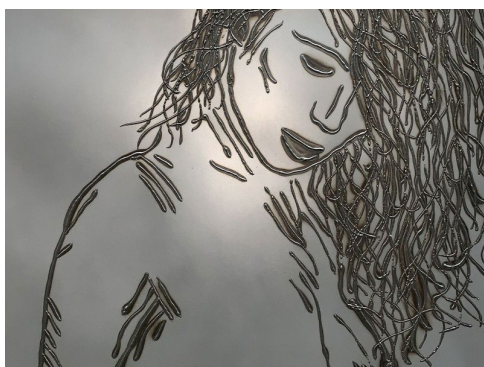
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— Art

Daniel Boccato at the Journal Gallery

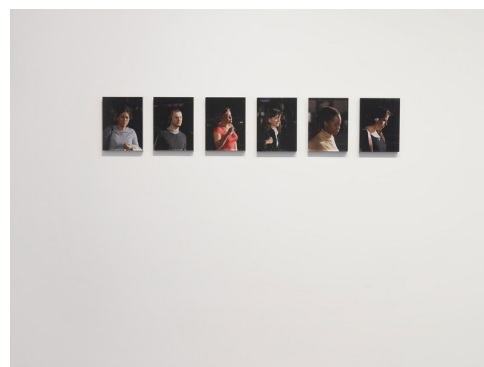
His first solo exhibition.



— Art

Steel Nudes

Nick Moss' 'Rigorous Perception' at Leila Heller Gallery in Chelsea.



— Art

Paul Graham's Seasons

Photographer Paul Graham presents 'The Seasons' at Pace Gallery, available for online viewing.

Jarrett Earnest: When the Light Suddenly Dawns

— Art

November 17, 2023

Eight years ago, artist, writer, critic and curator Jarrett Earnest began to take a small instant camera with him everywhere he went. The only guiding principle seems to have been organicity, and anything was up for documentation: paintings, gravestones,



friends, lovers, parties, flowers, sculptures, dicks. Earnest referred to the process of photographing these subjects and moments as “writing.” Over the course of several years, he accrued thousands of these photos. Sixty of them, each paired with text on the opposite-facing page, come together to make *Valid Until Sunset*. Opening with a quote from philosopher Simone Weil, Earnest foregrounds his work with her “method for understanding images, symbols, etc. Not to try to interpret them, but to look at them till the light suddenly dawns.”

Words by Samuel Getachew

Photos by Jarrett Earnest, courtesy of MATTE Editions

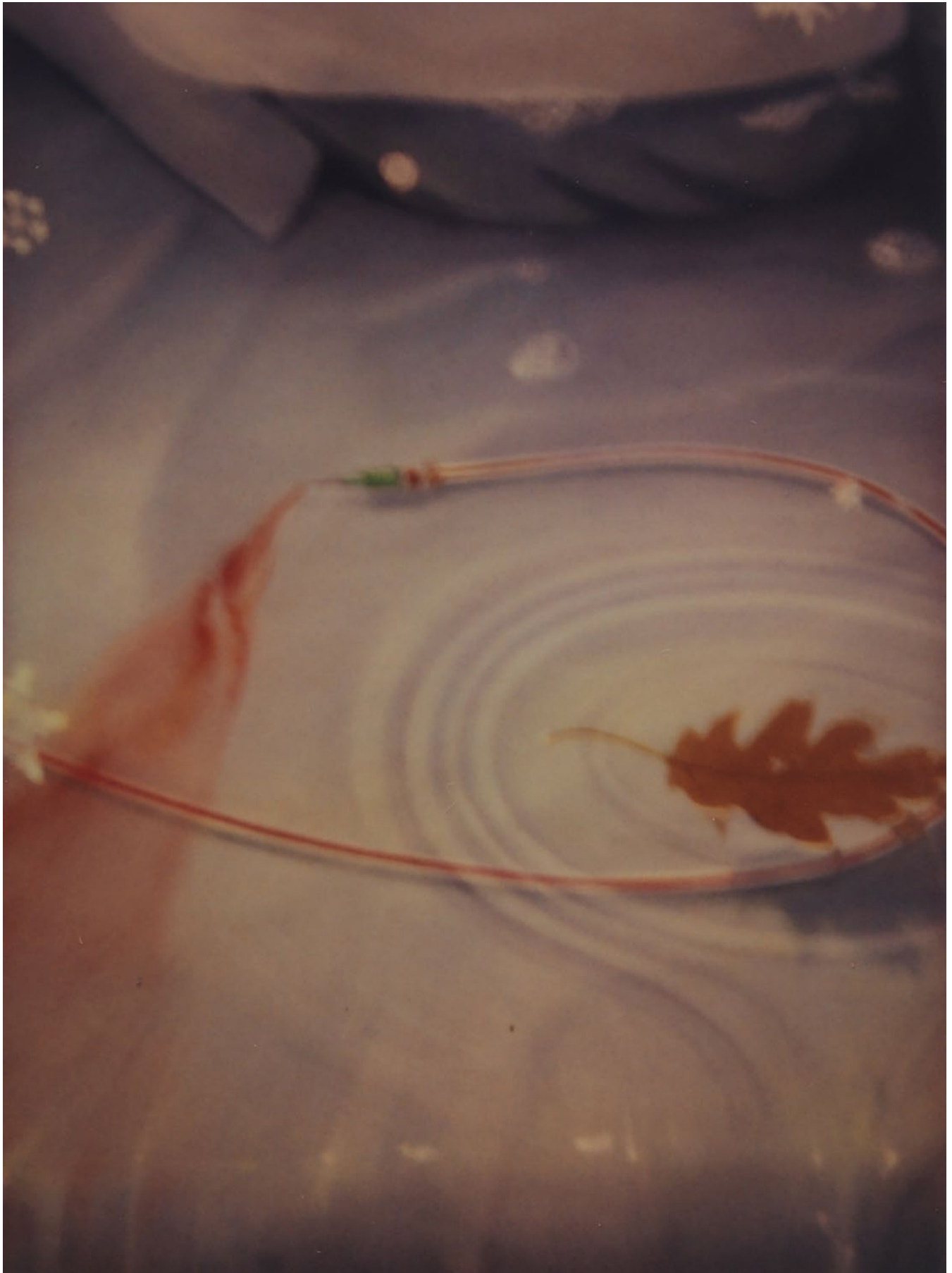
Earnest weaves together images of artwork from Renaissance paintings to contemporary sculpture with moments from his own life, drawn to what he calls the more “permeable” images over “perfect” ones. The photos serve as entry points for the reader — who perhaps may be described more aptly as a witness — to investigate their own boundary that claims to separate art and life.

The written tableaux that accompany his images are made up of laconic observations and retellings, unceremonious but nonetheless suffused with a tenderness that is little too self-aware to be called nostalgia. Earnest transmutes his critic's scholarly logic and precision to navigate the jagged and precarious terrain of self-examination. That self-awareness permeates the work, perhaps inevitably — after all, it is a meta-reflection on these years of Earnest's life, a retrospection on retrospections, an analysis of the memory of memory.



In one photo, a bouquet of flowers is placed on the grave of the aforementioned philosopher Simone Weil. In another, a lover lies naked on a bed, shot from above, a circle of post-coital dampness still visible on the sheets beside him. In *Valid Until Sunset*, love and loss, art and sex, and life and death rest shoulder to shoulder, arm in arm, blurring the distinctions between one another, between the past and the present, and between Earnest and ourselves.

The photos “address you in the second person,” he writes, and so does he, narrating in the present tense. Of course, these moments are from the past, not the present, and they are his, not ours – but the central contemplation is a universal one. *Valid Until Sunset* is a meditation not only on how we see our lives, but how we ‘write’ them through documentation and storymaking, and how we read them, and read them again, and again, and again.









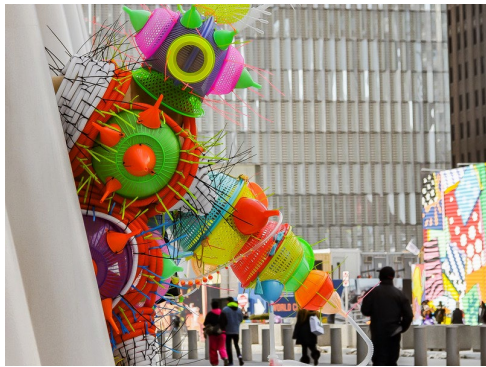


□

Jarrett Earnest is an artist, writer and curator living in New York City. His books include *What It Means To Write About Art: Interviews with Art Critics* (David Zwirner Books, 2018), *The Young and Evil: Queer Modernism in New York 1930-1955* (David Zwirner Books 2020), *Painting is a Supreme Fiction: Jesse Murry Writings, 1980-1993* (Sobercove, 2021), and *Devotion: Today's Future is Tomorrow's Archive* (Public, 2022). His writing has appeared regularly in the *New York Review of Books*, among many exhibition catalogs and other publications.

Valid Until Sunset is available for purchase from [MATTE Editions](#).

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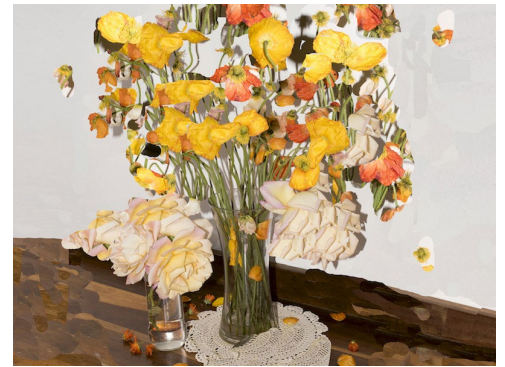
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