

# VIELMETTER LOS ANGELES

## Press Release

### Genevieve Gaignard

#### I'm Sorry I Never Told You That You're Beautiful

June 29 – August 17, 2019

Reception: June 29, 4 - 6pm

Downtown



Vielmetter Los Angeles is pleased to announce our first solo exhibition of new works by Los Angeles based artist Genevieve Gaignard, *I'm Sorry I Never Told You that You're Beautiful*. Known for her exploration of Americana via racial formation, interiority and portraiture, Gaignard disrupts symbols and images which attempt to assure supremacy and erase merging identities and notions of belonging. This exhibition explores affinity of place, desires of flight/departure, and an empathic turn through installation, collage, sculpture, and photography.

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In her recent bodies of work, Gagnard has used the site of homeplace and emblems of domesticity to explore American racial logic, beauty, and desire. Her architectural installations situate black and white subjectivity as acts of adornment entangled with historical tropes and present circumstance. Images cut from *Ebony*, *Life*, and *Jet* magazine populate wallpaper and appear alongside vintage furniture and sundries of new and old. These moments of interiority and familial space carve in and out of each other, prying apart racial strata and hegemony. In particular, black womxnhood and femininity are used as signifiers which mark the spectrum (in hue and body type) of representation via self-portraits. These stylized photographs present a myriad of identities as Gagnard appears in distinct wigs, costumes, and amongst varied domestic backdrops. Gagnard's characters are constructed through ideals externally imposed and those self-fashioned. Gagnard's scenes pivot the bifurcation of black/white, interior/exterior, aspiration/possession as sites of play that are as much things of history as they are expressions of current realities.

For *I'm Sorry I Never Told You that You're Beautiful* Gagnard presents a domestic space of pleasure and affirmation while attending to the possibility of tumult and atonement. Gagnard's signature wallpaper, porcelain figurines, and kitsch objects adorn her installation, presenting the amalgamation of things both of blackness and beauty enmeshed with (white) Americana textile patterns, advertisements, and ephemera. Mirrors and reflective surfaces merge viewers within discrete moments of Gagnard's objects and Gagnard herself, as her grid of portraits is an opportunity to behold and echo back onto the one gazing. The ask here is neither the solidity in difference- racially, gender-wise, or in homeplace -but rather the construction of such a precarious thing in the first place wherein both love and apology sit alongside the other as a means toward reconciliation.

Genevieve Gagnard (b. 1981, Orange, MA) received her BFA in Photography from Massachusetts College of Art and Design, Boston (2007) and her MFA in Photography from Yale University, New Haven (2014). Her work was included in the exhibition *Still I Rise* which opened at MASS MoCA in June 2019. Recent solo exhibitions include *Black White and Red All Over*, Monique Meloche Gallery, Chicago, IL; *Counterfeit Currency*, The FLAG Art Foundation, New York (2018); and *Hidden Fences*, Praz-Delavallade, Paris, France (2018). Her work was also included in *Prospect 4: The Lotus in Spite of the Swamp*, New Orleans, LA (2017); *Personal Space*, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, AR (2018); the Daegu Biennial, curated by Ami Barak, Daegu, South Korea (2018); *Talisman in the Age of Difference*, Stephen Friedman Gallery, London, UK (2018); and *Fictions*, The Studio Museum in Harlem (2017). Select public collections include The Art Institute of Chicago; The Studio Museum in Harlem; California African American Museum, Los Angeles; Pérez Art Museum Miami; The Nasher Museum of Art, Durham, NC; The FLAG Art Foundation, New York; and the San Jose Museum of Art, CA.