

Ingrid Luche's *Ghost Dresses* are part of a series of sculptures begun in 2011. Made to be printed and hung, the garments are soft, bodiless sculptural forms. No body-substitute fills out their volumes. The (*Californian*) *Ghost Dresses* series shown at Ghebaly Gallery in Los Angeles in 2018 is a group of fabric sculptures suspended from a support structure for photo studio backdrops. This makes the object itself a display system and an outsize clothes rack which, being mobile, pops up and moves about inside the white space of the gallery. Seemingly available – ready to be put back on and maybe embodied – these dresses were conceptualized in California and produced in Paris. They are all about the poses and prefabricated discourses – and their expression in reality – that model individual behavior and sculpt groups. Their origin is retinal and this is why I would like to bring the concept of blink to bear on these works.

Blink is simultaneously the glance, the wink and the flutter of the eyelid which seem to me one of the visual modes Luche tests out for capturing the social and media phenomena turned into images that roam our streets and screens. Captured, available, ready to use, these images embellish the empty – in the sense of uninhabited – forms of the sculptures making up the Californian series. Blink is the way I see Luche looking at the social phenomena that circulate on the networks (statements and posturings), on television (news 24/7), in the movies (bogus heroism) and in our cities (brands and niche stores): an outsider's scrutiny of the details of a world for sale and endlessly reformulated ideological merchandizing.

The series is constructed from a corpus of objects and images collected by the artist during her travels in California: a burning house (seen on TV), a mural of Arnold Schwarzenegger (spotted in the street), disposable headphones (from a plane trip), a photo of a Richard Prince print of a canyon in the desert (gigantic, seen at LACMA), and a screenshot of a video by woman bodybuilder and species activist Nasim Najafi Aghdam, who shot up YouTube headquarters and then committed suicide in April, 2018. Her stated reason was changes to YouTube's payment policy regarding her channels; she claimed 15,000 subscribers and challenged her downgrading. The burning house, Nasim Aghdam, Schwarzenegger and Richard Prince's deserts became all-over fabric patterns. The headphones and sunglasses picked up here and there are source materials brought together as networks of signs and textures to provide jewel-like ornaments on these images. The images and objects are folded, opened out and transformed. The Prince photo becomes an enormous pleated skirt belted with chains and goodies. Turned upside down, the house on fire is a decorative pattern stripped of its realism, and Schwarzie's a shawl. These transfers and displacements, these signs and forms are all the more surprising in that they stick to the thwarted model of individual desire (formulated, honed, submissive) and waiting (permanently hanging fire and dependent on a media institution that is itself disembodied). The use of 100% Spandex imitation leather is a reflection of

this unstable, unbalanced relation-projection.

Ingrid Luche explained to me that she was interested in production issues in both art and society: “Current life models are paradoxical and I’m drawn to the ambivalence and the sociological territories that fuel them. At one and the same time they produce fascination and its opposite, like a veganism based entirely on disposability. This checks out in attitudes and lifestyles. Nasim Aghdam is a hyper-powerful example of this kind of social network self-destruction.”

Marie Canet

Art historian and curator

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