

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

Banned Goods From JFK Subject of Art Gallery Show

by Fran Golden Sep 21st 2010 02:03 PM



"Handbag, Louis Vuitton (disguised) (counterfeit)", 2010

A bird corpse, overproof Jamaican rum, Botox and fake Louis Vuitton bags are part of a photography show opening at a Beverly Hills art gallery on Wednesday. All the images in the show, "Contraband," are of items seized from passengers or express mail entering the U.S.

Photographer Taryn Simon shot the photos during five days in November 2009 at John F. Kennedy International Airport, the busiest international gateway into the U.S.

According to the Gagosian Gallery, Simon lived at the airport during the shoot, seeking to capture illicit goods as they came into the country on a 24-hour basis.

The renowned photographer tells CNN she spent several months getting permission to do the project from airport authorities, before showing up with her air mattress and team.

"Myself and my team got very little sleep under the blinding fluorescent lights. It was torturous. I could barely stand on the last day," says Simon.

The photographer wants those looking at the photos of the illegal items to do a deep think about what Americans consume and what is banned.

"You confront American desire through the endless counterfeit goods that traffic through customs," Simon tells CNN.

There are 1,075 photographs in the series, which will also be exhibited in New York and featured in a 500-page book due out soon.

The show is up at the Gagosian Gallery in Beverly Hills through Nov. 6.

Check out some photos from the show:



"USA American Visagra, Viagra, China (counterfeit)", 2010



"Nesting dolls with Disney characters, Snow White (counterfeit)", 2010



"Steroids, Testosterone & Sustanon, Pakistan (illegal)", 2010



"DVDs, Lost, Season 4 (pirated)", 2010