

Gopnik, Blake. Artnet news. 15 Jan. 2015. Web.

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Paul Mpagi Sepuya Photographs Absences



THE DAILY PIC: Paul Mpagi Sepuya took this elegant photo in his studio on June 11, 2011, after his subject had left. The image is on view at Foxy Production gallery in New York in the group show called "Spain & 42 St"—named after a fractured William S. Burroughs poem. There's always something witty about recording an absence—and thereby making it a presence—but in this case, there's the image has the added virtue of pointing to the fundamental emptiness behind every photo of a person. We dutifully cultivate the cliché that such photos reveal essences, when the most they can ever be is a record of surfaces, maybe with nothing behind them.