



NELAart SECOND SATURDAY GALLERY NIGHT MAP ENCLOSED

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ONE YEAR

The Art of Politics in Los Angeles

With "ONE YEAR," at Glendale's Brand Library & Art Center, 20 local artists, working in a variety of mediums, lay bare the emotion of the past year.

Curators Joey Forsyte, Lawrence Gipe and Alex Kritselis have succeeded in channeling the power of art to reflect on what has been for many a highly confusing time. All of the artists selected for the show have a history of making political engagement integral to their artistic practices.

"Throughout history, artists have been activists," says the curators' statement, "digging beneath the surface, posing the critical questions, challenging authority and calling the public to action. In today's contentious climate, LA artists are responding to this new urgency, seeking to tell their truth in an era when truth is becoming a precious commodity."

With its direct take on themes of racism, xenophobia, misogyny, lies, and hatred, this could have been one exceedingly ugly show. Instead it is striking in its beauty and warmth.

There is color, and importantly, there are people—lovely humans set against the tragedy.

Eileen Cowin presents video of people—adults and children—slowly beginning to cry, creating an initially awkward and ultimately shared experience with the viewer.

Nery Gabriel Lemus presents "A Memorial to Three Unknown Females," evoking simple plaques at burial parks along the U.S.-Mexico border, but with the beauty and respect that these missing women didn't get at death.

HK Zamani's photography, stemming from performance pieces, depicts a rainbow of color, the burka as almost fashionable. But it does not mask the eyes of the wearers, which reveal sorrow and the stress of endurance.

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Scott Grieger, United States of Anxiety



HK Zamani, Nery Gabriel Lemus, Mark Steven Greenfield, "ONE YEAR, The Art of Politics in Los Angeles"

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Some pieces work on a multiplicity of levels.

Linda Vallejo's "The Brown Dot Project" puts a human face on data—for example, a portrait of a young woman composed of 33,461 brown dots that illustrate the fact that 30.9% of Latinos living in the U.S. earned \$50K+ in 2014.

With "Welcome to the USA," Guillermo Bert uses modern materials such as laser cutting, led lights, and plexi to evoke traditional fabric art that may take one back to one's grandmother's house—except that these works, on examination, contain images of stooped figures and barbed wire.



Guillermo Bert, Welcome to the USA

Alexis Smith's deceptively simple piece appears to be a thrift store find—a painting of a hooked fish being yanked from ocean waves—with a golden ticket to see Donald and Ivanka Trump live glued on. But there's more to be learned from the title; this is "The Big Fish," that prize of highly exaggerated grandeur that gets away. Ms. Smith's piece is a cautionary tale, a warning to look beyond what is depicted.

Above all, ONE YEAR functions as a call to action. Joey Forsyte's room-size installation is a tribute to her mother, who passed away of breast cancer the day after casting a vote for Hillary Clinton. The installation launches the artists' Band of Voters project, through which groups of friends will form "bands" and commit to voting together in 2018.

"I lost my mother," says Ms. Forsyte. "I don't want to lose my country."



Linda Vallejo, The Brown Dot Project



Joey Forsyte, Mixed Media Installation (detail)

ONE YEAR

The Art of Politics in Los Angeles
Through January 12

Brand Library and Art Center

1601 West Mountain Street, Glendale

<http://www.glendaleca.gov/government/departments/library-arts-culture/>
Conceived and organized by Joey Forsyte, Lawrence Gipe and Alex Kritselis.

Artists include: Kim Abeles, Guillermo Bert, Eileen Cowin, Kohshin Finley, Ron Finley, Joey Forsyte, Keiko Fukasawa, Lawrence Gipe, Mark Steven Greenfield, Scott Grieger, Emily Elisa Halpern, Alex Kritselis, Nery Gabriel Lemus, Constance Mallinson, Star Montana, Amitis Motevalli, Thinkh Nguyen, Umar Rashid (Frohawk Two Feathers), Ben Sakoguchi, Alexis Smith, Linda Vallejo, and HK Zamani.

Several film screenings, workshops, and conversations are planned in conjunction with the exhibit. Updated information is available on the web site.



Emily Halpern, The Door to Sin



Amitis Motevalli, "Confiscated Portrait of the Artist as a Young Rebel, 2005/2010. "With current technology, there is always a questioning of the levels of reality but even of the absurdity of the reality itself."



Nery Gabriel Lemus, A Memorial to Three Unknown Females



Alexis Smith, The Big Fish



Eileen Cowin, video installation