

# ROBERTS & TILTON

Juxtapoz Magazine  
"Ed Templeton 'Synthetic  
Suburbia' @ Roberts &  
Tilton, LA"  
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If you follow Ed Templeton on Instagram (which you should), you have been lucky enough to enjoy his #dailyhbpierphoto and ongoing documentation of the people and culture surrounding the iconic pier in Huntington Beach, California. The legendary skateboarder, photographer, and artist's fascination with the peculiarity of Huntington Beach is the inspiration behind his new exhibit Synthetic Suburbia which will open at Roberts & Tilton Gallery in Los Angeles on April 25th, 2015. We headed over to the gallery this week to catch a preview and watch Ed set-up!

(All photography by Sam Graham)

Synthetic Suburbia extends Templeton's diaristic observations into a compelling visual analysis of the concrete experiences, perceptions, and idiosyncrasies of this hyper-local existence. "I'm obsessed with watching people walking along the sidewalks here, and of course the whole circus of humanity down at the beach. The young girls, the old men in rascal scooters, bike riders and their shadows."

The stylized figurative works are deceptively simplified: uncomplicated displays of contemporary portraits – hybridized composites of people Templeton sees on his daily drives and walks about town – inhabiting their own private worlds. Templeton has constructed suburbia as paradise, with visions of perfectly manicured lawns, pretty girls-next-door, idyllic beach views, and the walls quietly demarcating people off from one another. "As a young boy visiting my grandparents (who lived in Huntington Beach), I would always be able to tell when we were close to their house because suddenly there would be mile after mile of road where it's just the street, a sidewalk, then a wall surrounding a tract of homes. I would exclaim, 'We are in Huntington Beach now!' and they would ask me how I knew and I would respond, 'Because of the walls.'" Ubiquitous to the point of being invisible, these walls and fences have become a recurring theme in his work. "What is hidden behind them, and the false front they represent is interesting to me. Behind all of these nicely painted houses and planned communities are humans and all the thorny issues that come with them." Templeton positions himself as a voyeur looking into the world he inhabits; we the viewer are as just as complicit in enjoying this semi-confrontational gaze.