

## Slater Bradley

HERBERT F. JOHNSON MUSEUM OF ART  
Cornell University, 114 Central Avenue  
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In his well-known filmic series “Doppelganger Trilogy,” 2001–2004, Slater Bradley exhumed fallen heroes of pop culture. Bradley’s latest exhibition in the United States debuts his newest videos, *Sequoia* and *She Was My la Jetée*, both works 2013, which continue to explore haunting cultural presences by conjuring up idealized female figures. Shown on three screens, these women blur the boundaries between memory, fiction, and obsession, drawing the viewer in while they remain distant and unattainable.

In *Sequoia*, we see *Vertigo*’s Kim Novak showing Jimmy Stewart a giant sequoia tree, indicating this is where she was born and where she will die. In *She Was My la Jetée*, Alina, Bradley’s muse, is seen up close in black and white; at one moment, she recalls a woman who “was my vertigo.” These two loops are

projected on two separate screens in the space, yet their subjects seem to cross and coalesce into an impossible single female character before the viewer. Outside the screening area, Alina is depicted in photo-drawings that are surrounded in gold and black markings that resemble tree rings—unavoidable traces of linear time.

The theme of boundaries and their permeability is met with an additional overarching narrative introduced in another video in the show, *My Conclusion/My Necessity*, 2005–2006. This work depicts the reenactment of a mourning ritual and a cultural rite of passage: A mother paints the lips of her teenage daughter so that the young girl can kiss the tombstone belonging to Oscar Wilde, leaving a mark next to the dozens of other red and pink impressions. This act of replay underscores Bradley’s greater work, which observes cinematic relationships and undermines them.



Slater Bradley, *Sequoia*, 2013, two-channel HD video projection, color, sound, 2 minutes 17 seconds. Installation view.

— Rotem Rozental