

Women Artists to Watch at Frieze Los Angeles

By Evan Nicole Brown

Akea Brionne debuts a rich collection of familial textiles



Art: Akea Brionne/Courtesy of the artist and Lyles & King, New York.

Artist Akea Brionne will be showing new works in the fair’s “Focus” section (curated by Essence Harden, visual arts curator and program manager of the California African American Museum), dedicated to U.S. galleries that have been operating for under 12 years. It’s the first appearance at the fair for the artist and the gallery. Brionne’s textiles, which transform archival family photographs into tapestries created on a digital jacquard loom, are realistic depictions of the surreality of life and loneliness, often likened to Edward Hopper’s urban interiors, deserted landscapes, and anonymous figures. Brionne’s textile approach to creating distorted realities (sometimes accentuated with rhinestones) is part of a long, rich tradition of women artists using thread to create art. Weaving has long been somewhat pejoratively considered “women’s work,” despite the technical difficulty of it (enter Ada Lovelace, the mathematician who developed early computer coding based on jacquard-loom technology). The use of fabric to create quilts has also historically been employed by Black women as a form of storytelling and heirloom creation. Brionne is an exciting up-and-coming artist whose work engages the texture of womanhood and takes an ecological look at family histories.

Akea Brionne is represented by Lyles & King gallery