

Mizota, Sharon. "The details tend to accumulate." *Los Angeles Times* (Calendar), 10 October 2008, p. E19.

The details tend to accumulate

Known for working photographs of everyday objects into her dense, moody paintings, **Brenna Youngblood** moves in a lighter, more expansive direction with a gorgeous exhibition at Margo Leavin. Whereas previous works had a visceral, sometimes ponderous weight, the new images — though more layered and visually complex — seem to breathe easier, revealing an artist completely at home in her medium.

In addition to paint, that medium includes photographs, paper money (both real and fake), graph paper, wallpaper and photocopies that Youngblood uses to create an all-over patchwork pattern that is stained, painted over and covered with drips and splatters. Both mundane and politically charged, the images — decorative flowers, portraits of Abraham Lincoln, geometric patterns, bits of the American flag — emerge through layers of residue that betray the painter's hand but also suggest accumulation and a mournful deterioration.

The effect is not unlike the collaged elements of Robert Rauschenberg's "Combines" — an influence Youngblood seems to acknowledge in "STATION," a two-sided painting with a busted-up frame, perched on a wooden stool. Similarly, "A Special Way to Fold the Flag," with its sideways clock and truncated U.S. flag dollar sign, rests on the floor, pushed out from the wall on a metal support, as if standing at attention.

Margo Leavin Gallery, 812 N. Robertson Blvd., L.A., (310) 273-0603, through Saturday. www.artnet.com/gallery/174240/margo-leavin-gallery.html.