Tilton Gallery Presents

*BRENNA YOUNGBLOOD: A PHRASE THAT FITS*

March 3 – April 19, 2014

Reception: Monday, March 3rd, 6 – 8 pm

![Waiting, 2014](image)

Tilton gallery is delighted to present *A Phrase that Fits*, an exhibition of new paintings by Brenna Youngblood from March 3 to April 19, 2014. A reception for the artist will be held Monday, March 3rd, 6 – 8 pm.

In Youngblood's newest body of work, this Los Angeles-based artist continues her exploration of the delicate juncture between abstraction, illusion and the concrete object. Seen as a totality, this is her most lyrical, abstract and painterly exhibition to date. However each individual work remains grounded in some tie to reality, whether it be through a single collaged object, the inclusion of an illusionistic flat image, a shape painted so thickly that it takes on an object-like presence on top of the painted canvas surface, or the framing and mounting of a canvas that brings a work that is clearly a painting into the realm of sculpture or object-hood.

Youngblood’s early work centered on the use of photography. She made photographs that were simultaneously surreal and conceptual, and then used photos as images incorporated into sculptural, rough, almost awkward, painted works that were perhaps the 21st century descendants of earlier Los Angeles assemblage by artists as disparate as Noah Purifoy, John Outterbridge and Edward Kienholz. Over recent years, these have evolved into ever more beautiful paintings, more reliant on painterliness, though still almost always incorporating photographic images and the materiality of collaged objects. Simultaneously, the works have become less grounded in realism and the specificity of the image and more about the
abstract work as a whole, where the image is used as much for its material, shape and color as for its referential role.

This evolution in the role collage plays in Youngblood’s work parallels that of an artist such as Mark Bradford. Both began making urban collages of materials intimately associated with their personal histories and moved ever further towards a wider discussion about painting and object making.

Youngblood’s newest works remain layered and visually complex in meaning as well as in the process of their construction. She includes layers of paper, photos (one under resin), wall paper, contact paper (like that used to line kitchen drawers), and faux wood as well as distinct objects: found plastic shapes, wood, the lid of a tin can, paper doilies and a tree-shaped air freshener. Repeatedly, Youngblood takes something representational and abstracts it, while, always interested in a multiplicity of meanings, allowing it to retain emotional vestiges of its former life.

Youngblood’s work comments on the history of the still life in painting, veering from the reproduction of a fruit still life in one work to — literally — the kitchen sink in another. The mechanically reproduced image co-exists with the handmade and, these days, is absorbed into the gestural painter and poetry of the whole. The artist consistently finds the sweet spot between the rough and the soft, the opaque and the light infused, the flat and the scumbled, constructivist structure and lyrical painterliness, representation and abstraction.

Brenna Youngblood was born in 1979 and received her BFA from California State University, Long Beach in 2002 where she studied with Todd Gray and her MFA from the University of California, Los Angeles in 2006 where she studied with John Baldessari, Catherine Opie and James Welling. She has exhibited widely and her work has been included in museum exhibitions such as Made in L.A., the Los Angeles Biennial organized by the Hammer Museum and LA><Art and Fore at the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, both in 2012; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 2013; and the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston and Contemporary Art Museum, St. Louis in 2014. Solo exhibitions include those at Honor Fraser, Los Angeles, Galerie Nathalia Obadia, Brussels, Susanne Vielmetter Berlin Projects and Margo Leavin, Los Angeles.