

The Creators Project, *Female Photographers Tackle Gender Roles and Relationships*, Text/ Gabrielle Bruney, January 31 2016

The Creators Project

print

United States ▼



Female Photographers Tackle Gender Roles and Relationships

Gabrielle Bruney (/author/gabriellebruney) — Jan 31 2016



Pixy Yijun Liao, Some words are just between you and me, 2010. C-print, 16 x 20 in, edition of 5. Courtesy of Flowers Gallery

Female artists can be depressingly underrepresented in the art world, but [Flowers Gallery](http://www.flowersgallery.com/) (<http://www.flowersgallery.com/>) is doing its part to fight back. "Over the last few years, we at Flowers have noticed that our current roster of photographers is a bit male dominated and we have wanted to do more to promote female photographers," writes Brent Beamon, Director of Flowers Gallery, New York. "We... thought that this show would be an excellent opportunity to highlight four photographers who share a similar point of view." The point of view that unites the work of [Pixy Yijun Liao](http://www.yijunliao.com/) (<http://www.yijunliao.com/>), [Natasha Caruana](http://www.natashacaruana.com/) (<http://www.natashacaruana.com/>), [Melanie Willhide](http://melaniewillhide.com/) (<http://melaniewillhide.com/>), and [Juno Calypso](http://junocalypso.com/) (<http://junocalypso.com/>), the photographers whose work is being shown in [The Real Thing](http://www.flowersgallery.com/exhibitions/view/the-real-thing) (<http://www.flowersgallery.com/exhibitions/view/the-real-thing>), is one highly aware and critical of gender roles and deeply analytical concerning interpersonal relationships, particularly romantic ones.



Juno Calypso, *Massage Mask*, 2015. Archival pigment print, 26 x 40 in, edition of 5. Photo courtesy of Flowers Gallery

For example, the photos in Pixy Liao's *Experimental Relationship* series focus on her relationship with her boyfriend and muse. "A male friend had asked me about why I had chosen a boyfriend who was, in his eyes, more like a girlfriend: younger, prettier and obedient," she writes, and in her photos her boyfriend is submissive, vulnerable, and frequently nude, as male artists have so often depicted their muses.

Melanie Willhide's featured project, *Sleeping Beauties (The Box Under the Bed)*, also tackles the relationship between lovers. Her works are forged antiques, intimate photos she's made authentically vintage-looking and well-loved, complete with scrawled messages and watermarks.



Juno Calypso, *Seaweed Wrap*, 2015. Archival pigment print, 40 x 60 in, edition of 5. Courtesy of Flowers Gallery

"For me photography is a type of artificial intimacy," Willhide tells the Creators Project. "A

<http://thecreatorsproject.vice.com/blog/female-photographers-gender-sexuality>

Page 2 of 9

LEO XU PROJECTS

Female Photographers Tackle Gender Roles and Relationships | The Creators Project

22/09/2016 12:57

photograph of a person or an event can be surrogate for the real thing, capable of eliciting emotion similar to what the real person or thing would elicit. It is this willingness to emotionally succumb to the illusion of a photograph that informed the way I created the images for these series. I was making photographs that look like the images made between lovers and friends—those that are intended for the eyes of a single individual. This work is all about artifice...thousand-layer phyllo dough of artifice: artificial pictures, artificial subjects, artificial situations, and artificial text. All of this points to the illusion."

Natasha Caruana's series documents her furtive dates with married men she met via an Ashley-Madison style website, while Juno Calypso's self-portraits depict beauty rituals that are almost science fiction worthy in their complexity and illustrate the painstaking lengths women go to in order to be beautiful.



<http://thecreatorsproject.vice.com/blog/female-photographers-gender-sexuality>

Page 3 of 9

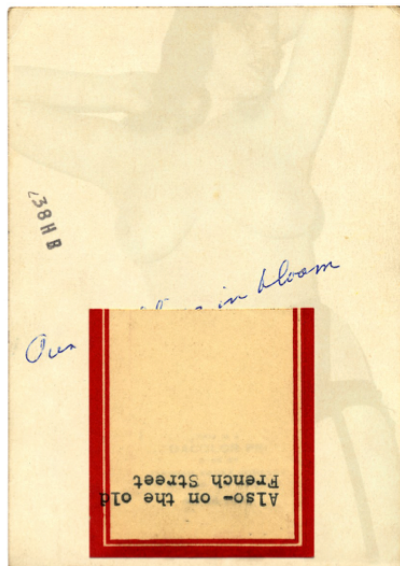
LEO XU PROJECTS

Female Photographers Tackle Gender Roles and Relationships | The Creators Project

22/09/2016 12:57



Melanie Willhide, For Spite, 2007. C-print, 8 x 8 in, edition of 5. Courtesy of Flowers Gallery



<http://thecreatorsproject.vice.com/blog/female-photographers-gender-sexuality>

Page 4 of 9

LEO XU PROJECTS

Female Photographers Tackle Gender Roles and Relationships | The Creators Project

22/09/2016 12:57

Melanie Willhide, Shallow Breath Thinking of You, 2007. C-print, 8 x 8 in, edition of 5. Courtesy of Flowers Gallery



Natasha Caruana, The Barn, 2008-09. C-type photograph 16 x 20 in, edition of 5. Courtesy of Flowers Gallery



<http://thecreatorsproject.vice.com/blog/female-photographers-gender-sexuality>

Page 5 of 9

LEO XU PROJECTS

Female Photographers Tackle Gender Roles and Relationships | The Creators Project

22/09/2016 12:57



Natasha Caruana, Tiger Tiger, 2008-09. C-type photograph 16 x 20 in, edition of 5. Courtesy of Flowers Gallery



<http://thecreatorsproject.vice.com/blog/female-photographers-gender-sexuality>

Page 6 of 9



Pixy Yijun Liao, *Get a firm grasp of your man*, 2010. C-print, 20 x 16 in, edition of 5. Courtesy of Flowers Gallery

The Real Thing is presented at Flowers Gallery New York until February 27th. To learn more, [click here \(http://www.flowersgallery.com/exhibitions/view/the-real-thing\)](http://www.flowersgallery.com/exhibitions/view/the-real-thing).

Related:

[The Manipulated Female Body Explored by Taiwanese Photographer](http://thecreatorsproject.vice.com/blog/the-manipulated-female-body-explored-by-taiwanese-photographer-3cm)

<http://thecreatorsproject.vice.com/blog/the-manipulated-female-body-explored-by-taiwanese-photographer-3cm>

[Maya Fuhr's Portraiture is a Rite of Passage for NYC's New Creatives](http://thecreatorsproject.vice.com/en_uk/blog/maya-fuhrs-portraiture-is-a-rite-of-passage-for-nycs-new-creatives)

http://thecreatorsproject.vice.com/en_uk/blog/maya-fuhrs-portraiture-is-a-rite-of-passage-for-nycs-new-creatives

[VICE: Meet the Middle East's First All-Female Photo Collective](http://thecreatorsproject.vice.com/blog/meet-the-middle-east-s-first-all-female-photo-collective)

<http://thecreatorsproject.vice.com/blog/meet-the-middle-east-s-first-all-female-photo-collective>

Gabrielle Bruney (/author/gabriellebruney)

Tags: Pixy Yijun Liao (/tag/Pixy+Yijun+Liao), Natasha Caruana (/tag/Natasha+Caruana), Melanie Willhide (/tag/Melanie+Willhide), Juno Calypso (/tag/Juno+Calypso), photographer (/tag/photographer), feminist art (/tag/feminist+art)



COMMENTS

0 Comments

Sort by Oldest



Add a comment...

Facebook Comments Plugin