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Arts Review

By Wayne Alan Brenner

'Francesca Gabbiani: Dream Baby Dream'

Lora Reynolds Gallery, 300 Nueces #50, www.lorareynolds.com

Through July 10

You walk into this exhibition armed with the knowledge that some of the works were inspired by Alejandro Jodorowsky's film *The Holy Mountain*, you're going to be expecting a certain

psychedelic experience. You're going to think, maybe, if you've heard only that about what's on display and not yet seen any relevant images, "Oh hey, here comes the trippy hippie shit, all posterized and looking like Dalí on a bad day."

On a bad day, you'd be right – but turn off that interior black light, lover: Lora Reynolds Gallery has more taste than that. You could realize it from having seen previous shows in the venue or from noting how, in the description for this current "Dream Baby Dream" collection of work by Los Angeles-based Francesca Gabbiani, the description's author doesn't say that Gabbiani depicts rooms empty of people but that she's actively "robbing her interiors of physical beings." Yes, the air at the base of this holy mountain, whether tainted by a whiff of some purple-haired cannabis sativa variant or not, whether breathed through a sheet of Leary-grade LSD or otherwise, is *muy* rarefied, and its inspirational delights are often as subtle as the serpents of the field.

Serpents of the field are plentiful and rampant in the artist's *Stoned*, for instance: spiraling, almost knotted among leaves of marijuana and other psychoactive flora to form a wreath of seemingly infinite and rhythmic colors surrounding a bright black void. Did we mention that this piece, that these works are not paintings or drawings but *are composed of thousands of densely layered abstract shapes of cut paper*? It's painstaking work that pays off for the viewer, that demands closer inspection and thought: "What have *I* been doing with all those hours an artist must spend to create such beauty?"

To create such beauty is to visit rooms like those depicted in the hymenopteran-studded *Venus' Boudoir*, to navigate the multiple lonely staircases of *House of Falling Leaves* and return to tell the tale with photoreproduction and achingly precise, collage-like stills from *The Navidson Record*. Lora Reynolds offers these rooms architected and wreaths woven paperwise by enchantress-with-an-

X-Acto Gabbiani, whose previous wonderworks you'd do well to research before visiting these – so that you walk into this exhibition armed. – *Wayne Alan Brenner*

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