

The artists and works in About Face employ ideas of scale, zoom, and cropping to complicate figuration and portraiture in relation to abstraction. Emphasizing images of proximity and visual intimacy or immersion, the female form, visage, and trappings loom large. About Face presents an approach to figuration perceived through the self's inherent abstractness and an attention to abstraction that assumes as much. Ideas of defiance, insistence, and repetition are significant in the works and attitudes of the artists presented. Each, in their own way, tracks degrees of approach, withdrawal, or turning inward and considers how aesthetics can picture that path. From self-portraits to formal geometries, a sustained commitment to one's art as an intense pursuit both fanatically private and full of tremendous humanity is evident throughout this intergenerational group.

A series of large-scale paintings by Joan Brown highlight her extensive investigation of the self in portraits depicting the artist in her studio, her family and other personal relationships, her passions and her spiritual leanings.

Brian Calvin's paintings bring the face to the forefront of the exhibition as an absorptive, defamiliarizing abstraction. Continuing his open, lyric approach to portraiture, this body of work hovers between gawking and gazing with close cropping, exaggerated features, and long-held breaths.

Maria Lassnig's highly personal paintings are attempts to depict experiences of interiority. Included in the exhibition is Kantate, one of the few videos Lassnig produced, in which she recounts the story of her life in 14 verses.

Dianna Molzan's paintings engage in an open and unpredictable conversation with the limitations and expectations of a painting, often incorporating compositional elements and materials that introduce familiar yet unexpected notions of texture, surface, weight, color and shape.

Never before exhibited in Los Angeles, Diane Simpson's powerful and precise sculptures refer to both clothing and architecture, often incorporating the use of stands and armatures or simply hanging the pieces within the space. Beginning with a recognizable source, such as a bonnet, vest, or dress form, Simpson transforms her chosen material, which may include wood, linoleum, metal, wire and fabric, into meticulously constructed abstract forms.

Christina Ramberg's seductive paintings approach form and the female body in tightly cropped compositions and sleek surfaces. Her depictions of bound limbs or finely braided hair, for example, push her figures towards abstraction with a darkly stylized elegance. Ramberg's drawings, never

exhibited while she was alive, speak to relevant perceptions of gender identity as well as our cultural desires to contain and control the female body.

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