

Kristin Calabrese: *The Witness*



*Blending In*, 2011, oil on canvas, 48 x 96 inches

All of these paintings are meant to be some other place, time, thing, or state of mind, superimposed onto the gallery to be experienced by a viewer. All of the paintings are fake things – none of them are what they look like, yet all of them are actual objects: paintings.

These paintings intend to blur boundaries. They are meant to see the viewer and have feelings. The band-aids cover the viewer. The painting “Board” looks like an actual piece of wood. When hung on a wall, it suggests windows boarded up from the inside. “Don’t Be Afraid” is a useless fake broom leaning against the wall. It wants you to use it in your mind.

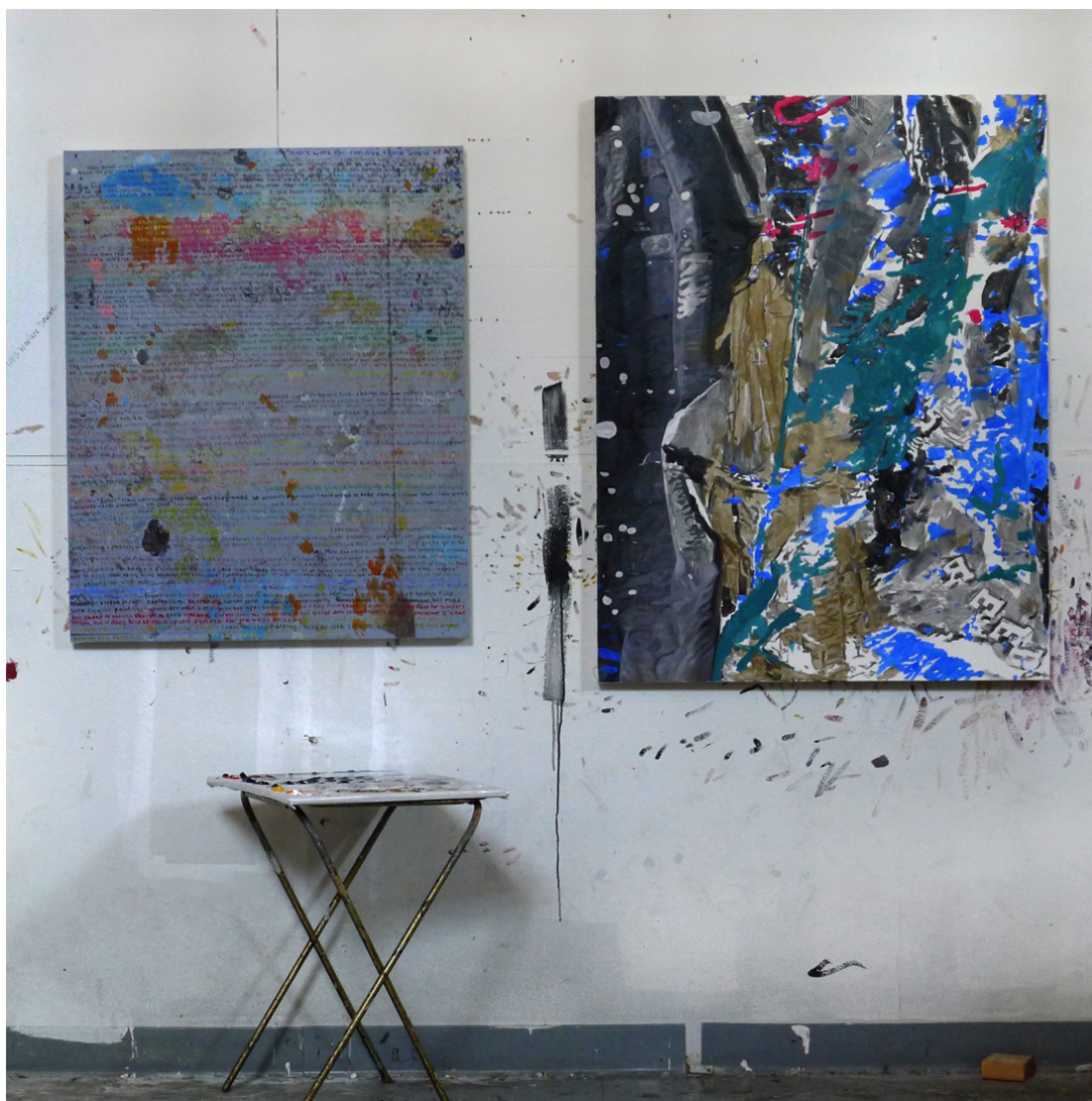
“Frame” presents authentic paint marks on the unpainted middle part of the canvas that hovers illusionistically over a fake (painted) frame. The paint marks could suggest scratches of someone trying to escape.

You see a portrait of the artist in “Blending In” doing something ridiculous. She’s distracting someone (maybe you) from having some sort of fill-in-the-blank (heightened emotion). It’s her sacrifice to keep the peace. In the portrait, she’s also “Blending In” because she and the background are covered with eyes. The eyes are meant to act like either a wall of sound or camouflage. Her leg is becoming transparent,

which tells you the painting is extra-real and not a picture of physical reality. Calabrese uses the gravity defying properties of representational painting to describe an emotional state (of being the class clown) that the artist sometimes embodies.

Kristin Calabrese, b. 1968 San Francisco, is an artist-curator who lives and works in Los Angeles. She received her BFA from San Francisco Art Institute and her MFA from the University of California, Los Angeles. Calabrese primarily works in painting and explores ideas in psychology, humor, and politics while examining the formal issues of composition and representation. Calabrese mines her own life's experiences as a source to express a small piece of the human condition. Solo exhibitions include Gagosian Gallery and Susanne Vielmetter in Los Angeles, Brennan & Griffin in New York, and Michael Jansen in Cologne. Calabrese has curated many group exhibitions, including shows for Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions and Honor Fraser Gallery. Her work is included in numerous collections including Saatchi and The Armand Hammer Museum. She is represented by Brennan & Griffin.

*What We Do for Fun: Kristin Calabrese with Caitlin Lonegan and Brenna Youngblood*



*(unfinished studio shot of Kristin's Caitlin and Brenna paintings)*

In the adjacent project space, The Green Gallery East presents *What We Do for Fun: Kristin Calabrese with Caitlin Lonegan and Brenna Youngblood*. This unique three woman show spurred from a couple of ideas Kristin was exploring while collecting source material for new paintings. Calabrese started taking

photographs of incidental paint marks in her friends' studios and the marks inspired Calabrese to look at collaboration from a different perspective. By bringing the paint marks into her own studio, Calabrese could actually collaborate with the impressions her friends had made on their studios. Also through her friends' paint markings, Calabrese achieved her desire to shift the color of her usual palette and make paintings that looked abstract yet have rendered light, texture and space (thus needing some sort of basis in observation).

In a subsequent conversation, Caitlin Lonagan expressed an interest in seeing a painting of hers along side one of Kristin's paintings that incorporated the paint marks from Caitlin's floor. Their separate works had a literal link of palette/source (Caitlin had painted her floor not too long before Kristin took the picture, so the paint on the floor was mostly from her recent body of work).

Soon this concept of linked paintings inspired Brenna Youngblood to volunteer a painted tarp for Kristin's project. Kristin incorporated the tarp into her body of work by using it as a subject for one of her paintings. While there is an esoteric link to Brenna's paintings, the two paintings together create a conversation. Kristin is more quoting Brenna in combination with her own formal fascination with the appearance of space in the picture. Brenna is speaking her truth directly, utilizing her own unique formal painting language, which includes breaking the frame literally and figuratively, and the recycling of found discarded materials.

The paintings Kristin Calabrese made from Caitlin Lonagan's studio floor and Brenna Youngblood's tarp are the first two in the project. They will be shown together with a painting by Caitlin Lonagan and two pieces by Brenna Youngblood that were made around the same time the materials were collected. The result is a show that is loaded with re-appropriation of color, texture, and incidental marks – stripping the raw materials of their original purpose and re-contextualizing them into other paintings with a different artistic intention. This show is not only a celebration of the elements that link these paintings, but a comment on all paintings (which are linked because they are paintings). These paintings are a little more linked than other paintings.

We are excited to see what they will look like together.

Caitlin Lonagan is an artist who lives and works in Los Angeles. Her work includes large scale paintings on canvas, small journalistic studies, and works on paper. She received her B.A. from Yale University and her M.F.A. from the University of California, Los Angeles. She is the recipient of the Joan Mitchell M.F.A. Award and has recently been exhibited at ACME., (Los Angeles), L.A.C.E., (Los Angeles), Idyllwild Arts Center (Idyllwild, CA), Steve Turner Contemporary (Los Angeles), and the Cue Foundation (New York). She is represented by ACME., Los Angeles and is currently working on an upcoming solo show, a recently founded arts journal, and a handmade artist book as a part of Laura Owens' curated books project.

Brenna Youngblood earned a BFA in 2002 from Cal State Long Beach and an MFA in 2006 from UCLA, where she studied with Cathy Opie and James Welling. Recent solo projects include exhibitions at Honor Fraser Gallery, Jack Tilton Gallery, Susanne Vielmetter Berlin Projects, Margo Leavin Gallery, Wignall Museum, and the Hammer Museum. Youngblood has also participated in exhibitions at The Studio Museum in Harlem, Harris Lieberman Gallery, Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, Fort Lauderdale Museum of Art, the 2008 California Biennial, and the California African American Museum. In June of this year she will participate in the first Los Angeles Biennial, Made in L.A. 2012. Her work is included in the collections of Los Angeles Contemporary Museum of Art, Fundación/Colección Jumex, Hammer Museum, and Studio Museum in Harlem.