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Subtlety of Color and Decay Displayed

Photo Exhibits of Marie Cosindas and Tanya Marcuse

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Tanya Marcuse: *Fallen*

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“There is beauty in decay,” is the mantra I repeat to myself as I trudge into old age. Tanya Marcuse has visualized that sentiment in her large-format pigment prints of fruits and other bits of flora and fauna rotting on the ground. This is an inevitable and necessary process in nature’s cycle of renewal, and Ms. Marcuse has arranged the elements of her photographs into richly textured compositions. In “Fallen No. 306” (2012) the pale heads of half a dozen or so sunflowers, stripped of their yellow leaves, lie at the base of a tree in a patch of shallow puddles and moss, a tapestry of browns and greens. In “Fallen No. 182” (2011) pomegranates, the ancient symbol of fecundity, lie split open and losing their seeds in a bed of grapes, plums and leaves—the reds, purples and greens reminiscent of Marie Cosindas’s palette, although the scale and subject are quite different.

A close inspection of “Fallen No. 496” (2012) reveals snakes or their shed skins, the translucent wings of dead cicadas, the jaw of a bat, the hind leg of a rabbit, and a profusion of broken and charred chicken eggs intermixed with leaves of various sorts, a mushroom and a few delicate green sprouts. Other pictures include fiddlehead ferns, milkweed pods, walnuts and apples. Because they were shot outdoors on the ground rather than in a studio, Ms. Marcuse’s images are not so much the *natura morte* of classical still lifes as meditations on mutability.