

WOMEN AND MIGRATION(S) II



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Cover image: FIRELEI BÁEZ for Marie-Louise Coidavid, exiled, keeper of order, Anacaona, 2018. Oil on canvas. Installation view: 10th Berlin Biennale, Akademie der Künste (Hanseatenweg), Berlin, 9 June 9-September 2018. Photo: Timo Ohler. Cover design by Anna Gatti

9. Notes from an Undisclosed Location

Someplace in the Mojave Desert, California,
United States

Brandy Dyess

I was born in a place in the middle (Wisconsin) and have explored places on both ends (New York, Los Angeles). I now call a place in the Mojave Desert home.

And I have discovered myself in desolation.

In this place, watching the sunset is an event. My ritual is to stop whatever I'm doing and behold the experience. I can spend an entire day watching the clouds glide across the sky. And at night, I'm granted a front row seat for seemingly endless showers of meteors, backlit by the Milky Way.

It was in this place that uniquely creative spirits like Marta Becket, Mary Hunter Austin, Noah Purifoy and Leonard Knight constructed their own alternative worlds. I honor the outsiders. The people who don't fit into the world as it is—and they've no other choice but to build a place for themselves.

Joshua trees (*Yucca brevifolia*) are found only in this very particular geographic location. There's unique soil here. Perhaps unique soil nourishes unique souls.

In this place, there is a delicate balance to things. And vast contrasts.

A heightened sensitivity develops. There's a harshness—intense heat, bitter cold. And a softness—the cactus flower that opens to reveal a fine, delicate fur.

I try to show you the things I feel.

Silence becomes your favorite sound. On a warm, calm, autumn day, I sat outside and listened to the wind carry in the Winter.

I try to show you the things I hear.

Change is always happening. After weeks of brown and gray heaviness, one brilliant morning there is nothing but blooms and butterflies. A bee mistakes the tip of my purple pen for a flower.

I try to show you the things I see.

It is here that I have been the most alone. And the least lonely.

An isolated individualist. A cult of one.

In the solitude and space, there is quiet anarchy. Gentle revolution. Calm resistance. Fierce existence.

Perhaps I'll hear the (police) Siren call of a place in the city once again—the shared spaces and forced intimacies—but for now, I'm selfish about my solitude.

I am home in this place. Let me show you...



Fig. 1 *Rain Dance*, 2019 © Brandy Dyess.



Fig. 2 *Magic Bus*, 2018 © Brandy Dyess.



Fig. 3 *Take Your Seat*, 2019 © Brandy Dyess.



Fig. 4 *The Portal*, 2018 © Brandy Dyess.



Fig. 5 *To The Future*, 2019 © Brandy Dyess.

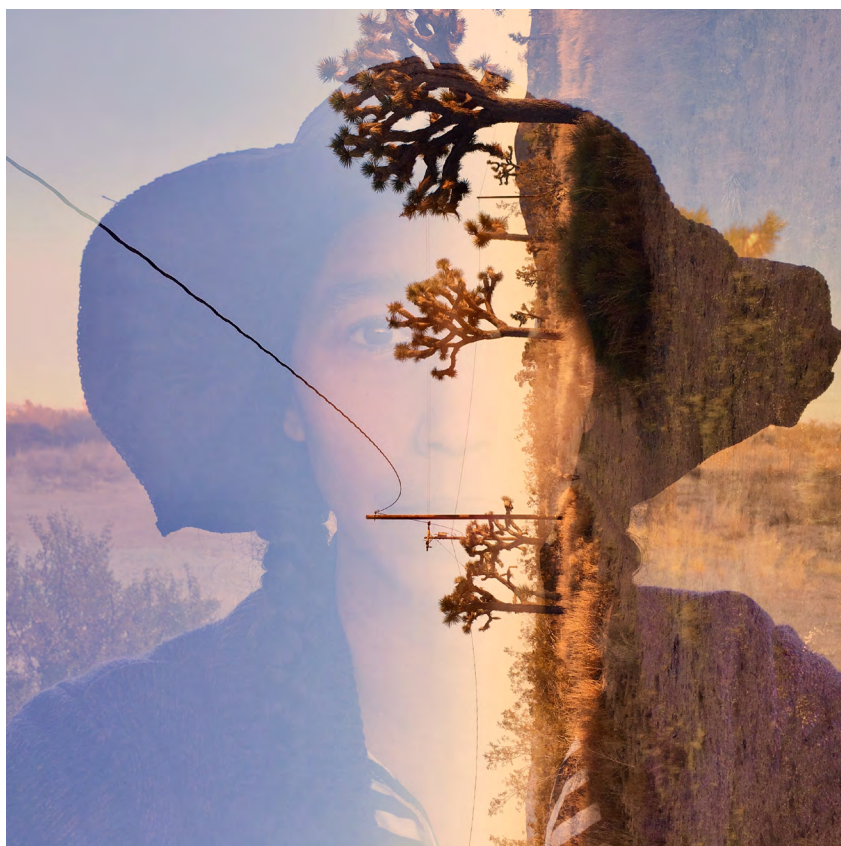


Fig. 6 (E)*Merge*, 2019 © Brandy Dyess.

