



## Brooklyn Center for Media Education

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### With artist Lorna Simpson, history repeats

By Alex Rush

*The Brooklyn Paper*

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In the Brooklyn Museum's latest show, history repeats itself — literally.

In “Lorna Simpson: Gathered,” the Fort Greene artist juxtaposes her huge collection of vintage photographs with original works that are often close replicas of their predecessors.

“Even though photographs are historical documents, they’re also weighted with all these questions about the unknown,” said Catherine Morris, the exhibit’s curator. “Lorna Simpson’s arrangement gives the historical photos new stories.”

Simpson’s perhaps best known for her large-scale portraits of African-Americans in various poses, which incorporate text to comment on race and sex. The subjects in her new show, which opens Jan. 28, are also African-American, but many pieces are actually archives dating back to the Jim Crow South that she picked up at various flea markets and on eBay.

A standout among that set is the series “May June July 57/09,” in which Simpson paired a photo of a glamorous pin-up girl taken in 1957 with recent self-portraits that replicate the model’s pose and clothes, as well as its black-and-white, grainy, spontaneous quality, in order to create a narrative about two characters whose lives happen to be decades apart.

“She’s trying to identify with this woman and create a dialogue with history,” said Morris.



*Seeing double: In “Lorna Simpson: Gathered,” opening Jan. 28 at the Brooklyn Museum, the artist pairs this vintage photograph with a self-portrait she took in almost the exact same fashion.*



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“Lorna Simpson: Gathered,” at the Brooklyn Museum [200 Eastern Pkwy. at Washington Avenue in Prospect Heights, (718) 638-5000], Jan. 28-Aug. 21. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays.

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