

CULTURED

BECKY KOLSRUD: 30 UNDER 35

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By Maxwell Williams



Becky Kolsrud. Portrait by Jeff Vespa.

L.A. artist Becky Kolsrud's unsettling portraits, sometimes painted with security gates in the foreground, call to mind eras past, in which women played coy and suits were always tailored. At Art Basel Miami Beach, she'll exhibit works in the Positions section with JTT Gallery, and is currently at work on a solo show at Tif Sigfrieds next spring.

How do you find inspiration? I find inspiration walking and driving around L.A. looking at advertisements, storefront signage, packaging, merchandising, magazines, books, everything. I'm inspired by photo studios, Sears portraiture, school photos, glamour photos—images of people trying to look their best, but have an awkwardness or authenticity to them.

What was your first gallery experience?

When I was in college, my friends and I made our own shows in New York City. We would do a show in a space for a night and put up our own work, and offer beer. That segued into gallery experiences that were non-profit DIY. But my first real show was in New York at Karma in the West Village. I remember Bruce Springsteen walked by.

If you could trade with anyone, who would it be?

Probably Hildegard von Bingen—one of her psychedelic illuminated manuscripts.

How did you fund your first works?

I had my first studio in New York in a building where I worked for a couple of the artists. I traded the landlord gallery-sitting for a free studio that I had to build out myself, and cut out a door with a Sawzall. I collected the trash and extra supplies of the people in the building, and cobbled together enough to make my first paintings out of school.

When you aren't in the studio, where are you?

I'm hanging out with my son, Tito.



Becky Kolsrud's *Gymnasts with Security Gate*, 2016. Courtesy of JTT.