



Joan Snyder: Rosebuds & Rivers review

Art @ **Blainsouthern** , Mayfair Until Saturday May 11 2019 ★★★★★



Joan Snyder 'Proserpina' (2013) Image courtesy of the artist and BlainSouthern. Photo: Fionn Reilly

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TIME OUT SAYS ★★★★★

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‘Feminists Don’t Wear Pink and Other Lies’ is a recently published collection of essays edited by Scarlett Curtis. The title acknowledges the depressing truth that when we talk about women or femininity we often start by responding to the stereotypes stuck like discarded cat hairs to the word ‘female’. And, following this logic, works of art involving the colour made from mixing red with white or other ‘girly’ things (teddy bears, lipsticks, glitter paint) are often explained as ‘subversive reclaimings’ or ‘ironic appropriations’, that sort of thing.

Joan Snyder’s heavily textured, wall-based artworks, exhibited at Blain Southern in the artist’s first ever solo UK show, are dripping with ‘feminine’ juices: thick clots of fuchsia, rows of roses, a random velvet bra strap and, yes, glitter. Lots of glitter.

But despite being made from sugar and spice and all things nice (sometimes literally – one painting here has Chinese herbs stuck to it), Snyder’s works never feel like they’re responding to an aggressive subtweet about female artists or functioning as a visual apology for gender stereotypes. They’re female, but they’re not all that bothered about being so.

If there is something that ‘Rosebuds and Rivers’ is concerned with, it’s nature. Those basic Valentine’s blooms float in a muddy soup of soil clods, burlap shreds and seed heads. Snyder’s paintings aren’t the corsage on a bridesmaid’s dress, they’re the boggy field where frothy cow parsley grows alongside vicious brambles.

And the best thing about the works – which doesn’t come across in reproductions – is how sculptural they are. Poppy seed pods coated in high-gloss paint jut out like lollipops, a gloop of violent red resembles a pomegranate pummelled to death on the canvas, and a bulge of jellied eggs ripples from an opening. Forget trying to decide what they look like and start imagining what they feel like.


By: **Rosemary Waugh**
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DETAILS

Venue name:

Blainsouthern

Contact:

 VISIT WEBSITE

020 7493 4492

Address:

4 Hanover Square

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DATES AND TIMES

April 2019

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FRI APR 12 2019

 **Blainsouthern**

 10:00am

SAT APR 13 2019

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