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West Coast Style
 by John Everett Daquino

The Happy Ever After: The Believers and Boulevard Series

Katy Grannan
Salon 94 Freemans
1 Freeman Alley, New York, NY 10002
 April 1, 2011 - May 14, 2011



Salon 94 Freemans is the perfect setting in which to view Katy Grannan's latest series of photographs, *Boulevard*. Located down a dark and narrow graffiti-filled dead end in the lower east side, the gallery, much like the people photographed by Grannan, exists on the fringes – an environment that makes the already hyper-realistic portraits of eccentric city dwellers all the more three dimensional.



In her new body of work, Grannan breaks from her usual modus operandi by taking to the streets photographing anonymous passersby in the Tenderloin District of San Francisco and along Hollywood Boulevard in Los Angeles. She adheres to a strict methodical approach by photographing each denizen in the relentless noonday sun against a white stucco wall. No other details are in the frame, which makes the portraits feel less like the product of street photography and more like a formal studio production. This lack of background detail allows a viewer to focus exclusively on each subject, to forensically examine the nuances of facial expression and body language and to voyeuristically gaze at their bodily eccentricities. Ironically, though the blinding sun illuminates every minute detail of their bodies, it is often difficult to discern what is typically one's most obvious attribute, gender.

Personal highlights of the series include a Marilyn Monroe impersonator much older than the eternally youthful Norma Jeane whose eyes reveal a similar vulnerability and sadness; a man, probably drunk, who has a wild beard as

long and unkempt as his body hair; and a feminine male holding, for no apparent reason, two fluffy cute bunnies. In addition, there is a 1970s outlaw country-singer type who resembles Waylon Jennings, and though quite normal in appearance, exudes something through his physiognomy that states otherwise.

~John Everett Daquino

Images: *Anonymous, Los Angeles, 2008*; *Anonymous, Los Angeles, 2008*. Courtesy Salon 94 Freemans.

Posted by [John Everett Daquino](#) on 5/08 | tags: [photography](#)

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