



KiptonART Featured Artist Interview with 2011 KiptonART Rising Winner Ysabel Lemay

At what age did you know you were an artist? What was the first work of art you created?

I was five. At pre-school, everyday I use to spend the first two hours painting. It was by far the best hours of the days. We were given large sheets of paper and buckets of gouache paints. To this day, I still remember the scent of the paint and the joy I experienced creating those paintings.

As a KiptonART Rising Winner, what do you hope will happen for you this year?

I hope this year's association with KiptonArt will bring forth an increase in visibility within the contemporary art scene, especially with New York as well as public awareness which is essential for the growth of my art career at this point.

What is one of your favorite past exhibitions?

About five years ago I saw an exhibition by the artist Jérôme Fortin at the Montreal Museum of Contemporary Art that completely transported me to another level of awareness. It was the most intelligent and beautiful art I had ever seen. I understood then the powerful impact an artist could have on a person's life. I was standing in the middle of the museum, in complete awe, desiring more than anything else to create artworks that one day would transport people as much as I was at that moment. It was simply Divine.

Who/what is your biggest influence or inspiration right now?

Joan Mitchell for her strength and intelligence behind her paint strokes and Robert Rauschenberg for his eternal creative youth.

What is the first thing that comes to mind after an opening?

Thank God it's over! Lol I can sleep now!

And after I let the magic happen. I know that amongst all these people that visited the show there is always one special encounter that I experience. A person with who I will forge a relationship. Someone always comes into my life to help me expand.

Why do you work in this particular medium?

This is a choice I made after spending eight years painting on canvas and using a brush. The day I took a camera in my hands and started documenting Nature, I felt an amazing sense of creative freedom. At the moment, I am enjoying this freedom of instant expression that the camera allows. I will continue to use this medium for as long as I have something to say with it. Somewhere within all of this, photography is also another stepping stone in the evolution of my art.

Do you collect anything?

I collect art and random images. They represent the structure of my own emotions, aspirations and probabilities of thoughts.

Which of your own works on KiptonART are you favorite? Why?

The ones that were channeled through me. I am in a constant meditative state when I create them. They just seem to appear right there in front of me effortlessly. They really do come from another dimension. A place not restricted by the boundaries of space and time.

LeMay took a new turn in 2010 as she devotes herself full-time to the medium of photography. Combining her technical expertise with her deep-seeded roots as a painter, Ysabel LeMay continues her exploration into the power and divinity of nature through "Photo-Fusion". This innovative technique is a lengthy process during which hundreds of photographs are taken, light and visual properties attuned and assembled one detail at a time in a painter-like fashion to form one large composition.

[View Ysabel Lemay's Portfolio](#)



Ysabel Lemay, *Illuminated*. 60" x 60", lamda print



Ysabel Lemay, *The Mentors*, 2010, lamda print, Diasec, 24" X 72"





Snoecks 2015 | Ysabel LeMay Sprookjesnatuur



woord HILDE PAUWELS beeld YSABEL LEMAY

Verblúffend mooi, dat is het eerste wat je denkt bij de kunstwerken van Ysabel LeMay. Uit vele foto's van insecten, vogels, planten, bomen en blaadjes componeert deze Canadese kunstenares sprookjesachtige tableaux. Met hun kleurenweelde en ongereptheid zijn het onverholten hommages aan de natuur. Roze flamingo's laven zich, vogeltjes en bijen fladderen onbekommerd rond, en óveral wemelt het van de bontgekleurde bloemen. Haar zinsbegoochelende techniek noemt ze 'photo-fusion'.

Elk werk begint ermee dat ze met haar camera de natuur ingaat: observeren en nog eens observeren. Dan neemt ze honderden foto's, en daar licht ze details uit. Vervolgens begint het gepuzzel: met de vele stukjes die ze heeft construeert ze een digitale compositie – een monsterklus die gemiddeld vier tot acht weken in beslag neemt. Elk fragment heeft een eigen verhaal. “Het is als borduren: het is leuk, het is hard werken, en langzamerhand zie je iets magisch ontstaan. Dan voel ik me nederig.” Ze werkt ambachtelijk, met Photoshop als werktuig. Ze vertelt dat ze in het begin de techniek nog niet helemaal onder de knie had, waardoor ze alles uit haar creativiteit moest halen. Het leidde soms tot fantastische resultaten – immers, techniek kan ook een rem zijn. Naarmate ze op dat vlak vorderde, zo merkte LeMay, werd haar werk cerebraler en repetitiever. Voor haar is het dan ook zaak om haar geest open te houden, zoekende te blijven: dát stimuleert originaliteit.

Verbaasd

Het gebeurt slechts zelden dat ze vooraf al een helder beeld heeft van het eindresultaat. “Vaak is er wel iets van een ongedefinieerde visie. Die vloeit voort uit mijn ervaringen, emoties, kennis, gevoel voor esthetiek, spiritualiteit, mijn verleden. Maar ook een boom, een boek dat ik lees, of een stoel die ik bij een ontwerper zag kan mij activeren. Alles is in mijn bewustzijn op een mysterieuze wijze geordend. Ik geef me daaraan over, en als ik vanuit die houding aan het werk ga ontstaat er vanzelf iets. Wanneer ik later het afgewerkte resultaat zie sta ik vaak

verbaasd dat het uitgerekend dat geworden is. Ik forceer niets, manipuleer ook niets. Het enige waar ik op let is dat het beeld in evenwicht is.” Soms is er een trigger, zoals bij ‘Stillness’. Ze vertelt hoe ze door een straat liep waar druk gebouwd werd. De werklui maakten flink wat kabaal. Te midden van alle bedrijvigheid zag Ysabel LeMay ineens een boom, die daar duidelijk al heel lang stond, misschien wel eeuwen. “Een tijdje probeerde ik de boom te zijn, alles om me heen in me opnemend. Op dat moment begreep ik volledig wat stilte is.”

Oceaan als landschap

Ysabel LeMay doet niets liever dan haar liefde voor de natuur op anderen overbrengen. “Het is schrikbarend hoe weinig de gemiddelde mens nog buiten is en bewust geniet van het groen, van de lucht, van de stilte. En als dat al eens het geval is verzucht men steevast dat dat vaker zou moeten gebeuren. Wat let je, denk ik dan. Gá eropuit!” LeMay zelf heeft die aansporing niet nodig, maar lange tijd was ze op dit punt dan ook wel erg verwend: “Toen ik begon met deze montages woonde ik in Florida, en dat is een bomen-, bloemen- en vogelparadijs zonder weerga. Een ongehoorde weelde.” Als ze er in haar huidige omgeving – Texas – opuit trekt neemt ze precies zoveel werkspullen mee als er in haar reiskoffer gaan, dan is ze maximaal flexibel. Haar bestemmingen kiest ze met zorg: ze is altijd uit op planten en dieren die ze nog niet kent, en op verrassende invalshoeken. Het werk ‘Unity’ is daar een voorbeeld van. Deze ragfijne sluier met blaadjes en vrolijk gekleurde vlindertjes en bloemetjes is het product van



ver doorgevoerde observatie: vier jaar lang zocht ze elke ochtend dezelfde boom op. Ze zag hoe het microsysteem eraan en eromheen met de seizoenen meeveranderde en al even verschillende soorten insecten, mos, bloemen en blaadjes aantrok. “Deze tere harmonie inspireerde me om een kunstwerk te maken dat het samenleven van mensen uitbeeldt.”

Ook de woestijn boeit haar. Het barre van het landschap zet haar ertoe aan om de weinige blijken van groei en vruchtbaarheid die er zijn grondig in zich op te nemen en vast te leggen. De kunstzinnige resultaten daarvan, ‘The Chief’ en ‘Heartbeat’, ademen, hoe verschillend ze ook zijn, volkomen de geest van dit landschapstype. Je voelt als het ware de aanwezigheid van de Indiaanse voorvaderen die er ooit woonden – precies wat de kunstenares voor ogen stond. Binnenkort gaat LeMay zich overigens richten op het andere landschap-

pelijke uiterste: de oceaan. Toen ze na een fotosessie terugvloog uit Costa Rica raakte ze mateloos gefascineerd door het immense blauw onder haar. Ze heeft zich voorgenomen om zo snel mogelijk haar bivak op te slaan aan de Costa Ricaanse kust om erachter te komen wat voor uitwerking oceaanfotografie op haar kunst zal hebben.

Tegenstelling

LeMay’s werk is hyperrealistisch, want opgebouwd uit stukjes natuur die ze voor haar lens vastlegde. Tegelijk weet je dat haar beelden té mooi zijn: het kan niet anders of we bevinden ons in een (idealistische) droomwereld. Over haar bedoeling hiermee zegt de kunstenares dit: “De realiteit bevat veel pijn en onrechtvaardigheid. Mijn antidotum is het creëren en delen van een extreem mooie wereld die hoop uitstraalt. Ik zie mijn werk als een leidraad



naar genade; ik hoop dat het kijkers aanzet tot reflectie.” Toch, als je goed kijkt, ontwaar je in veel van haar beelden wel degelijk dode, verdorde of uitgedroogde elementen. Lang voor haar deden Hollandse meesters als Rembrandt en Vermeer daar al veel mee, zeer tot haar inspiratie: “In hun werken zie je de polariteit van de natuur: enorme schoonheid die uit de duisternis tevoorschijn komt, schitterende lichtinval op een stuk rijp fruit, een dood dier of een verwelkte bloem. Onvolmaaktheid kan mooi zijn, als een omhelzing van leven en dood.”

LeMay voelt zich ook erg aangetrokken tot de biomimetica, de wetenschap die ingenieuze systemen uit de natuur wil imiteren in menselijke toepassingen. Een goed voorbeeld hiervan is velcro (klittenband), een vondst die gebaseerd is op de klitplant. De zaadjes hiervan blijven zoals bekend hardnekkig aan de vacht van dieren of aan kleding hangen, en

een Zwitserse ingenieur slaagde er midden vorige eeuw in dit na te bootsen. LeMay: “Hoe meer wij de natuur en haar principes toelaten in ons bestaan, hoe evenwichtiger de mensheid zich zal ontwikkelen. Nu leven we al te gedenaturaliseerd.”

De weg die ze tot dusverre heeft afgelegd omschrijft Ysabel LeMay als een reis naar eenvoud. Ze groeide op in een muzikantengezin, in het Canadese Quebec. Op jonge leeftijd verliet ze het ouderlijk huis om zelf ook artistiek bezig te gaan, als grafisch ontwerper. Toen na enkele jaren van reclamemaken de drive een beetje verdween besloot ze schilderlessen te gaan volgen, mede op instigatie van haar echtgenoot Carmelo Blandino – zelf schilder. Dit beviel stukken beter: vanaf 2002 wijdde ze zich er zelfs volledig aan. Maar, ook dit was het nog nét niet. De finale switch, die naar de fotokunst, kwam bij toeval tot stand.



Van een vriend leende ze een kleine camera, en in korte tijd raakte ze totaal aan het ding verslingerd. Meer nog: een maand later had ze met Photoshop haar eerste twee digitale composities gerealiseerd. De bevriende fotograaf was zo opgetogen dat hij haar de camera cadeau deed en meteen maar al zijn fotospullen afstond. Het was Ysabel LeMay duidelijk: dit was haar roeping. Haar penselen borg ze op, maar haar langjarige schilderervaring zou haar goed van pas komen. En dat gold toch

ook voor de eerder opgedane grafische vaardigheden: “Het ontwerpen van advertenties heeft me veel bijgebracht. Het komt er immers op aan het grote publiek warm te maken voor je idee en het productieproces efficiënt te organiseren. Je moet voortdurend rekening houden met het budget, met je medewerkers, met opdrachtgevers, je kwaliteitsnormen enzovoort. Allemaal zaken die in mijn huidige bestaan net zo relevant zijn.”



Haar werk onderging de laatste twee jaar een koersverandering. Het werd vooral complexer. Ysabel LeMay kent steeds meer gewicht toe aan emotie: die moet een extra dimensie aan het beeld geven. Ook wil ze zich nóg preciezer leren uitdrukken. Ondertussen was haar werk op diverse tentoonstellingen te zien – wereldwijd – en sprokkelde ze enkele awards bijeen. Toekomstplannen heeft ze genoeg. Hoog op dat lijstje staat, naast Costa Rica, installatiekunst – uitzoeken wat

bewegende beelden met haar werk doen, en samenwerking met andere kunstenaars. Hoe dan ook, 2015 wordt een jaar met meer ruimte voor creativiteit. De afgelopen jaren werd ze vaker dan haar lief was in beslag genomen door dagdagelijkse beslommeringen, eigen aan het groeiproces van een kunstenaar. “Ik heb al een strategie bedacht om meer tijd voor mezelf te hebben; ik kan haast niet wachten tot het zover is.” Wij wachten mét haar af, zeer benieuwd. ■



From the Studio of... Ysabel LeMay

By [Saatchi Art](#) · March 14, 2013 · [Inside the Studio](#) · Tagged: [Featured](#)

We are thrilled to share this peek into the (traveling) studio of Austin-based Québécoise artist [Ysabel LeMay](#).

Favorite material to work with?

Nature of course! You can't get more diversity than what you find in nature. Each plant I pick has its own life, its own story to tell. Nature has its magic creative effect on me.

What themes do you pursue?

NATURE'S DIVINITY. It is here, there, all around, living, transforming, and it never ceases to enthrall and inspire me. I let her lead throughout the rhythm of the seasons. By means of my camera, I attempt to capture her subtleties and beauty in its purest form as I interpret to you her divinity as I sense it. A leaf may appear commonplace at first glance, but when our eyes linger over it, the mundane becomes something of wonder. There is so much beauty in this world! We need only to take the time to surrender to the spectacle. My art is a tribute to Nature. It is an offering; a moment of contemplation.

Where is your studio?

Three years ago, when I changed my medium from painting to photography, I had one very important objective in mind which was to fit my entire studio in a suitcase. I wanted to work outside and travel. So, my studio is located wherever I choose to create. I always have a small room where I can do my digital composition. I do spend a lot of hours in front of the computer. Presently I am in Austin, Texas. Tomorrow... I don't know yet.

Art school or self-taught?

Self-taught! I haven't learned much at school and being constantly driven by the desire to create, I was forced to spend long hours perfecting my skills. My early years as a painter were excruciating but so rich in acquiring knowledge, wisdom and understanding of the Self. I apply to my photography work everything I learned as a painter. I like to say, "If you can paint, you can do anything else."

How many years as an artist?

I would like to count as well my years as a graphic designer. They were highly creative years that gave me also the necessary business skills to live well as an artist. Total years as an artist: 26.

What do you collect?

I collect photographs of organic matter, plants, flowers, branches, birds, butterflies, liquids, landscapes, everything which is. I am particularly attracted to images of plants that are desiccated by time.

What was the best advice given to you as an artist?

I always keep these pieces of advice on my desktop as a reminder.

How to get over your self sabotage:

- 1- Never compare yourself to other artists.
- 2- Know that your family is biased. Whether for or against, their views are skewed and do not represent an accurate reflection of your work in the world.
- 3- Base your success on how your art has enriched your life and how you feel when you create it.
- 4- Constantly push yourself to expend and learn.
- 5- Remember, it is the job of the artist to create new culture, not simply to regurgitate what exists.
- 6- Never expect your family to understand your art, but do your best to educate them about it, patiently.
- 7- Whenever a client/gallery owner/patron offers their advice, smile and nod. Then create your art authentically.
- 8- Remember what Dalí said: "Have no fear of perfection. You will never reach it."



Prefer to work with music or in silence?

Because i spend so much time alone, I like to fill my working space with sounds. It helps me to create from the heart instead of the mind. During the day, I listen to interviews posted on several alternative information website such as Gaiam TV. I am passionate about metaphysics, science, self-empowerment and alternative medicine. At night, I listen to music. I follow several dj's. I enjoy very much listening to KCRW and discover whatever is new in the music world.

Where can we find you outside the studio?

In the morning you will see me at a local yoga center, sweating my insanity away. It's a discipline I must do daily to keep myself balanced in this over stimulating world. I also like to photograph early morning so a good hike is often on the program. At night, when I am not spending late hours in front of my computer I like sipping on a glass of red wine at a cool neighborhood spot or I am at a theatre enjoying a good play or movie. My Sundays are sacred. NO WORK! I bike around town, chill at a pool with a good book and connect with my loved one over the phone.

Favorite contemporary artist?

Peter Doig, Joan Mitchell, Alexander McQueen, Andy Goldsworthy, Edward Burtynsky.... and more.

If you could only have one piece of art in your life, what would it be?

It would be a painting by Joan Mitchell. Her spirit lives within me and I aspire to express with the same power as she does, the beauty of the duality within human's Nature.

If you couldn't be an artist, what would you do?

I would still be an artist but I would be a singer. I am very envious of the ones who carry this amazing gift. What a powerful tool to reach people's souls!

Favorite editing software (if any)?

I am a big Photoshop lover. This software allows me to bring my ideas to life. It is a smart, intuitive software and, if well used, it offers the possibility to create visual magic.

Camera type?

My entire equipment consist on a Canon EOS 5D, a few good lenses, 2 Canon 580 EXII speedlite flash and a few backdrops for when I shoot inside. When I am lucky have a friend or an assistant to carry everything for me.

Natural or artificial light?

As much as possible, natural light. I love to shoot during overcast days or early morning to catch the crisp early light.



Hundreds of Individual Photographs Assembled Together

Posted by [Alice Yoo](#) on November 11, 2011 at 5:00am

At first glance you might think you're looking at ornate nature paintings. While the images are indeed art, they're actually composed of hundreds of different photographs that were taken individually. Quebec, Canada-born artist Ysabel LeMay not only shoots these photographs, she carefully assembles them together until she gets her desired result. Each work takes her, on average, between 4 to 8 weeks to complete. This process is called "Photo-Fusion."

"Each branch, each flower, each leaf is photographed and positioned one by one," she tells us. "Every insect, every plant, every bird that I capture with my lens has an individuality that I want to enhance and share with the viewer. I believe it is often in the simple details wherein lies divinity."

With a background in graphic design and painting, LeMay decided in 2010 to leave that all behind and turn her attention to photography. All was not lost, however, as she utilizes the skills she's learned in her daily work. "My background as a painter gave me the visual maturity which is the understanding of space, form, movement, and depth," she says. "It gave me comprehension of spatial organization which is essential to what I do. The understanding of color harmony and the discipline of being able to work in my studio everyday and surpasses myself. "

Ultimately, what stories is she trying to tell? "I see my work more as a reflection of my personal connectivity with Nature more than a story. It express the creative connection I have with her. It is here, there, all around, living, transforming, and it never ceases to enthrall and inspire me. I let her lead throughout the rhythm of the seasons. By means of my camera, I attempt to capture her subtleties and beauty in its purest form as I interpret to you her divinity as I sense it. A leaf may appear commonplace at first glance, but when our eyes linger over it, the mundane becomes something of wonder.

"The arrangement of colors, the shapes that define it and the veins that crisscross throughout become the personas. My art, is a tribute to Nature. It is an offering; A moment of contemplation.

"For a transient moment, I hope my art will transport you to an illusory place. An abode where it feels good to sojourn, and revitalize oneself."

Amazing.

[Ysabel LeMay's website](#)

Thanks for the tip, Carmelo Blandino!

Le Jardin de Ysabel LeMay

2013/07/09

Ysabel's work takes us in to the spaces most of do not see or imagine. Peace, beauty and nature, a gift for us all.

Would you please tell us a little about yourself?

To be short and sweet I recently moved to Austin, Texas after spending the last six years in Florida. I am originally from Quebec City, Canada. I had spent the first fifteen years of my adult life working as an art director in advertising. In search for a more creative and fulfilling life, I began eleven years ago my journey into Fine Arts. My husband and painter, Carmelo Blandino, put a paint brush in my hands and I never looked back. Painting was a vigorous eight years of training for what would become my true passion, Photography, ... most specifically, digital composite. For the last three years I had devoted my entire life, my soul, and much more to develop what I call my "True voice".

What brought you to photography?

To be honest, I didn't know but I hated painting. A photographer and very good friend of mine, Ed Chappell had offered to let me borrow his small Canon G9. A month later, I returned his camera and showed him the first two pieces I had created using a camera and Photoshop. His reaction was very revealing. He gracefully gave me his camera and offered me to let me borrow any equipment I needed for my future projects. I INSTANTLY dropped the brushes and went full force in my new direction, photography.

Did your family and childhood affect your decision to become an artist?

I was born an artist. As a child, I was enjoying crafting and dancing. My parents were musicians, so the climate was favorable to my artistic nature. But I felt very different from the rest of my family ... somehow, more sensitive... I had the urge to break free from the tribe at a very young age. I think my independence and originality was the driving force to become an artist.

Which photographers and other artists work do you admire and what about their work inspires you?

The list is long! But let's say that Joan Mitchell was the first artist who made me feel the power of the Divine within her work. Standing in front of her paintings gave me that heart pounding desire to express myself artistically and to become more confident and bold.

Another artist who completely turned me upside down was Jérôme Martin. I saw one of his exhibitions at the Montreal Contemporary Museum of Fine Arts and I was floored by the intelligence and beauty behind his series called *ECRANS*. In that moment, standing in the middle of the room with my mouth open, I understood what my life purpose was. I was no longer searching!

<http://rfotofolio.org/2013/07/09/le-jardin-de-ysabel-lamay-fine-art-photography/>

Since then, many other artists touched my soul and continue to do so. I am very sensitive to beauty and intelligence. Art in all forms has the power to transform me. It gives me that energy force, that drive I need to surpass myself.

In your mind what makes a great photograph?

A great observer.

What challenges do you face as a photographer?

Do not under-estimate the genius power of naïveté behind your first works. A lack of technical skills forces you to be more creative and often, the results produces magical images.

Becoming technically skilled can be a curse. I find myself cut in the details and my work become more cerebral and repetitive. So, the biggest challenge for me is to keep myself in a position of uncertainty. It allows my true originality to shine through.

How do you over come a creative block?

I drink a lot of red wine and avoid looking at other artists' work. I take a short trip, I play, I empty my mind and then the magic happens again.

When I am on a tight deadline where I MUST produce, I remind myself that "crafting", "manipulating my medium", is the way to make myself available to receive Divine intervention. By being present I have much more chance to receive. Hiding in fear is NOT an effective technique to overcome creative blocks.

And how do you go about planning a shoot?

It depends. A lot of my work is very spontaneous. I often produce a piece with the "image bank" that I have been creating for the last three years. But now I am working on projects that are more staged. This is where I put myself out of my comfort zone and transform my studio into a science lab. It's pure chaos. Everything stops around me until I get some results. I run back and forth to Home Depot, meet with eccentric pet shop owners, beg professionals to help me... anything can go! Thinking about it, I could create a very funny documentary on the subject. It's a surreal experience.

Would you tell us about your workspace?

When I left my painting years behind, I promised myself to create a studio I could put in a suitcase. I wanted to make sure I could take off spontaneously and work anywhere I wanted. My studio fits in a suitcase! I have an excellent camera and a few lenses, 2 speed light flashes, and my photography space is the size of a closet. I have a room in my house that became my studio. It is a smart,

compact, and efficient space. I have liberated myself from “stuff”. I live light and it allows me more time to create.

How important is the “creative community” to your art form?

This is a sensitive subject...to be honest, the creative community just started to acknowledge my work. Until about a year ago, I was a lonely sailer navigating the turbulent sea of the art world. It made me strong and independent. I am in a better position to choose and negotiate. I understood the value of believing in myself and I became more comfortable with the business aspect of my art career.

I am slowly developing a relationship with the creative community. It is a marriage I do not want to fail, so I take my time.

How does your art affect the way you see the world?

My life as an artist made me more humble. My ego so often got crushed that it made me understand it's limitation. I see and live life with a much more open heart. Less and less judgment occupy my mind and I do see more beauty in the world. It's all a question of perception, right?

How do you hope your art contributes?

My art is a tribute to nature. I hope to make the viewer feel the sense of freedom that nature proposes for us. I create an abode where it feels good to sojourn and revitalize oneself.

Within that space, the viewer can experience the brief sparkle of awakening to their true nature.

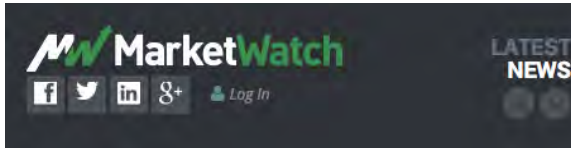
Where can we see your work, and would you like to share any upcoming projects?

From September 5 to Nov 9, 2013, I will be participating in the TEXAS BIENNIAL which will be held at the Blue Star Contemporary Art Museum in San Antonio. Also, I am presently the “online featured artist” with Verve Gallery in Santa Fe. I have representation in Canada, the U.S., and Europe. Next October, I will be presenting my work in Los Angeles at the Westgate Design Fair.

Any stories about your work you would like to share?

My biggest wish is to collaborate with other talented artists. My next step...installation art!

Thank you, Ysabel for sharing your work and your words. To learn more about Ysabel LeMay please visit her site. <http://www.ysabellemay.com>



Bloomingdale's Premieres New Location in Stanford, CA

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#newbloomiesstanford

NEW YORK, Oct 08, 2014 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- Bloomingdale's new Stanford store in Palo Alto, CA, will open on Oct. 10, 2014. This location will anchor the Stanford Shopping Center at the northeast side of the mall as part of a multi-phase renovation of the shopping center.

The three-level, 125,000 square-foot reimagined store will include 68 designer shops, more than 100 new brands, and a refreshed assortment of stylish essentials for women, men, children and home. Suited to the digitally-sophisticated community, the overall shopping experience will be enhanced by technology utilized throughout the store. All details of the new store boast efficiency and customer-friendly technology, while incorporating the contemporary Bloomingdale's style that makes it like no other store in the world.

"We are thrilled to have the opportunity to reimagine our store in the Stanford Shopping Center. This new Bloomingdale's includes a great contemporary assortment, including many new collections, as well as all of our latest thinking with regard to technology and design," said Tony Spring, chairman and CEO of Bloomingdale's. "We look forward to showing our newest store to the Palo Alto community."

"We were able to design a space that embodies Palo Alto's sleek and modern aesthetic utilizing advanced materials, local inspiration, and high-tech elements, all in keeping with the iconic Bloomingdale's appeal," said Jack Hruska, executive vice president of creative services at Bloomingdale's.

An awe-inspiring visual tribute to the local California Redwood Forest created by artist Ysabel Lemay is found in the Fine Jewelry department which will house such designers as David Yurman, Ippolita, Marco Bicego, and more.

Photos/Multimedia Gallery Available:
<http://www.businesswire.com/multimedia/home/20141008005201/en/>

SOURCE: Bloomingdale's

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Recording artists: Two photographers document changing environments

Michael Abatemarco | Posted: Friday, September 19, 2014 5:00 am

Though Irving Greines and Ysabel LeMay, photographers with work currently on view at Verve Gallery of Photography, have quite different approaches to creating their images, both consider their projects to be expressions of the organic. The pieces in LeMay's *Gracia* show are constructed compositions, photomontages of many elements. Greines' Portrait series, his latest installment in an ongoing body of work exhibited under the title *Urban Wilderness — Chaos Transformed*, is a selection of straightforward, unaltered photography. "Where I like to wander is in the blighted areas of cities, and the walls are often filled with layer upon layer of writing — political messages, personal messages," Greines told *Pasatiempo*. "Those areas are usually avoided. People don't pay attention to what's on the walls, really. It was challenging to me to be able to isolate parts of that urban chaos and make a statement that I hope is somewhat beautiful."

Greines began his *Urban Wilderness — Chaos Transformed* series in the early '90s, shooting first in San Francisco and later in New York, Los Angeles, Paris, and Rome. The photographer focused on major cities because of their abundance of structures bearing affiches plastered on with wheat paste. Wheat paste degrades over time to reveal layers upon layers of paper, paint, and plaster from such ads and posters. "In New York, in particular, and certain areas in Los Angeles where most of this show was shot, you can see the evolution of an image. I've recorded changes over time. Sometimes, over the course of three or four days, you can see a transformation from one thing into a completely different thing, and it can also happen overnight. I will sometimes show that in photographs." For Greines, these sites where numerous people interact with printed materials on city walls — either by defacing them or adding embellishments with spray paint and markers — represent a public venue for self-expression, the record of humans interacting with their immediate environments. In addition, the elements take their toll. "These walls are like living organisms, and they change almost in the same way as nature changes," he said. "I'm hiking through the urban wilderness and trying to capture the changes."

Urban renewal also brings changes to the environments Greines shoots in, but the results are often an erasing of the interactions and mark making he documents. What's more, gentrification doesn't always make an urban landscape more attractive. During the decades Greines has spent wandering around inner-city streets and alleys, he has seen his share of such "improvement." "The stuff I photograph is basically condemned by most people. You know: graffiti artists are basically bad guys. The question is whether graffiti adds something interesting and beautiful to the sameness that's being built in everywhere around us. There are things of beauty you can find if you simply stop and take the time to look. I've met a number of the taggers. I'm interested in what they're doing, and they're interested in what I'm doing. I once had a show in Atlanta with all of these former New York taggers, all of whom had been arrested at some point and are now doing their work on canvas. My work captured the kind of stuff they did when they were still street taggers."

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reines' portraits are all photographs of people. His *Madonna*, a triptych, is a trio of shots of the same poster taken in three Los Angeles locales, each one altered by the elements or human intervention. One image of the famous singer and dancer's face is embellished with a spray-painted eye mask. Another is peeling away to reveal text from previously affixed material that's been covered over. "I tried to capture the exact same positioning of the eyes and mouth to show how you'll find that image again and again in different ways. I must have 50 variations of that image, but chose only three for the show."

Ysabel LeMay combines elements in her symphonic visions of nature that come from her own photographs — but, unlike Greines, she does not frame and crop photographs as she shoots them or present her works as she found them. LeMay's technique is painstaking and time consuming. "I take a trip four times a year and focus on getting images," she told *Pasatiempo*. "I go to different environments where I know I will find new things. I just create a lot of images and work over a period of three to four months." After gathering photographs, LeMay works digitally, removing backgrounds from her shots and extracting elements such as flowers, birds, and trees for later use. Her aim is to create — using photographs — compositions that have a painterly feel. "The reason is that, before touching a camera for the first time, I was a painter for almost 10 years. All of my understanding of space and composition was learned through painting techniques. When I moved to digital components, a photo-grapher who documented my life as a painter offered me a small camera. When I came to photography, I created landscapes that had a strong reference to the history of art — the Flemish painters."

LeMay, a former minimalist, cites two painters as influences. "One of the painters is Martin Johnson Heade. He was born in 1819. His influence was Romanticism, but he brought Surrealism into his work. He was part of the Hudson River School, but he took the classic approach of that school — the light and landscape quality — and he was playing with the size of the forms, and it was very Surrealist. It was a strong influence in terms of color palette. Another influence — and, strangely enough, her work has nothing to do with mine — is Joan Mitchell. The reason I was inspired by this person is the energy behind her brushstrokes. She's a woman who managed to rise with the boys during the Abstract Expressionist period. My work, as soft as it can be, is bold as far as verbal language goes. You can recognize my work a mile away, just as with Joan Mitchell's."

LeMay's imagery has a baroque quality: it is intricate and has ornate details. The compositions are cohesive and their components are carefully selected to exist with one another in a way that appears natural. "Extractions are the work of a month. This takes the most time. Flowers are easy to extract, but when I get to trees or foliage, it can be very complex." Much of her work is full of light that penetrates through pale flowers or saturates sections of a piece, washing out the imagery around it. In *Cosmic Nursery*, white paint drips appear to be pouring from a light-filled sky. "When I created that one, I had promised myself to have a breakthrough in my imagery. I wanted to be bolder. I struggled terribly with that piece. In a very serene landscape, I put in elements that put you on your toes. I'm playing with polarity — from very soft to something that puts you out of your comfort zone. It's an expression of what it is to try to break new ground, the chaos behind creating new work." ◀

Irving Greines: *Portraits* (part of the ongoing *Urban Wilderness — Chaos Transformed* series) & Ysabel LeMay: *Gracia*

Opening reception 5 p.m. Friday, Sept. 19; exhibit through Oct. 25

Gallery talk 2 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 20

Verve Gallery of Photography, 219 E. Marcy St., 505-982-5009, www.vervegallery.com

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DIVINITY OF NATURE

by YSABEL LEMAY

FROM CANADA, U.S.



Well-rounded artist Ysabel LeMay, whose central focus of late has been photography, explores the power and divinity of nature through her unique eye and a distinct process she calls "photo-fusion". Her elaborate photographic art resembles hyper-realistic painting at first glance. Yet the innovative technique of the Quebec born, now Texas based artist involves taking hundreds of photographs where light and visual properties are in tune. She then assembles one detail at a time in a painterly fashion to form a single composition.

LeMay ends up with startling sizeable prints, which demonstrate an altogether new way of looking at the simplicity of nature and finding the beauty and wonderment within. "For a transient moment, allow me to transport you to an illusory place," says LeMay. That she does, as we look on in amazement at her intricate tapestry of light and color.

LeMay turns something as commonplace as a leaf and a hopping bird into an awe-inspiring scene – at once heartwarming and intimidating – as a commentary on nature the divine.

www.ysabellemay.com



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