On November 17, the artist Laura Owens will host an exhibition of her paintings at 356 S. Mission Road in Boyle Heights. It will be the first exhibition of her work in Los Angeles in nearly ten years. The previous solo exhibition being the survey the Museum of Contemporary art devoted to her in 2003.

Los Angeles has a unique history of artists working independently and improvising their own spaces for site specific and event based works. The project that Laura has undertaken taps into that spirit of community and context driven production in Los Angeles. After a year of looking at various types of spaces, from disused churches to abandoned movie theaters, she decided on 356 S. Mission, an industrial building in Downtown LA. It was built in 1926 for a lithography studio, but has also had a life as a storehouse for Liberace's pianos, and as a shed for cheap clothing for teens. Now the space is both a studio and a place of exhibition. Laura has been working in it for the past year, making the many of the studio into the one of the exhibition.

Laura became well known in the 90's for paintings that were strikingly individualistic, self contained worlds of painterly techniques and references. For the past several years she has challenged that mode of working, focusing on groups of works where the individual paintings step back into a gestalt, and meaning is contingent on the proximity and arrangement of discreet gestures within the group. For instance, her 2010-2012 untitled series of ninety-four clock paintings have been shown in various groupings and arrangments, and with each exhibition the constellation changes. The paintings are an interdependent system that generate meanings between themselves, but are not single works. Similarly, series of paintings shown recently at the Kunstmuseum Bonn and NY Frieze, investigate a deflation of the autonomous painting, looking instead for a dispersed meaning outside the painting's edges.

The new group of 11 x 10' paintings are a hybrid of her modes of working from the past two decades. They were made while she designed the walls of the exhibition and planned their placement, a hyper-determined process that includes the space in the paintings. And while the works are the same size, they assume individual poses, while still being held in an array by the exhibition. The exhibition will be open for six months,or until it is not longer interesting. It is an artists studio and exhibition space, a gathering place, a bookstore, a concert hall, an outdoor movie theatre, a cantina, a residency…..