

Genevieve Gaignard: I wouldn't say this is my medium of choice per se. It's more that I'm an artist that works in various mediums (photography, installation, sculpture and collage) in order to address the topics of gender, class and racial injustice in America. For me, it's very instinctual to work with magazine images. I grew up collaging my bedroom walls as a teenager. I feel like, in a way, I'm taking from that memory and applying it to my practice.

Ashley: What is your approach to selecting and compiling different images for your collages?

Genevieve: I source magazines from all over, ranging from the 1940's to the 1980's. I'm interested in taking these found images from the past to talk about issues of today. Most white Americans think that we've come so far from our racist past. I'm making these works as a way to shine a light on the fact that things haven't changed as much as you'd like to think.

I also cut out all of the images myself, so a lot of time goes into that. I spend hours cutting out images, it's a very calming exercise for me. As I'm cutting things out, I'm thinking of all the different ways I can flip how the image was seen in its original context. I start to envision how the different images will come together in their new context.

Ashley: You often refer to the "invisibility" of growing up mixed-race in America. Would you explain that to us?

Genevieve: Sure. My particular experience growing up in a predominately white town and looking white to most people felt like I wasn't really seen at all.

Ashley: You draw upon the aesthetic values of both black culture and white culture throughout your exhibition. Was it challenging to fuse the two binaries into one body of work?

Genevieve: Combining the aesthetic values of both black culture and white culture is what I do throughout my entire art practice, and not specifically to this show. I am unapologetically me and that's empowering, not challenging. The real challenge is for the viewer. You are being asked to evaluate yourself when confronting these works. If you approach these works as if you are looking in a mirror, in what parts do you see yourself? Regardless of the fact that these works are birthed from my personal story, they are a reflection of all of us, asking, "do you like what you see?"

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Mercy Mercy Me, 2019. Vintage wallpaper, vintage magazine cutouts, doilies, wood shelves, porcelain figurines, twine, clothespins, clear acrylic, on panel. 40 x 30 x 6 in. (101.6 x 76.2 x 15.2 cm). Photo by RCH Photography. Courtesy the artist and Monique Meloche Gallery, Chicago.



Black White and Red All Over, Installation View *Black White and Red All Over*, 2019. Photo by RCH Photography. Courtesy the artist and Monique Meloche Gallery, Chicago.

Ashley: How would you say the representation of women of color in American art and culture has evolved over the years?

Genevieve: Women of color in American art have become more visible, but if you compare that to the amount of time they have been silenced or erased from the American art story, then you can acknowledge that we've only made a fraction of an impact towards inclusivity.