



## GENEVIEVE GAINARD: COUNTERFEIT CURRENCY

**Exhibition Dates: June 5-August 17, 2018**

**Opening Reception: Tuesday, June 5, 6-8pm**

**The FLAG Art Foundation, 545 West 25th Street, NY**

The FLAG Art Foundation is pleased to present *Genevieve Gaignard: Counterfeit Currency*, the artist's first NY solo exhibition, from **June 5-August 17, 2018**, on its 10<sup>th</sup> floor. The exhibition of new self-portraits and collages, all created in Florida, continues Gaignard's interest in the performance of race, gender presentation, beauty standards, and class, through fictional personas and staged environments. The title, *Counterfeit Currency*, addresses the inherent complexities of self-presentation, noting that the way one appears to others is often incongruent with the way in which they see themselves, yielding a feeling of displacement and fraudulence.

Through a variety of female archetypes, Gaignard explores her own existence as a mixed-race woman of color, revealing the malleability of identity as something both self-constructed and culturally affected. In addition to photographic works, the artist will also present a new series of collages that combine vintage wallpaper and magazine cutouts to render dreamlike and satirical narratives.

In her full-floor installation at FLAG, Gaignard creates multiple "mise-en-abîme" environments in which objects depicted in her cinematic photographs and collages are present in the gallery's space. Incorporating personal and politically-loaded objects, one vignette is furnished with vintage wall paper, rattan furniture, and a spring of porcelain black panther figurines, while another holds appearance-altering beauty products, such as skin-bleaching creams, face masks, and makeup. Seen together, the objects contained within the artist's physiological spaces are designed to challenge assumptions and widen our understanding of each character. Like Federico Fellini's film within a film *8 ½* (1963), Gaignard's self-reflexive stage-like installations create an undercurrent of displacement and awareness that everything on view is a construction.

Serving as a central piece within the exhibition, *Seeing is Believing*, 2018, features a black mirror installed amidst a wallpapered sea of white, female Victorian faces. While the women gaze in judgement, the viewer is confronted with his or her own image, darkened by the mirror. Regardless of race, this piece underscores the distress of being seen as 'other' and brings to the forefront the complexities of race and racism.

Gaignard's practice developed alongside the rise of "selfie culture," which promotes shared social performance and constructed alternate realities. The context of such a self-conscious moment differentiates Gaignard's work from other artists, such as Cindy Sherman, Nikki S. Lee, and Renée Cox, who also use the medium of photography and self-portraiture as a means of examining female identity. Gaignard cites drag culture, specifically the performer Divine, and film director John Waters as inspiration for the employment of kitsch as a methodology to disarm and engage viewers.

### About:

**Genevieve Gaignard** (b. 1981, Orange, MA) is an artist living and working in Los Angeles, CA. Gaignard received her BFA in Photography from Massachusetts College of Art and Design, Boston, MA, in 2007, and her MFA in Photography from Yale University, New Haven, CT, in 2014. She has been the subject of solo exhibitions including *Hidden Fences*, Praz Delavallade, Paris, France (2018); *Prospect 4: The Lotus in Spite of the Swamp*, curated by Trevor Schoonmaker, New Orleans, LA (2017); *In Passing*, Houston Center for Photography, Houston, TX (2017); *The Powder Room*, Shulamit Nazarian, Los Angeles, CA (2017); and *Smell the Roses*, at the California African American Museum (2016); among others. Her work has been included in numerous group exhibitions, including *Face to Face: Los Angeles Collects Portraiture*, curated by Naima J. Keith and Diana Nawi, California African American Museum, Los Angeles, CA (2017); *Fictions*, curated by Connie H. Choi and Hallie Ringle, The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, NY (2017); among others. Gaignard has been the subject of articles and reviews in publications including *Artforum*, *Artsy*, *Cultured Magazine*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *W Magazine*, *Los Angeles Times*, *The New York Times*, *VICE*, among others.

PRESS CONTACT: Maureen Sullivan  
Red Art Projects, 917.846.4477  
maureen@redartprojects.com

**The FLAG Art Foundation**, founded in 2008 by art patron Glenn Fuhrman, is a non-profit exhibition space that encourages the appreciation of contemporary art among a diverse audience. FLAG presents four to six exhibitions a year that includes artworks by international established and emerging artists, borrowed from a variety of sources. FLAG invites a broad range of creative individuals to curate exhibitions and works in-depth with artists to provide curatorial support and a platform to realize their own solo exhibitions.

FLAG's innovative approach to foster dialogue around contemporary art includes producing artist talks, artist-led workshops, and exhibition tours for school and museum groups. Based in the heart of Manhattan's Chelsea art district, FLAG and all its related programs are free and open to the public.

Join the conversation online and follow FLAG's Instagram (@flagartfoundation) and Twitter (@FLAGartNYC), and use the #GenevieveGaignard hashtag when posting.