

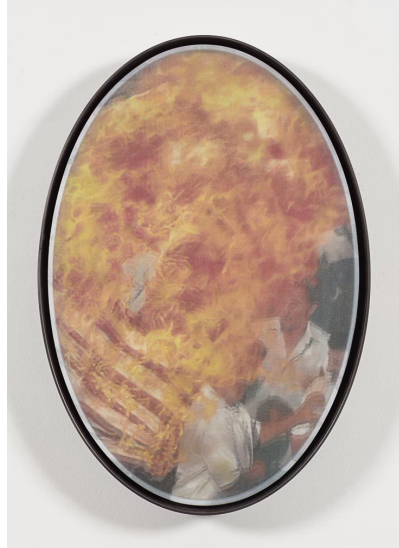
# SPRING/ BREAK ART SHOW

**LISA BLAS, BRADLEY MCCALLUM, DAAPO REO**  
“AMERICANAH”

**SPRING/BREAK Art Show, 1 - 6 MARCH 2017, NEW YORK, 4 Times Square,  
NYC (entrance on 43rd Street), ROOM 2250**



**Lisa Blas** from “The Instability of Nature Morte Series v.51” 2015-present, Digital C-print mounted on aluminium 20 x 14 in.



**Bradley McCallum** from “Untitled no.1 (Fire, from the Protest series)” 2016 Oil on linen, toner on silk, 29.5 x 20.75 in.



**Daapo Reo** “AFRIKAN HISTORY X” 2016, mixed media, 60 x 42 in.

Natasha Becker presents three New York City artists, LISA BLAS, BRADLEY McCALLUM and DAAPO REO, at this year’s SPRING/BREAK Art Show.

The title of the exhibition is inspired by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s 2013 novel about identity and belonging in a global landscape.

Contained within Adichie’s neologism, Americanah, is the word Americana which describes the many different kinds of artifacts that make up the history, geography, folklore and cultural heritage of the United States. The American flag is an iconic symbol within this collection of artefacts, representing a national identity that is based on the principles of liberty, justice, and humanity. It is an inspiring image but one that can also highlight moments where the nation falls short.

By adding an ‘h’ at the end of the existing word, Adichie extends its meaning to describe, defend, and criticize a complex process of becoming in which identity is not predicated on the seeds of nationality or the ground of place but rather on experience (relations of identity,

nationality, race, difference, loneliness, aspiration, love) and trajectory (the path one follows through place and time).

The exhibition explores the delicate balance between expressions of American idealism and the freedom of artists to comment on times where nations falls short of their ideals.

Lisa Blas investigates how a single representation is mediated in its time of origin and redeployed in changing economies of signs and significations. Her poetic flag portraits representing Emily Perez (the highest decorated African-American and Hispanic woman to have died in the recent Iraq War) are potent symbols of vulnerability and in her newest series of vibrant collages, entitled “The Instability of Nature Morte (reconsidering monument[ality] under the throwaway evidence of work”, she explores personal and activist responses to contemporary political culture.

Bradley McCallum transforms news media images of burnings of the American flag into shimmering abstractions of flames, figures and fragments. Flag burning is a practice long associated with protest against the policies of a government or nation. His series of protest paintings (2015/2016) link the power and beauty of national icons with intense longing and demands for fairness and justice.

Daapo Reo reinvents the popular red, white and blue as a symbol of African aspirations, “ALCOHOLOTOPIA (A GEOPOLITICAL DREAM UNDER THE INFLUENCE,” and belonging, “AFRIKAN HISTORY X: GAY IS THE OLD BLACK, BITCHES!”. Reo’s flags are made from different African textiles representing layers of personal history, cultural memory, and conflicting experiences to comment on utopian aspirations and past and current realities, poking fun at privileged elites and anonymous masses along the way.

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