

# Perfect Likeness: Photography and Composition at the Hammer

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Text by Randy Rice



Christopher Williams, *Untitled (Study in Yellow and Green/East Berlin)*, Studio Thomas Borho, Düsseldorf, July 7th, 2012 (2012). Inkjet print on cotton rag paper, 14 3/8 × 18 inches. Image courtesy of the artist and David Zwirner, New York/London.

In contemporary photography, there is apparently nothing new under the sun. *Perfect Likeness: Photography and Composition*, organized by Russell Ferguson, is yet another photo show that features basically the same group of artists—all of whom have been shown steadily since the 1990s as the status quo representatives of contemporary photography. No other medium has shown such stagnancy with regards to the introduction of new voices. What's more, it is incongruous to photography's development, considering it has changed more than any other medium since the advent of the digital. In this exhibition, even some of the younger artists are familiar, such as the overexposed Elad Lassry. The only new names included in *Perfect Likeness* are Lucas Blalock and Peter Holzauer, both of whom make excellent, yet limited contributions.

There is little to say about the show other than to point out its redundancies. While all of the work in *Perfect Likeness* is of high quality, much of it has been shown repeatedly. The concept that pulls the show together—photographers creating “carefully composed images”—is obvious and vague, as if the premise is not already fundamental to the medium.

Across the hall from *Perfect Likeness*, the Hammer has mounted the first-ever Los Angeles museum exhibition of one of the most important local artists in recent years: 53-year-old Mark Bradford. We need more wall space devoted to overdue artists like Bradford and less for the dated pictures of Demand, Gursky, Ruff, Wall, Williams et al.

*Perfect Likeness: Photography and Composition* runs June 20—September 13, 2015 at the [Hammer Museum](#) (250 South Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90012)



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Barbara Probst, *Exposure #70: Munich studio, 05.10.09, 3:03 p.m* (2009). Ultrachrome ink on cotton paper. Two parts, 24 x 24 in. (60 x 60 cm) each. Edition of 5. Courtesy of the artist and Murray Guy, New York.



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Thomas Ruff, *Portrait (P. Stadtbäumer)* (1988). Chromogenic print. 70 7/8 × 63 in. (180 × 160 cm). Image courtesy of David Zwirner, New York/London.