

Simmons, William J., "Lauren Halsey calls into question the balance of power," *CulturedMag.com*, November 29, 2018

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30 under 35 2019

30 young artists to watch in 2019

Functioning at times as incubator, dinner table, escape route, desk, bedroom, lab, the studio is a sacred space, one that we chose to focus on for our third annual young artists list. Our imperative led us to seek out individuals upending traditional resource and revenue streams in order to create room for new ideas to grow. We were surprised to discover that not only are young artists charting new paths and repairing old ones, but helping each other do the same. The studio is no longer a haven for the individual but a hinge that serves to open the doors to others. Here, a look into the studios of 30 young artists leading by example

Lauren Halsey calls into question the balance of power



LAUREN HALSEY IN HER LOS ANGELES STUDIO, 2018.

We often speak of space—who owns it, who takes up too much of it, how to celebrate it, and how to divest it of subjugation and imbalances of power.

Lauren Halsey has always intervened in these questions in her examination of architecture, history, and Black culture in Los Angeles.

She says: "I've always questioned who's designing the architecture I live in, as well as the architectures that define a neighborhood. I can't separate architecture from other oppressive forces that have the ability to reinforce stereotypes, deplete the morale of a place and instigate violence."

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HALSEY'S INSTALLATION AT MADE IN L.A. 2018 AT THE HAMMER.

Halsey interrupts those forces by creating monuments to Black creativity that are always in flux and announce their connection to the community from which their energy is drawn—or in Halsey's words, remixed. Central to Halsey's spatial interventions is a capacious investment in social documentary:

"I'm interested in accumulating living archives of downtown South Central LA that include, but aren't limited to, local heroes, signage, logos, mix CDs, celebrations, menus, incense and oils, party flyers, gang tags, figurines, superhero groups, tattoos, hairstyles, bus routes, city blocks and local businesses." Halsey's work is therefore an always-mobile assemblage of banal and extraordinary elements of community life that coalesce into an undeniable presence. It is no wonder that Halsey named an important project at MOCA's Grand Avenue location "we still here, there." Her work implies duration and fragility simultaneously, which creates a space for the endless combination and recombination of cultural narratives.



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