A seminal figure and respected pioneer, Baldessari is well known for his work featuring found photography and appropriated images. Through witty juxtapositions and skillful fragmentations, Baldessari's work undermines easy reading of an image by obscuring details from which we often derive meaning. This exhibition signifies yet another exciting departure for Baldessari, whose prolific and dynamic career has helped define and refine conceptual art. For the past four years, Baldessari's photo-based works have primarily focused on the deconstruction of human identity through the isolation of particular facial features and body parts, be it elbows & knees, noses & ears, or eyebrows & foreheads. By highlighting oft-overlooked features, Baldessari demonstrates the subjective nature of representation, forcing an awareness of that-which-is-omitted versus that-which-is- included uncharacteristic of our rapid-fire digestion of the contemporary image-glut.

The new work in this exhibition continues Baldessari's systematic dismantling of visual language with photographs on canvas overlaid by acrylic paint—a conflation of media typical of the artist. Never before has that-which-was-omitted been more enticing than in these new works, as traces of imagery in silhouette slice through pristine empty space and insinuate a larger context whose multiplicity of meanings are belied by the powerful graphic simplicity of the canvases.

John Baldessari's major retrospective, Pure Beauty, opened at the Tate Modern, London, in October 2009 before traveling to the Museu d'Art Contemporani in Barcelona. The exhibition, co-organized by the Tate Modern and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, will arrive at LACMA on 27 June 2010, where it will remain on view until 12 September, at which time it will travel to its final destination, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. John Baldessari was awarded the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement at last year's Venice Biennale.

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