



Gallery Guide
Contemporary Art
Museum St. Louis

May 9–
June 22, 2014



Brenna Youngblood: Loss Prevention

Loss Prevention, the first Midwestern solo museum exhibition of Los Angeles-based artist Brenna Youngblood, features a selection of multimedia paintings, many of which were created especially for CAM. Often combining paper, paint, and collage with everyday objects, Youngblood juxtaposes the figure with the abstract, raising questions of what is familiar versus what is unknown.

Although Youngblood's mixed media practice refers to collage-based artists from Robert Rauschenberg to Mark Bradford, her work contains more muted layers of abstraction, with ambiguous and heavily-worked surfaces allowing glimpses of the recognizable. Built-up layers of paper and paint—in particular an underlayer of red oxide—often give Youngblood's work a rusty, tarnished, and worn quality. Nails, a grocery bag, old wallpaper, and the sole of a shoe appear on hazy collaged backgrounds. In *Single and Successful?*, a photograph of a bare light bulb is affixed to an ethereal, atmospheric pink surface. Other works reference the figure in the form of their canvas. The shaped canvases of *Flourless Bread Slice #1* and *#2* look like the famous silhouette of the Wonder Bread bag, and are collaged and painted to become delicate, fanciful picture planes. Other works function as mock tromp l'oeil paintings, decipherable at first glance and then dissolving into abstraction upon further examination.



Brenna Youngblood, *Single and Successful?*, 2013. Mixed media on panel, 48 × 60 inches. Collection of Andrew Stearn, Los Angeles.

The isolation of the objects in Youngblood's canvases—as well as her choice of subjects that underscore a lower socio-economic status—raises subtle and compelling questions about the class dynamics surrounding the items. For instance, *Blade Runner: Red, White and Blue* alludes to the post-apocalyptic sci-fi world of the eponymous movie and presents fan blades painted the colors of the American flag, transforming leftover detritus into tongue-in-cheek patriotism. In *FORECAST*, a small tear-shaped photograph of a cloudy sky appears to be a window or peephole through which the viewer sees a different—albeit distant—reality. Challenging our understanding of objects we use every day, Youngblood creates work that is both poetic and beautiful while cleverly engaged in socio-political critique.



Audio Tour

Download the CAM app at camstl.org/app or ask for an iPod at the front desk to hear directly from the artist and curator on the audio tour.



Brenna Youngblood, *Blade Runner: Red, White and Blue*, 2014.
Acrylic paint, paper, ceiling fan blades, 72 × 60 inches. Courtesy the artist and Honor Fraser, Los Angeles.

Brenna Youngblood (b. 1979, Riverside, California) lives and works in Los Angeles. Most recently, she was included in the group shows *Rites of Spring* at the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston; *Fore* at the Studio Museum in Harlem; and *Made in L.A. 2012*, organized by the Hammer Museum and LAXART, Los Angeles. Past solo exhibitions include Nathalie Obadia, Brussels; Tilton Gallery, New York; Susanne Vielmetter, Berlin; and the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles. Youngblood earned a BFA from California State University, Long Beach, and an MFA from UCLA.

Brenna Youngblood: Loss Prevention is organized for the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis by Lisa Melandri, Executive Director.

This exhibition is generously supported by Honor Fraser, Los Angeles, and Andrew Stearn.

Related Programs

*Free and open to the public unless otherwise noted.
For a complete list of programs, please visit camstl.org.*

Friday Evening Tours

Fridays, May 16–August 8, 6:00 pm

Breakfast with the Curators

Friday, June 6, 8:30 am

Exclusively for CAM members. Complimentary coffee and baked goods. Register at camstl.org/breakfast
Before the Museum opens to the public, join us for breakfast and a private tour of the current exhibitions.

First Friday

Friday, June 6, 5:00–9:00 pm

A complimentary drink for Young Friends members and above. Cash bar.

Enjoy an evening of art, music, and culture the first Friday of every month. DJs and musicians present music in dialogue with the exhibitions, For a complete list, visit firstfridaysgrandcenter.org.



**Contemporary Art
Museum St. Louis**
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