

LOBLURN

M A G A Z I N E

VOL 6: Fall 2015

FEATURING:
CARRIE ANN BAADÉ
GENEVIVE ZACCONI
VALI MYERS
REBECCA ROSE
and more...

Painting by ©Genevive Zacconi, "Illuminated"; oil on panel, 24"x24", 2012.



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"Thurisaz Merksteve" ©Genevive Zacconi (detail)

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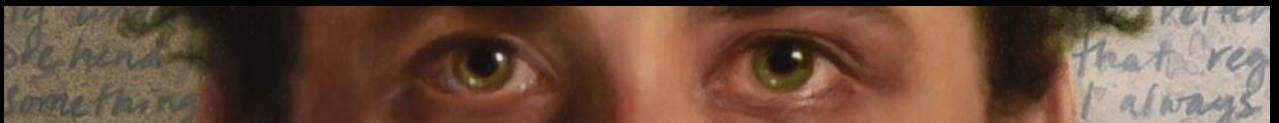


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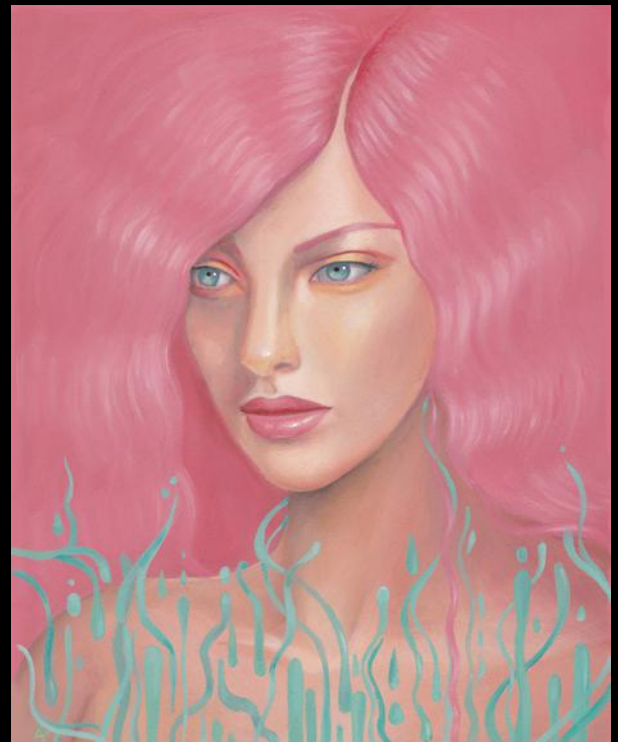
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"Daughters of Maternal Impression" 16x20" oil on linen.



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Key to the Piece

Laurie McClave

Laurie McClave, prolific figure and fantasy artist, features myth, legend and vision in her female representations of the elegant goddess and mystical divine. Precise and bold, her work helps us imagine moral, ethical and political import while simultaneously wowing us with sophistication and style.

“Sacrifice” is a recent work, created in acrylic on wood. The piece is a statement of power and grace. It holds intricate meaning about the sacred divine, and the power of nature. It also presents an overall message about the state of the planet, and our human connection and responsibility.

“I have always been an advocate for Mother Earth, and was recently able to put together an international group show at my gallery for her,” Laurie said. “As I considered my own contribution to the show, I wanted to interpret Gaia in all her strength and Glory, perhaps a little scary, but mostly benevolent and caring. “Sacrifice” is a Gaia figure in my style, of course, and I needed to incorporate some of the issues we are dealing with as humans living in her grace. She floats in a nebula that we are all a part of and wears a crown of trees precariously balancing all of the Earths gifts we take for granted. Bees were added as her soldiers and her opened chest symbolizes the sacrifice of her heart to feed the Earth.”

Laurie’s co-operative gallery in Port Townsend Washington, The Red Raven Gallery, is celebrating its four year anniversary this summer. The gallery, featuring other figure and fantasy artists in differing mediums, is a showcase of the fantastic, with featured artists from both the co-operative, and from an international pantheon of artists and craftspeople. Laurie’s work can be found in the gallery at www.redravengallery.storenvy.com , and through her website www.lauriemclave.com and in the artist collective Copycat Violence, www.copycatviolence.com .



"Sacrifice"



"Angel of Paradox", oil on panel, 16 x 20 inches, framed 38 x 48 inches, 2015

Carrie Ann Baade

by David Herrle

The eye has a natural thirst for excess, even for overload. The first time I saw Carrie Ann Baade's work, I wanted more. Thankfully, her work always offers more. Carrie herself admits that she seeks "to cram as much as possible into one single picture plane." This reminds me of what Richard Hamilton said of his art; "I wanted to get all of living into my work." Much of Carrie's all-you-can-eat quality is due to her paintings being based on collages, uniting pictorial fragments to form inspiring prototypes from which to paint. Instead of blurring the boundaries of the adjacent collagistic elements to deemphasize the original format, Carrie proudly retains the elements' evident edges with great skill that presents two kinds of visual art for the price of one. Her paintings have a Baroque complexity and a Postmodernist bite, and they are full of delicious juxtapositions, vibrant, bursting with Mannerism and a Renaissance glow. I think of Bernini, Luini, Giotto, Bronzino, Pozzo, Severini, Rubens, Gonzago, Audrey Flack, Klimt, De Lempicka, Evelyn Pickering de Morgan. Carrie has a fundamental, astute respect for both past art and modern innovation. (Even Deconstructionist Jacques Derrida said that "the experience of a 'deconstruction'...begins by paying homage to that which, to those whom, it 'takes on.'") Calling herself "the steward and the ax man to art's legacy," Carrie "cut[s] up and serve[s] the reinvigorated past to be contemplated in context of the contemporary."



"Melancholia with Demons", oil on copper, 9 x 12 inches, 2005

David: Carrie, you freely admit to using collage as the prototypical basis for your oil or egg tempera paintings. As you say, "I start with scissors." There's a lovely metaphor in that, since you literally fragment wholes to make new wholes, which relates to your claim of being art legacy's simultaneous advocate and chopper. Collage and Cubism are cousins, and they're both children of metaphysical fragmentation, relativity, neo-primitivism, even disillusionment. However, it birthed Max Ernst, Matisse, Julien Pacaud, Hannah Hoch, Tom Wesselmann, Ashkan Honarvar, Terry Gilliam and countless fashion trends. Cubism's progenitor, Cezanne, opened up creative ways of seeing, paying fresh attention to subtle distortions of planes and tension between objects that revolve around a point in defiance of traditional linear perspective. David Hockney would consider this one of the two "big mistakes of the West" (next to the internal combustion engine). Tell us more about your process and your thoughts on Cubism, collage, and traditional versus "modern" perspective.

Carrie: One thing I could not make myself do in painting class at school was treat everything the same, as though it all belonged to the same style. I wanted an orange to feel like the orange and the apple to feel like an apple so much that my teacher told me my still life

looked like it was painted by a schizophrenic, and I smiled for the first time in my entire adolescence. She yelled back over her shoulder, “*That was not a compliment!*” I have always been fascinated with the act of rebellion in Cezanne’s still lifes. This was great defiance of western art! After all the effort to get the orthogonals that would elucidate perspective, he just *didn’t*. Cezanne’s table would start on the left of the painting, and somewhere in the center of the fruit it would have just jumped down an inch. I admired his blatant disregard for rules and for following through to make a coherent whole. I exploit this disregard every chance I get.

Collage is a purely modern medium in that it could not have existed until there was enough printed materials to cut up. The collage artist works from the detritus of civilization. In the process of poring over materials, I am like a magpie looking for the shiny thing in a pile of mess. There is something about this process that is me. I have collected paper since I was a young child. Part of doing collage is the desire to remember to have a footnote to the real thing. This person is romantic and nostalgic. She is reverent to the masters and she is remembering. And then I become the other, and I am the person who cuts things up, the person who is dissatisfied with the facsimile: it is not worth anything, it is standing in for the thing of worth, it is a copy. The urge to cut it up and make something new is part of my desire to have the past while being unable to reenter it. But as Walter Benjamin suggests in *Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, I am looking for the “aura.” By repainting these with my voice, and my life, I am experimenting with the possibility that I can breathe new life into old things.

I cut and tape them back together with the satisfaction of a Dr. Frankenstein who wants his creation to be real, and I go through all the labor of making it whole. I just know better than to play god with the seams and become a magical realist. I know that showing the footnotes to the other parts of the past holds meaning in their parts. The modern component of collage is that it cannot go back to being whole it is about the fragmentation. This ugly disorienting way of attempting a new whole is grotesque and decadent. I accept this as part of the postmodern dilemma that these pieces cannot be made whole. Is it precisely our awkward fissures and pops that make today so different, so appealing and so perfectly irreconcilable?



"Halcyon", 12 x 18 inches, oil on panel, 2012

"The Perilous Compassion of the Honey Queen", 16 x 24 inches, 2010



David: Perhaps my favorite of your motifs is your enhancement of eyes. An eye or a pair of eyes is “cut” from another image, or it’s on its own plane, hovering above or in front of the subject, even held as a mask. Often the eyes are too large for the face, which is a surreal and disorienting way of emphasizing the penetrative power of the human gaze. It’s astounding how even just a peek of a pair of eyes, a glimpse of a glimpse, can create an emotional, eerie or erotic shockwave. (Think Franju’s *Eyes Without a Face* film.) Director Steve McQueen’s 2004 short film, *Charlotte*, features only a red-tinted extreme close-up of one of actor Charlotte Rampling’s lovely eyes. It seems almost genital at that ultra-vulnerable proximity. By the way, I’ve come to believe that we humans sin from the eye; sin ignites there and is dependent on sight. What do you think of that theory? Why do eyes compel you?

Carrie: We certainly covet what we see, yet the eyes are the windows of the soul. Their two-way glass takes the interior world in while exposing an entire interior world to the world outside. These eyes are masks. They hide and they bear truth; the subject is more intriguing with the contradictions. Also, I cannot lie. I saw all this big-eye art coming right at the turn of the millennium and thought, *How do you make bigger eyes without making a bigger head?* You just cut them out and put them on a smaller head.

Self-portraiture is inherent to the artist’s dilemma of subject: if you have a mirror, you are always there. The artist, needing something to draw/paint/do, uses the self as a subject. The experience immediately becomes ontological. As meditation on being, one has to deal with their own eyes. I looked into my own face until I could not anymore. In fact, in the last self-portrait I did in my mid 20s my eyes were shut. When I created a second pair of eyes, I could appear in my work again. I became an actor who was costumed. I became a fascination to myself, whether I was the armature with other things on my face or it was my eyes that stared back from another face. In the end, I think I forgot if these were all self-portraits, or if I was seeking pure forms that represented god. Ultimately, I am looking for the deus ex machine, and I like referring to the possibility of the unseen presence(s).



“The Manufacturing of Tears”, oil on panel, 18 x 12 inches, 2010

"Artemis," framed oil on panel, 16 x 20 inches, 38 x 48 inches





"Triumph of Divine Love - The Eternal Mother, oil on panel, 16 x 20 inches, framed 38 x 48 inches, 2015"

David: Your work is dense and dynamic, reminding me of Bernini, Giotto, De Morgan, Klimt – even dashes of Miriam Schapiro and Alice in Wonderland’s John Tenniel. You’ve revealed some of your direct sources: Botticelli’s Birth of Venus and Giraud’s Princess Mathilde’s Dining Room in your Angel of Paradox. Also, Rubens’ Triumph of Divine Love and Charity, Pontormo’s Deposition from the Cross and a Virgin Mary icon for your eponymous Triumph of Divine Love. You shower us with fragments without obliterating coherence, beauty and narrative, and your eclectic contextuality shows a knack for harmonizing the old and new. Is your head an intense jumble of artistic circuitry that finally explodes, or are you a methodical harvester, conceptualizer and composer?

Carrie: Triumph of Divine Love: The Eternal Mother is my response the concept of God as a woman. I used that large eye, like the one mysteriously on our dollar bill, and I attached it to a mother whose womb is the binary zero, which represents Nothing and Everything. It is from her passion that all is created. We are created out of the earth and to the earth we return. She cries spermatic tears, as if they have fathered her sacrifice. Angel of Paradox (Suck My Clit, Georg Baselitz) was created because I fell in love with this poster I had of Giraud’s Princess Mathilde’s Dining Room but I loved it upside down. It lived in my house, in my dining room, in my bedroom, in my hall, as I stuck things to it. I was hoping that I could use it somehow.

I just loved the very Victorian dining room with pinup women’s legs falling through the ceiling or female nudes breaking up the perfection and static civility. For a while there were images of WW2 fighter planes shooting each other attached to it. How does one disrupt the silent oppression of courtly behavior? I decided that Courbet’s Sleep, with two women with their legs intertwined, was steamier (and painted about the same time period). I am interested in what men are thinking while society is covering everything up. And then men expose and say what they are thinking, like Georg Baselitz, and I think, I have thoughts too, repressed and inappropriate. I think I will share them pictorially.



"The Involuntary Thoughts of Madam Cecilia Devereux", oil on panel, 16 x 20 inches, 2015

David: Oscar Wilde said that beauty is the highest genius, and dear Margaret Fuller (a true genius) hated her looks, her “ugly cumbrous mass of flesh.” Politically incorrectly, I find the priggish myth of “real women” problematic, and I think that women are the primary focus of beauty. In *The Beauty Myth*, however, Naomi Wolf claims that “beauty pornography” keeps men chasing the ever-receding centerfold, which reminds me of the trick of *jouissance*. Artist Marlene Dumas says “one cannot paint a picture of/or make an image of a woman/and not deal with the concept of beauty,” and critical theorist Wendy Steiner says that “beauty, in the western tradition, is so closely bound with the representation of the female figure that to suppress beauty is effectively misogynistic [*italics added*].” Steiner also defends Manet’s lovely *Olympia*, claiming it shows “a pleasure [viewers] can’t control” and that “the conscious beauty of a female subject symbolizes the highest ideals of communication and love.” Many feminist artists still honor the female nude, carrying it beyond the *odalisque*’s dreamy repose without nixing the erotic and attractive. What are your thoughts on beauty and its link to the feminine?

Carrie: When I teach my undergrads about the female gaze, I usually have to spell the term because they think I am talking about lesbians (“female gays”). My answer to the *odalisque* and the female gaze is a painting from 2012 called *Transit of Venus*. The subject is one of my former students, drag diva Myron Morgan, aka Serena Cha Cha, who was on Season 5 of *Drag Race*. She is the prettiest woman I have ever met. In this painting, she is holding her flaccid member while making direct eye contact. It has been postulated that we are entering the *Testicular Age*. Mind you, I think this is just because no one yet has the balls to call it the era of the Female Erection. This is a painting dedicated to the end of the patriarchy and a beginning of an era of compassion. Beauty belongs to the one who can use the brush.

David: While folks such as Swinburne and Pater insisted that Beauty is art’s primary goal, Roger Fry rejected “beauty” as a meaningful artistic term, finding form alone sufficient. Marlene Dumas wrote that “(they say) Art no longer produces Beauty,/She produces meaning,” and artist Barnett Newman, who preferred the sublime to the figurative, said that modern art’s impulse was beauty’s destruction. Often, *Baby Beauty* has been thrown out with the “patriarchal/bourgeois” bathwater. I think humans have a basic urge to spit on Earth angels and topple sculptural bodies, and beyond that there’s a general thanatotic compulsion to riot against design and turn mountains into molehills. “[Man]...passionately love[s] destruction and chaos,” says the narrator of *Notes From Underground*. “[S] mashing something is also very pleasant on occasion.” Might this apply to art that deliberately flouts pulchritude? Your thoughts?

Carrie: When I was in graduate school Donald Kuspit's term "New Old Masterism" hailed the return of beauty "lost to avant-garde innovation," but it returned, carefully crafted and fully "assimilated and accommodated," to the old avant-garde perversity. Before this point in the 20th century, it was hard to approach technical painting without being called an illustrator (as a pejorative). In my work, I like mixing beauty and ugly up so that there is a dynamic. Too pretty, and it's all wallpaper with no grab. All chaos, and there is nothing to sweeten the deal and entice us to stay. It's the ability to mix things up that keeps harmony from being decoration and discord from becoming grating. I happen to be a creator/destroyer and a not-so-great maintainer, but I prefer to think of myself as a storyteller who is here to make meaning where it was lacking.



"Parthenogenesis of the Muse", mixed media on paper, 20 x 30 inches

"The Hysterical Pregnancy", oil on copper, 18 x 12 inches, 2005





David: When it comes to “What is art?” I’m part Decadent and part Objectivist. I whistle Whistler’s tune that “art...should stand alone,” but I also appreciate Ayn Rand’s definition of art as “a selective re-creation of reality according to an artist’s metaphysical value-judgments.” Since art is a confluence of spirit and material, nihilism or ideology can have crucial consequences. Meanwhile, Magritte rejected banal artistic meditation and insisted “painting is not meant to express ideas, even ideas of genius,” condoning only “a genius of images.” The sexy excess of Art Nouveau and the dark finesse of Beardsley needn’t go deeper than the retina. Then again, you’ve expressed a desire “to speak to the complexity of the human condition” and explore masked and hidden psychology through your work. For Lucien Freud “to astonish, disturb, seduce, convince” is a painting’s primary purpose. What do you think of that? Share your thoughts on Art (capital a), inspirational artists (lower-case a) and my B.S. (capital b and s).

Carrie: As far as painting goes, my goal is to slam more information into one flat static plane. I like a challenge because it might be easier to write a book or make a movie instead of trying this. I also like to participate in the resurrection of painting. I was told painting was dead for so long that I thought no one would care now if I used it to do something new.

Perhaps that is a common ground of all painters, that we are engaged in an act of resurrection because of the inherent history and legacy of our medium. As a child I loved advent calendars: doors that marked time and told a story. By placing arcane and/or historical fragments of paintings in my work, I seek a portal to connect to another painting and another time. So, in this way, I use time as a tunnel or a wormhole to the past. The past image carries its symbolic significance, which has the potential for a contemporized allegory. I am also seeking to create experiences that viewers could ‘read’ and put together in their minds as multiple views of a whole experience. I don’t want to lose the meaning of the past, but I want to combine it into a legible new experience. Painting holds a dialogue of past and present, the multitude of answers that represent how the current population of artists explores to define personal experience. I think Art can do way more than any of us can conceive. Close your eyes and imagine the world without music, dance, paintings. Art is what has been saving us every day, the entire time.

David: “[L]umping together a diverse group of women [can’t] be intellectually or theoretically justified when it produces alliances reducible only to gender,” says art critic Whitney Chadwick. I prefer equity-feminism to chauvinistic gender-feminism, and past and present feminine/feminist artistic creativity thrills me. Of course, women have been kicking artistic ass for ages, despite a dearth of credit and recognition. In visual art, I think of underrated Marietta Robusti, Tintoretto’s daughter, who could hold her own against Dad’s brush any day. I think of the bizarre and eventually abusive ruse of Margaret and Walter Keane and the “big eyes”



Joy and Sorrow, 12 inch tondo, oil on copper, 2011-2013

paintings. This is all part of an old, obtuse disrespect for female agency. You’ve blasted artist Georg Baselitz for his (market-based) disrespect for women who paint. Tell us about that aspect. Is it difficult to not think of yourself as a “female artist” (a term that defaults “artist” as male)? Your thoughts on the grand artistic strides women have made?

Carrie: What I see in art and in art history is that the Muse is usually female. I can best answer this question by describing a collage/painting I created called *Parthenogenesis of the Muse*. In this self-portrait, I am lying naked and masturbating while wearing a codpiece made out of 13 collaged-together papal tiaras surrounded by birds and bees. This work is about the self-inspiring (masturbation) or fertilization of the female muse. When not engaged in the giving of her light to a male artist, the muse has the option to self-fecundate with proper stimulation. This rare pseudohermaphroditic state allows her to fertilize her own imagination, thus attaining the dual role of both muse and artist. The idea is if a muse can “inspire” herself, she gets off and she can go paint. One-stop asexual artistic reproduction at that!

I come from a long line of women who had talent but gave up their dreams for domestic life and children. In 2013 I literally married my art. I am officially an Art Nun. I was born knowing what I am and have done my best to waste no time getting into a position to have the skill and voice to be seen. This may be a joke, but it’s a real joke. I appreciate your interest in this question. I have asked myself about this very issue of gender and identity and being a painter. If I were a white heterosexual male, I think I would go paint landscapes.

David: In "The Lord Gave, the Lord Took Away" Kierkegaard wrote that "all the joy that is proclaimed in the world [is] a sounding gong and clanging cymbal if sorrow is not heard along with it. It tickles the ears but repels the soul." You said as much to *Innsmouth Magazine*: "[J]oy and sorrow are chained together." After all, "Hostile Forces" are placed between "Yearning For Happiness" and the "Hymn to Joy" in Klimt's *Beethoven Frieze*, and Beethoven himself is a good example of this existential tension. Jesus wept; Thalia and Melpomene are conjoined twins. "What you need is something with tears for a change," says *Brave New World's Savage*. Carrie, your impactful *Joy and Sorrow* depicts a forlorn (Melpomenean) woman with brimming tears holding three rather disturbing gleeful(?) alligators or crocodiles contrasted by three whimsical butterflies. Tell us about Joy and Sorrow, joy and sorrow, and how these inexorable companions strike you. Also, when Huxley's *Savage* calls for discomfort and poetry, he also wants God. Does God enter your metaphysic at all?

Carrie: This painting is inspired from Aesop's fable "Joy and Sorrow," which involves two sisters who are chained together at the waist. You could not have one without the other. I interpreted this story a bit differently. The alligators represent joy, for they have neither cares nor attachments. Sorrow holds on to these three, and she is made unhappy by caring for those who care nothing for her. Isak Dinesen said, "One of my friends said about me that I think all sorrows can be borne if you put them into a story or tell a story about them." This has been true for me. Pain is a side-effect of being alive. The root of pain and passion is pathos: "great feeling or suffering." Pain-ting seems to also be a derivation.

Victor Hugo wrote: "God manifests himself to us in the first degree through the life of the universe, and in the second degree through the thought of man. The second manifestation is not less holy than the first. The first is named Nature, the second is named Art." God is ever-present in my work – except when absent. I am content that the truth is near the paradox. How can one not have compassion and understanding of suffering for the human condition without pain? As though a God could cause suffering was not worth knowing or understanding and therefore worthy of blame? I am grateful for my consciousness. When my painting is really connected, I feel like I am engaged in an elaborate game of knock-knock jokes with the conscious universe. I seek God because I figure that is the best way to attempt understanding. I am content with the idea that we are all god, but I also believe every human being is an artist.



"The Supposedly Shared Sorrow of Magdalene and the Crocodile", 9 x 12, oil on copper

MS KAT MONROE





vincent gabriel

MS KAT MONROE



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VALI MYERS

by Ruth Cullen

Vali Myers artist, dancer, shaman, and muse to many was a fire starter, a creatrix, a force of nature. She was the real deal and you either got it or you didn't. She didn't care either way.

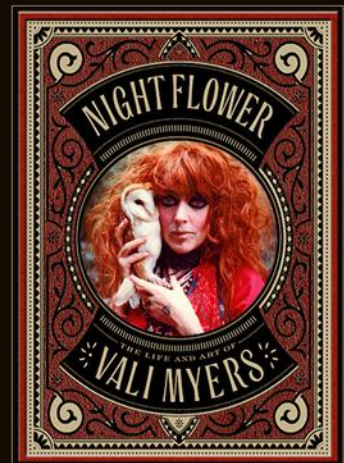
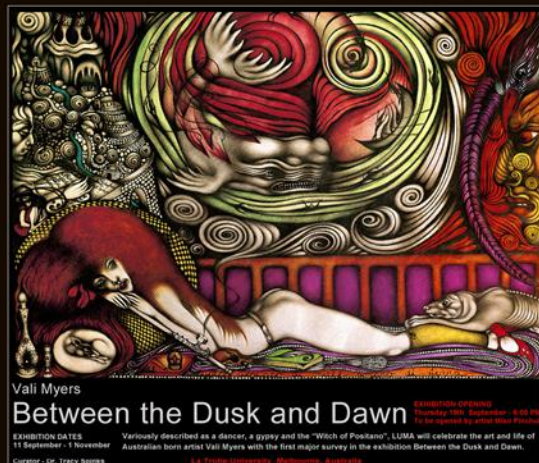
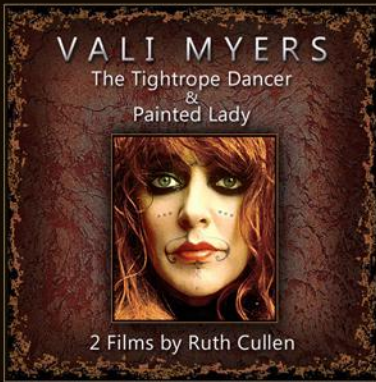
Her base, and source of inspiration for much of her art, was her wild valley, Il Porto, near Positano, Italy which she shared with her many animals and her partners. She lived in a tiny cabin without electricity or running water in a canyon that could only be reached by foot. And that was exactly how she liked it – elemental and wild.

"In the valley of the Toads and Tears, in the land of the Foxies and the Fire" (Diary excerpt)



Here, in her burrow, she drew by gaslight late into the night with her beloved fox "Foxy" nearby. While her personality was buoyant and larger than life, her paintings are delicate, timeless and rippling – magical, mythic, Visionary Art.

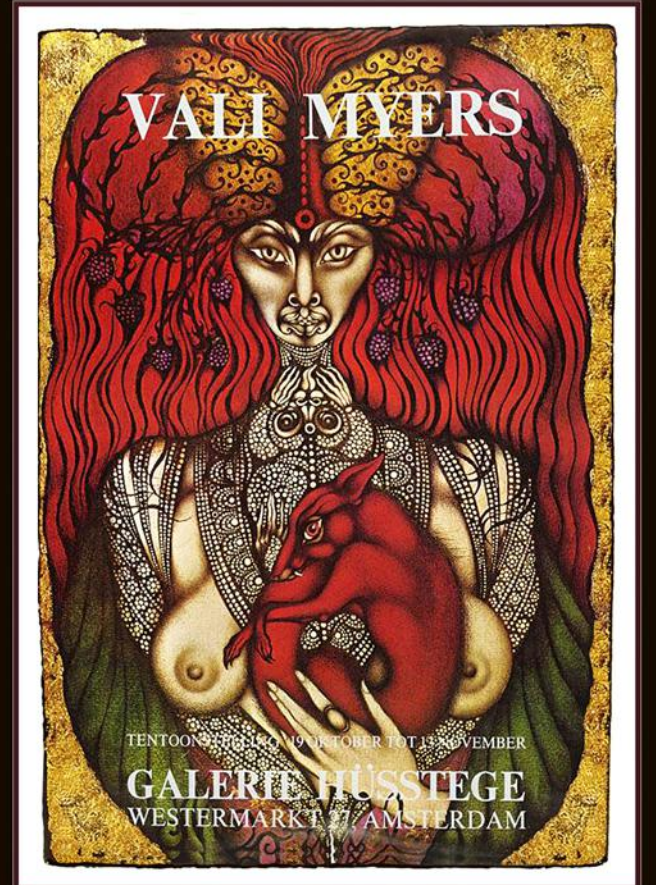
Her materials were ink, watercolour and gold leaf and she drew with a fine English pen nib set onto a goose feather for lightness. Although she was self-taught, she had an extensive knowledge of poetry, literature, and mythology and these elements all



found their way into her work. Her output was comparatively small – one or two paintings a year. Once they were finished she'd set off either to London, Amsterdam or New York where her collectors were based.

"A good fox hunts far from the burrow" (The Tightrope Dancer - documentary)

I met Vali in New York in the early 80s. I also made two documentaries about her. The first one was when she was living at the Chelsea Hotel. At that time Manhattan was about as hard core as it got in the "I've seen everything stakes" but even then Vali stood out. She was a magnificent beauty and remained so for the rest of her life, but it was her wild red hair, huge kohl rimmed eyes, facial tattoos and her gypsy robes that literally stopped people in the street. Later she had her front teeth plated gold but it wasn't attention she was after, it came from within. Like her art, she liked wearing the inside on the outside. She was a proud peacock – beautifully displayed in all her finery.



Photographers loved her – Dianne Arbus, Mary Ellen Mark and Scavullo photographed her, and the acclaimed Dutch photographer Ed van der Elsken made her the focus of his cult classic *Love On The Left Bank*. This book features stunning black and white photographs of Vali and her friends adrift in Paris – young post-war vagabonds who populated the cafes of the Left Bank.

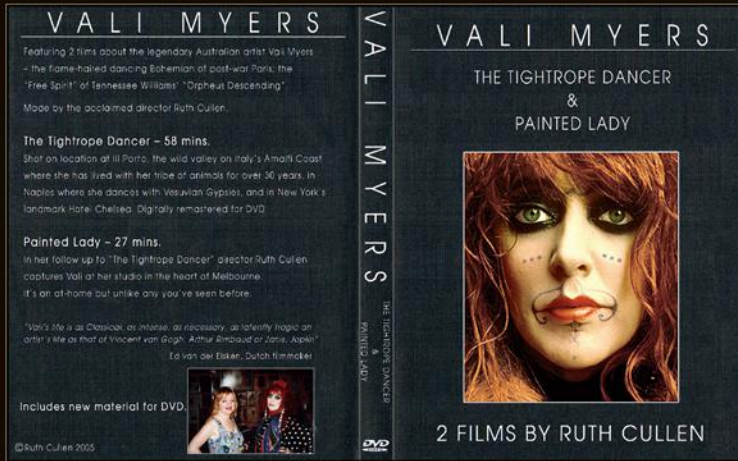
“Paris 1955 spinning in on myself, touching rock-bottom, flirting with death”

Love on The Left Bank went on to inspire many, including a 14 year old Patti Smith who became infatuated with Vali when she discovered these dark Romantic images. They opened up possibilities of a life far from the

banalities of the factory floor and New Jersey. Years later Patti met her idol at the Chelsea Hotel in New York and Vali tattooed her knee with a thunderbolt.

Valerie Ruth Myers was born in Sydney, Australia in 1930. She was 19 when she fled the country for Paris and she didn't return for over 40 years. During these “Paris years” she started to draw seriously. It was a time of “dark incubation” and opiated dreams where she rarely

saw sunlight. Only a few drawings have survived this period – tiny black and white self-portraits of a fragile soul close to death. These early “nigredo” works already encapsulate the elements that were





to become so much a part of her art later on.

After nearly 10 years of drifting around Europe and the UK, she finally settled in her oasis, Il Porto, Italy in 1958. This valley became her base for the rest of her life and her former partner Gianni continues to live there today. Vali always claimed that her valley bought her back to life and, as always, this was reflected in her work – especially *Lammas Tide* which she completed in 1964.

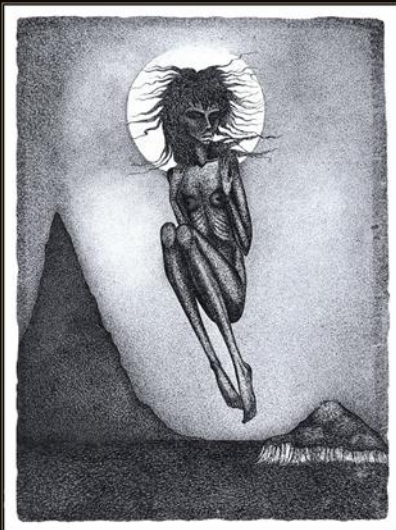
“It was like the rebirth of my spirit waking up again”.

Symbolic death and rebirth were to feature prominently in both Vali’s work and in her life, and this cyclical duality is fundamental to understanding her art. As she grew stronger, her drawings became more complex, they grew in size, and the content broadened to include the valley, her animal familiars, folklore, mythology, men, her lovers. Black and white led to sepia, then additional colour made its way into her work.

One of these early colour works *Opium* from 1967 is being exhibited at the Giger Museum. This drawing was only discovered recently and it has never been reproduced or exhibited before.

Vali spent most of the 60’s in her valley. Sometimes people would come to her, like Marianne Faithfull and Mick Jagger, but for months on end, her only companions were her animals and her husband Rudi and later Gianni.

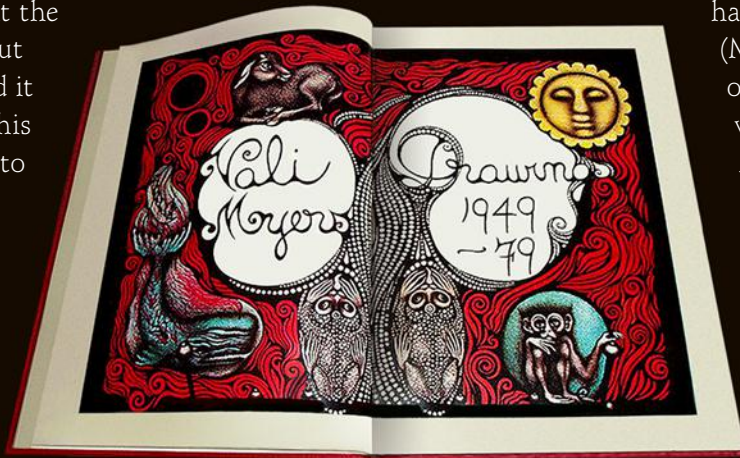
Vali never lived in the middle lane, she wouldn’t have known how. All





her life she embraced the peaks and troughs of outrageous fortune. She hated the word happiness but believed in intense moments of joy. Side by side with this went the dives into the abyss but she wouldn't have had it any other way. And this duality fed directly into her art.

"You got to take that pain and suffering and turn it into something magical." (The Tightrope Dancer – documentary)



One of her strongest influences was Herbert Melville's *Moby Dick* which she re-read every year. Many of her drawings feature a

harpooned white whale (Moby Dick) and one of her most important works shares the title. Any optimism in her art is symbolized by this harpooned whale of nature dragging human greed and hubris to the depths of the ocean before rising up triumphant as

nature re-balances and regains her rightful place.

The importance of nature was central to Vali work. Nature was always female and she believed that humans, symbolized by the male intellect, had lost their connection to the essential rhythms of life. As a consequence, life was out of balance in a very fundamental way. Vali's approach to nature was no hippie reverie, hers was a far more violent and savage entity than the peace and love crowd ever imagined in their Arcadian dreamings.

Vali hated the sun and always loved the bitter cold of mid-winter. She lived very simply in the valley, close to the elements and the cycles of the moon and the sun. She was frequently described as a witch, but she preferred to call herself a heathen. There's no doubt there's an esoteric element to her work but like the rest of her, she was part of it and transcendent at the same time. The witchy side is evident in the animal signposts – the raven, the hare, the owl, or the toads, which populate her drawings. It can also be seen in the central goddess figure such as the Madonna del Arco, Dido, or herself ("me but not me" she'd say). But regardless of whether it was a Black Madonna, a harpooned whale, or a warrior woman – sometimes fierce, sometimes sensual, sometimes dying, all would rise up again like a Phoenix from the ashes, just as she did repeatedly throughout her life.

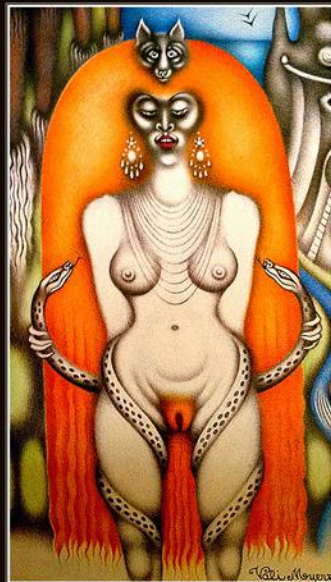
One artist she felt a real affinity with was Frida Kahlo. The similarities between the two are immense (right down to their mutual moustaches although Frida's was natural and Vali's tattooed) but Vali never even knew Frida existed until the late 80s and by then Frida had been dead for 30 years. Like Frida, women and the self were right at the centre of Vali's art and her perspective was essentially a female one. "Where do you come from and where do you go back to?" she'd ask.



Vali worked at night - by gaslight. Sometimes she would have Gianni read poetry to her while she drew, sometimes it was music, other times just the frogs, but there was always a drink quietly sipped as she worked till dawn. Night Flight is the name of one of the small black and white drawings from her Paris Years, but it is also the time when Vali came alive.

She loved heroes and heroines, dreamers and outlaws and there was always a special place in her heart for her beloved gypsies (Roma) of Naples. She liked to mix people up and never liked things to be too smooth. She always preferred some "sand in the gearbox" as she put it. She had an enormous capacity for pleasure and was very, very tough but she could also be gentle especially with wounded and vulnerable ones.

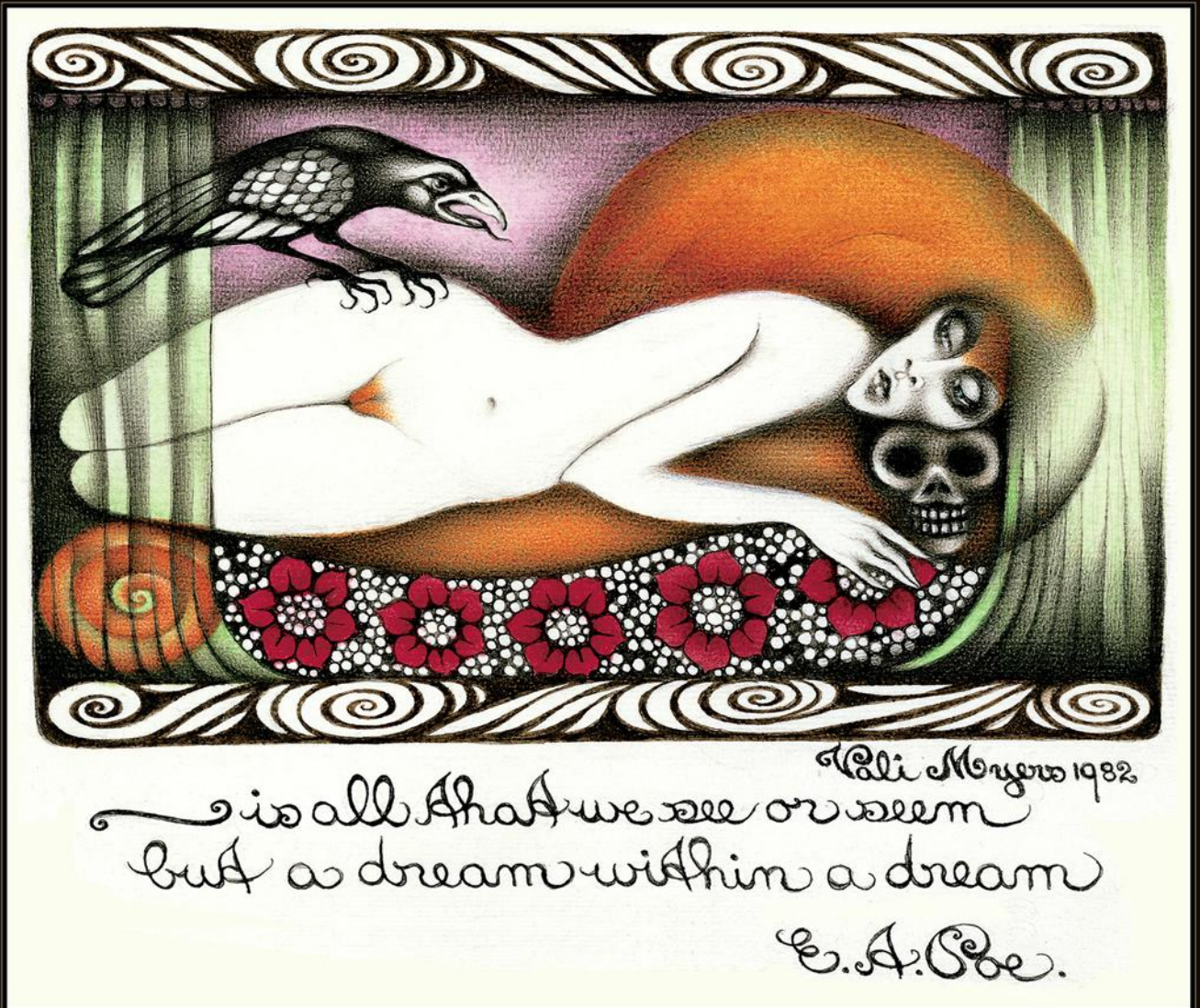
She lived absolutely in the present but drew on a huge esoteric body of knowledge that gave her art a vitality and complexity. At



the same time, she wanted her drawings to engage people on a very direct level. People without any art education or training have always passionately responded to her art and this, in many ways, gave her the most satisfaction of all. I remember her telling me how a big burly truck driver once broke down and cried when he saw her drawings. She was thrilled to bits as that was ultimately the level that she wanted to connect on – a passionate engagement with everyday people who instinctively got what the work was about.

She finally returned to Australia in 1992 and established a studio right in the centre of Melbourne. It became a meeting place for the young, the outsiders and the occasional celebrity until she died in 2003.

Increasingly, new generations are responding to different elements in her work – young

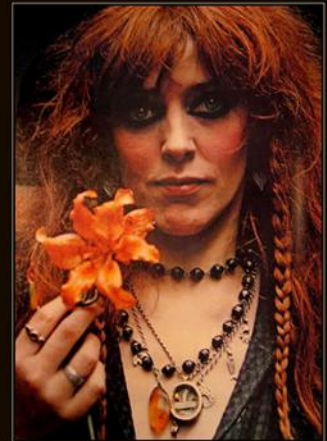


girls especially. Her art continues to inspire and attract people from all walks of life just as it always has. These days, social media and the internet are expanding her reach and the growth of interest in her is exponential. Maybe this is because she has never been more relevant than she is today. She was a conservationist before the word even existed, and a feminist before the word came into fashion, although she would never have described herself in either of those ways as she hated labels of any kind. Ultimately she was an outsider, who carved her own distinctive path and in doing so created a substantial body of work while influencing some of the most significant cultural “players” of the late 20th century.

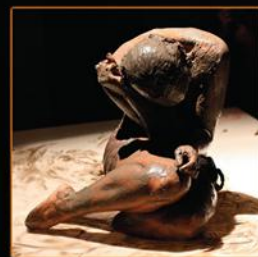
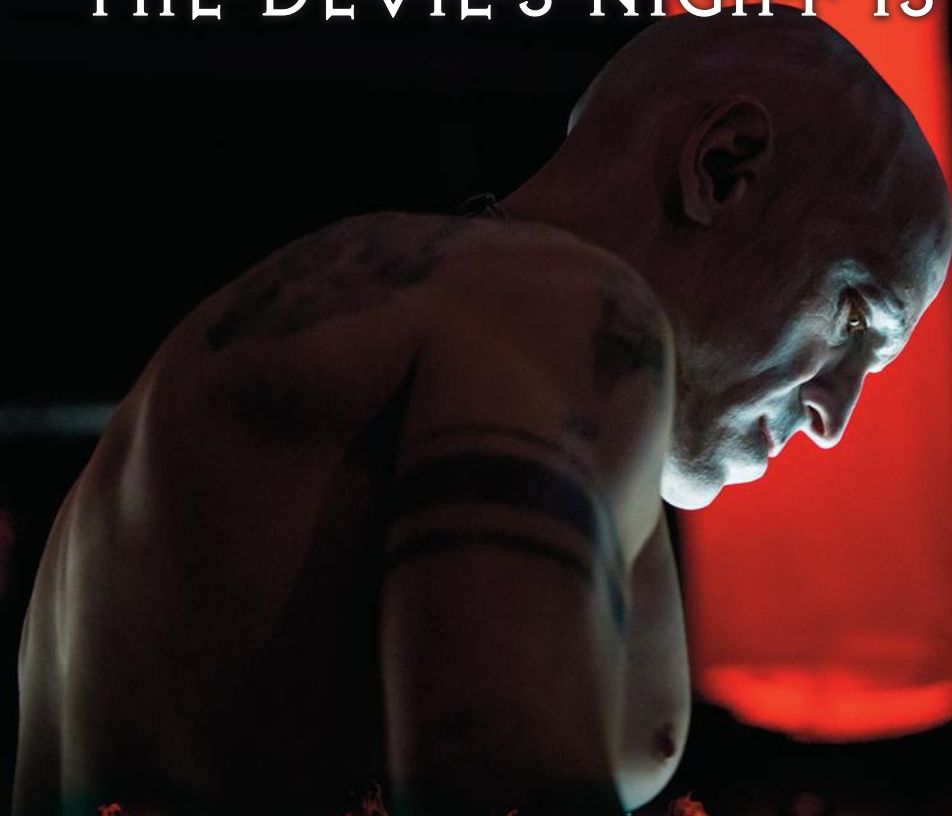
Today when the lungs of the world are being deforested in the Amazon and species face extinction on a daily basis, human hubris needs to take a back seat so nature can regain her rightful place. But it would be a mistake to reduce Vali’s work to simply an ecological theme, or a feminist stance, or an occult perspective. These elements are part of her art but not all of it. Vali’s art has the gift of making an outsider feel heard, and not alone; it has the gift of connectedness that great art can bring. It reminds us of another reality and provides a portal to a more eternal and timeless existence, to cite one of her favourite poets, Keats: “before the world was made”.

Ruth Cullen is an acclaimed documentary maker based in Australia. She was a close friend of Vali's for 20 years and is the Director of The Vali Myers Art Gallery Trust.

For more information about the book *Night Flower* and print sales contact - www.outregallery.com
For more information about the documentaries *The Tightrope Dancer* and *The Painted Lady* contact www.ruthcullen.com



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"Brokenhearted MeatBunny", 2015, Polaroid photograph



"Meaty Menagerie", 2015, Polaroid photograph



"Miss Meatface, the Other", 2015, Polaroid photograph



"The Divine Textures", 2015, Polaroid photograph



"Meatface Kitten", 2015, Polaroid photograph



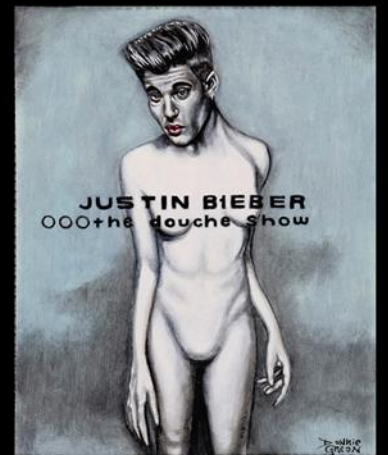
"Dinner Party", 2015, Polaroid photograph



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Genevive Zacconi

by Ellen Schinderman

Genevive Zacconi is a multi-talented artist and curator, who has worked with many of today's luminaries. Showing and creating shows from 19, Zacconi is a artist who pushes herself and others to challenge their medium. Recently, Genevive took time from her very busy life, she's prepping for a 3 person show at Sacred Gallery, NYC in October, to chat about her work.



"Tears"—progress shot

What was your first piece of art?

I honestly couldn't say. I've had a strong interest in art from the time I was a child and have been creating things since before I can remember, so it's been a life-long evolution into the oil paintings I do now.

What's your favorite piece (or pieces) you've made and why?

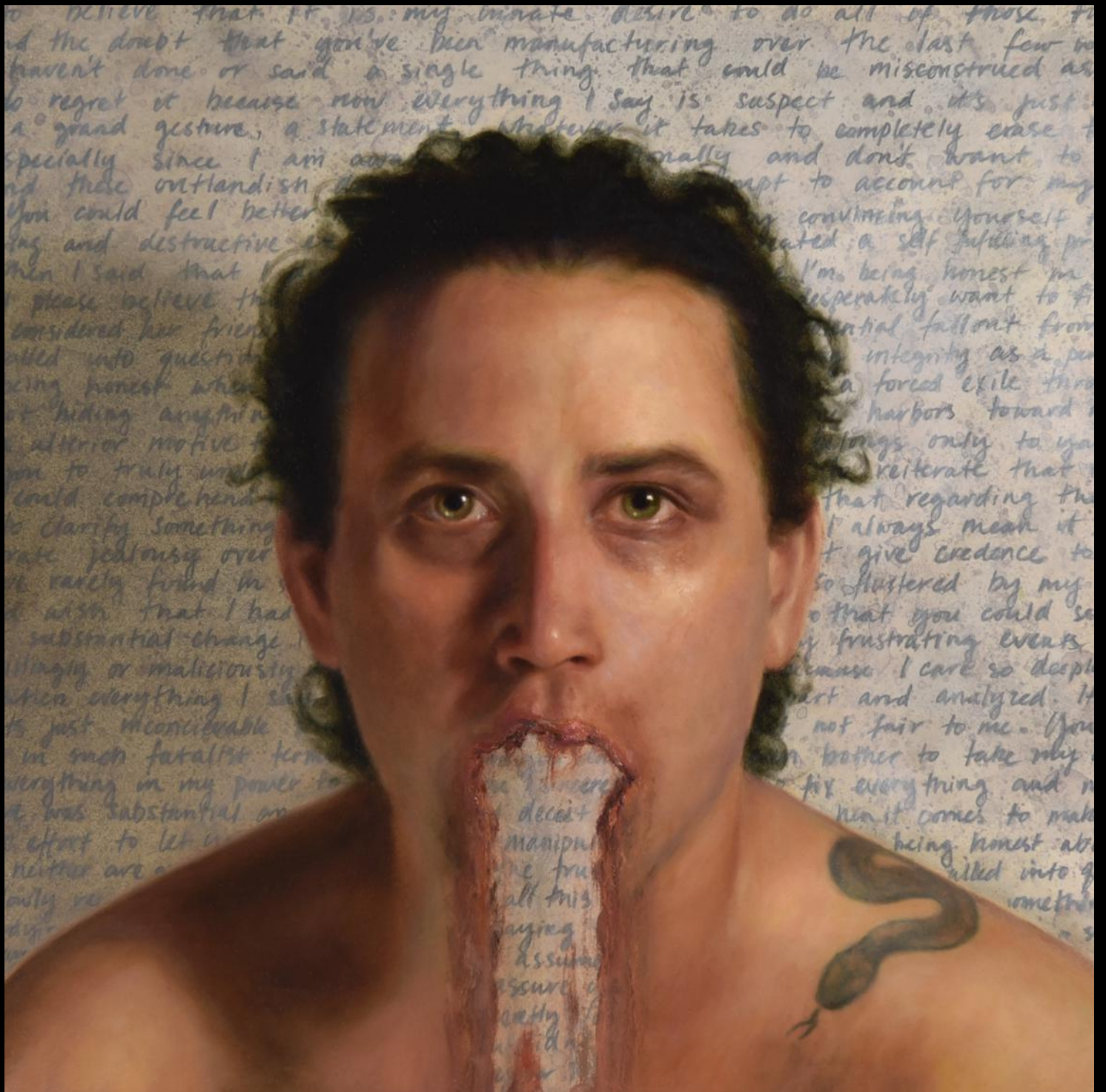
I think most artists feel more of a bond with certain pieces they create, but if I had to pick an absolute favorite, it would be an older painting of mine titled "In Our Nature". I think I've made some technical and aesthetic advances in my work since I completed that one back in 2010, but there remain several reasons why I feel a special affinity toward that particular piece. With some paintings, I come up with the idea, then almost immediately create the artwork that it inspired, but with this one I toyed with the concept over the span of a few years, and it became related to various situations in my life that I both experienced and witnessed. There's a well-known parable about a woman finding a wounded, freezing snake in the woods; she nurses it back to health and it bites her, and when she asks it why it would harm her after all she's done for it, the snake replies "you knew I was a snake". There are other variations of this premise, one where a frog helps a drowning scorpion cross a river, only to be stung then told simply "I'm a scorpion, it's in my nature".

The painting, in which I employed a lot of pink and blue tones to represent a feminine and masculine dynamic, portrays a woman cradling and attempting to breastfeed a bandaged snake that has already bitten her. The manner in which the woman is dressed is reminiscent of the Virgin Mary, yet she's wearing eye makeup that's been smeared, has a tattoo, black nail polish, and is sitting on a pile of skulls that had been left behind. This isn't someone who's naive... she's merely dressed up in a costume and has willfully put herself in this position to play the role of virgin/saint/martyr because it's bringing her some sort of masochistic satisfaction. The outcome of this allegory isn't just a consequence of the antagonist's nature, but also the protagonist's - hence the title "In Our Nature".

I also very much enjoyed creating this one. It was done during a winter where it snowed a lot; my studio had a great view, and the weather outside seemed to mimic the cool light of the image and the snow inside of the window in the piece as I painted it. Additionally, this was an artwork I wasn't sure would be understandable at all, but after hearing feedback when the painting was exhibited and shared online, I was genuinely surprised that there were actually people who "got it," at least in some sense. I love that art can be interpreted many different ways, and I don't need people to necessarily apply the meaning I intended to my own work, but sometimes it's nice when they do and you feel like you have a connection with someone you don't even know..

"Thurisaz Merkstave"- oil, acrylic and ink on panel, 6"x15", 2014.





"Lies" - Oil, acrylic and ink on panel, 10"x10", 2015

How do you approach your pieces?

I always come up with the idea first, then develop the visual components. I make notes and concept sketches, and sometimes do a color study. I then shoot some reference photos, and try my best to stick with my initial visualization. When I find models, it's often like casting a movie, as I usually always have the character developed and then need to seek out people who fit the part. Once all of that is in place, I start on the painting, doing a monochromatic underpainting first, then layers upon layers of color.

What inspires you?

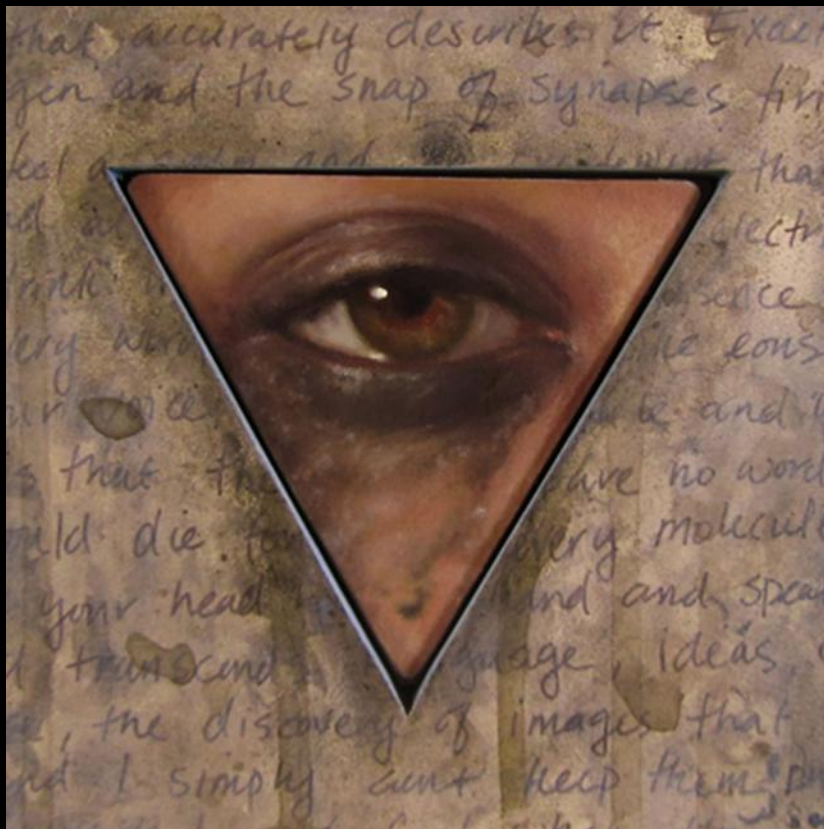
What fuels and serves as the basis of my own work are the things both I experience and witness: much of it deriving from my own relationships, love, loss, sex, and gender roles. Aesthetically, of course I'm inspired by countless painters from the past and present, but I also find a lot of inspiration in the work of various filmmakers.

Your works involve a lot of light, but your women are particularly luminous, can you speak to that?

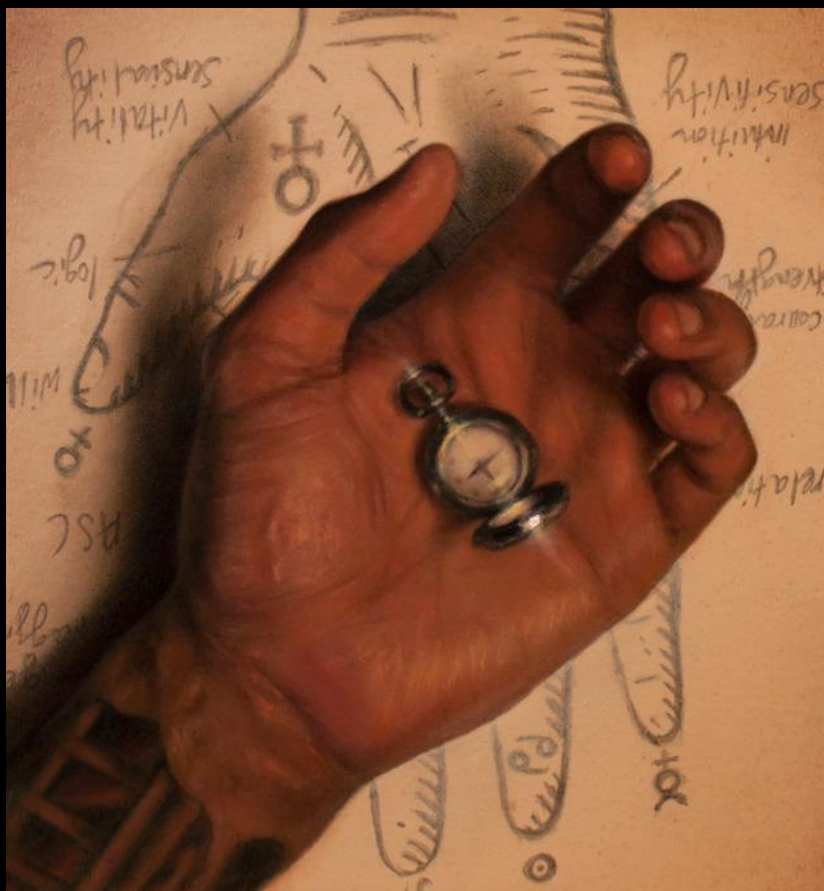
I've actually never noticed that I paint women differently than men, at least it's not something that I do on purpose! I do portray females more frequently; however, I don't gravitate towards painting women because of the visual aspect. Rather, they're often the basis of my paintings because I am a woman - I'm painting about my experiences as a female, and often the concepts just wouldn't work with a male as the subject. For instance, the "In Our Nature" piece I discussed earlier definitely wouldn't make sense with a male attempting to breast feed a snake, and on a deeper level, I also don't think men self-victimize quite as often.

Many of your works focus on hands. What do they represent for you, what draws you to them?

I like to paint hands because they have the capability to be expressive like a human face, and they're all different and distinct, yet leave the identity of the subject anonymous to some extent.



"Pieces"- Oil, ink and acrylic on cut & layered panels, 4" x 4", 2013.



"Fate, Up Against Your Will"- Oil, acrylic & graphite on board. 6.5" x 7.25", 2013.



"Illuminated": oil on panel, 24"x24", 2012.



"Fade Out"- oil on panel, 16"x20", 2011.

Your new work, “Deconstruct,” and the other pieces you’ve just done, “Lies,” and “Tears,” are much more conceptual than much of your earlier works. You seem to be stripping down layers and using more text. Can you tell me what’s happening for you both in the work, and perhaps personally, that’s pushed you in this direction? And what is the text? Is it found or personal writings?

Well, when I was in my early twenties, I was doing these paintings that combined graphic imagery in acrylics with more realistic elements painted in oils. A few years ago I had picked back up on creating similar pieces in mixed media that combine different styles. This time, on a smaller scale for group shows, I began doing stark pencil drawings and handwriting done in ink, then sealed in & painted over in oil. The basis for all of my work has always been the idea more so than the aesthetic, so I feel like my new series for “Evocation” was a natural progression in not only expanding upon the visual aspects of earlier paintings, but also in bringing the concept to the forefront instead of just as the foundation for the art.

The theme that inspired the new series was the development and demise of interpersonal relationships, and also the role that digital communication plays in both fostering and recording these connections. The square shapes in many of the paintings were intended to be reminiscent of the format used on social networking sites, as most people can now trace their history in the photos they post, and for many artists, even the various phases of their own work.

Similarly, in this series, the artworks show progress stages in the painting, or appear to have parts of the final layers of paint removed, in keeping with the themes of progression and deconstruction, and its documentation. The text that is used in the art is all actually taken from typed correspondences I have had over the years. As for the writing in “Deconstruct”: at the top, around the “completed” painting of the heart, are parts of love letters that had been written to me from significant others. As the image de-evolves (showing the underpainting, ground, drawings, then eventually just a scribble) the snippets I used become increasingly more argumentative, even insulting around the bottom. This piece in particular is definitely very text heavy, as the focus in the work is the destructive power of words.

We’re living in a weird time in that many of us can go back see the history of an entire relationship, from beginning to end, in messages and texts. It’s easier to catch someone in a lie, and have definitive proof. You can reminisce over letters of adoration that someone had sent you, compared with them now arguing with you. You can look through and see a turning point, and pinpoint exactly when things started going wrong. And yes, you can even use these intimate dialogues as the background for a painting.

What has been your favorite art experience?

I've had so many art experiences I've enjoyed over the years, that it's hard to narrow it down to one favorite. Having co-founded Last Rites Gallery, the grand opening was a pretty big feat, and it was amazing to see all of the planning, long hours, and hard work come to fruition in one night. Working for Ron English as his painting assistant was incredible – he had been one of my favorite artists for a long time prior, and is such a brilliant person that I feel like I learned so much in my time with him. Also, in directing at galleries and writing for Hi-Fructose, I've been able to visit so many talented artists' studios and get an intimate, first-hand look into their processes, which is just so awe inspiring.

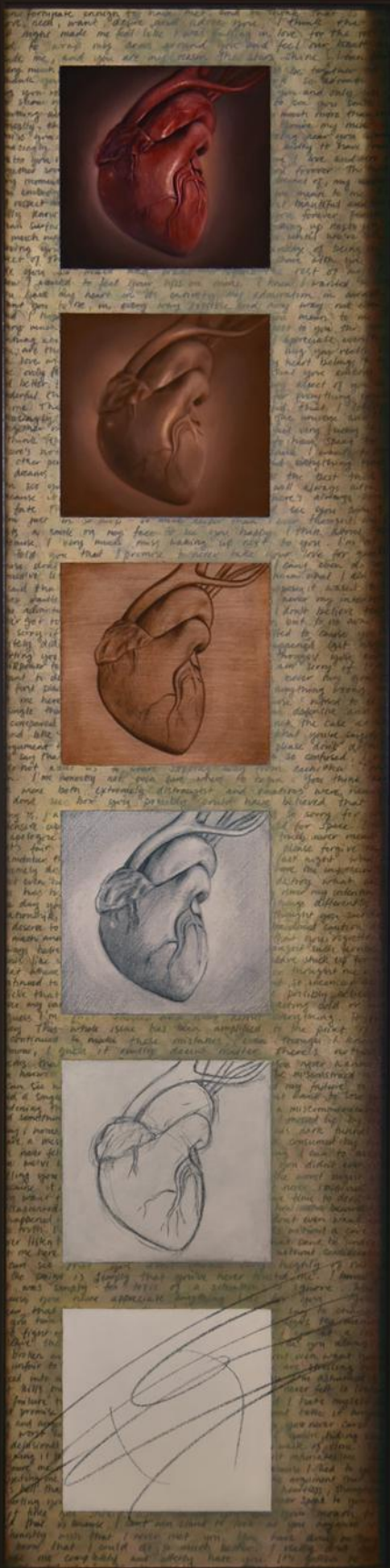
How did you begin curating?

I had started trying to show my work in galleries in my hometown of Philadelphia as a teenager, but wasn't very successful. I was doing somewhat similar to the work I do now, only more based around eroticism, and the imagery could perhaps be deemed as more "shocking". Aside from flat-out rejections, I had been told on more than one occasion by a gallerist that they liked how I painted, but my subject matter was the issue.

The only venues in which I was displaying my art, and that had welcomed me with open arms, were goth/fetish clubs. I will always be grateful for the people who gave me encouragement when I otherwise had none, but unfortunately, the problem with exhibiting at such places is that art isn't the main focus and is overshadowed by other elements. There were several artists showing at those venues whose work I really liked, doing the kind of stuff that I never saw at traditional galleries around Philly at that time, back in the 1990s. So I decided just to run my own art happenings, which would feature the type of work I wanted to see more of – at 19 I put together my first art event, and I'm pretty sure at that point I didn't even know that what I was doing was called curating. I rented out a space one night a month at a local theatre and showcased visual art, spoken word, performance, film and other forms of self-expression. Though the mediums varied, common themes were sex, death, taboos, drug use, and emotions on the darker end of the spectrum. The reason I have always gravitated toward and found this type of work of merit is because I think it's the things that many of us experience, but no one talks about in polite conversation, that can create some of the most powerful art. And I feel as though, at least with fine art, this type of work has often been under-represented. So since that first show I organized, I've strived to continue to build a curatorial career based upon exhibiting art that explores some of these aspects of life..

"In Our Nature"- oil on panel, 24"x36", 2011.





“Deconstruct”- Oil, acrylic, ink and graphite on panel, 9”x35”, 2015.

If you could put together any show, with no limitations, where and what would your dream show be?

I actually feel like I've come close to doing what would be my dream show because I have been so fortunate in having the opportunity to curate with some of my favorite living artists. It's a huge honor that I never take for granted. However, there are still many artists on my wish list that I've yet to work with, who would be a welcome addition to that ideal show. Of course I would love to have endless resources available to promote the art – a huge, attention grabbing venue, and an unlimited advertising budget would be nice!

What's next for Genevive Zacconi?

The next thing I have coming up is a three-person show alongside Mat Hurtado and Megan Massacre, entitled “Evocation”, which opens October 10th at Sacred Gallery in NYC.

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Nadia Lazizi EQUILIBRIUM 24 inches x 18 inches Oil on Linen

NADIA LAZZI

STATEMENT

'I feel there is something unexplored about a woman that only a woman can explore.' Georgia O'Keefe

I work predominantly with oils on linen, using solely brushwork to achieve the outcomes I am seeking. Mood and atmosphere is carefully constructed through the deliberate juxtaposition of the central figure against an ambiguous background. In turn, the image is further defined by the use of intense artificial lighting and a restricted colour palette. This projects the image outwards towards the viewer, establishing its presence within the central frame of the canvas. The play of light and shadows conveys an effect that is both welcoming and remote. In brief, it intensifies an ephemeral moment in time which the viewer can interpret in their own way whilst still being guided by the ambience and composition of the image as a whole.

The works possess a contemporary tone which is achieved through the integration of a soft-focus, chiaroscuro and dry brush techniques combined with an illustrative edge. Although my work is grounded in realism, it is far too stylised to be considered entirely so. I would refer to it as Aesthetic Realism, influenced by not only the classical fine artists of the Renaissance but also contemporary illustrators and digital photographers.

Many of my paintings represent a dream world or moments of quiet reflection, contemplation or introspection, where one can delve into the subconscious and attempt to understand one's own place within the greater scheme of things. I seek to represent and capture a fleeting moment in time, a transient image of contemplation that is a combination of dreams and reality, a tasteful balance between sensuality and femininity suggesting emotions and feelings frozen in time. They are illusions drawn from an unreal reality based on the commonly purveyed depiction of women in an idealised form.

I have always used my work in an attempt to understand my place within the world, as a woman of mixed cultural heritage. Questions of identity, memory, race and gender are integral elements to understanding the rationale behind my visual output. The element of reflection, catharsis and renewal are ever present aspects.



Nadia Lazizi Blue Belle 24 inches x 20 inches Oil on Linen



Nadia Lazizi SPIRIT Oil on Linen 14 inches x 9 inches

Nadia Lazizi MUSE Oil on Linen 22 inches x 11 inches



Nadia Lazizi BORDERLAND Oil on Linen Panel 8 inches x 8 inches



Nadia Lazizi BREAKAWAY I Oil on Linen 36 inches x 29 inches





Nadia Lazizi FALLEN Oil on Linen 18 inches x 14 inches

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the art of
Genevive Zacconi



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"Preservation", Oil on Board, 8"x10", 2015

MG

MEESHA GOLDBERG

"Partial Eclipse of the Witch", Oil on Canvas, 11"x14", 2014





"top left: Still Life with Axes", Oil on Canvas, 11"x14", 2014, bottom left: "The Bondage of Vanity: Andromeda and Cassiopeia Cast Into Space", Oil on Canvas, 16"x20", 2015, right: "Backwards Into Night: A Mars/Pluto Altar", Oil on Wood Sconce and Candle, 17"x5"x5", 2014



"Interlaced", Oil on Canvas, 11"x14", 2015



"Altering"



REBECCA ROSE

by Ellen Schinderman

Rebecca Rose is a force to be reckoned with. Her keen eye and deep intelligence read in every piece she creates. Rebecca's works are deeply personal, political, thoughtfully through, and uniquely beautiful.

What was your first piece of art?

My first piece of significant art was "The Unabridged Paper Doll Diner". It was a 30' x 15' x 8' life-size paper doll & pop-up book sculptural installation created for my exhibition as an undergrad in 2001. The techniques I used were: Relief Printed Linocuts on Arches Heavyweight Paper, Serigraphs on Arches Heavyweight Paper, Cast Bronze Sculpture, Cut Wood, Found Objects, Paintings with Acrylic on Metal, and Acrylic on Wood.

The overall theme was: true reality masked by manufactured reality, with supporting themes: two dimensional visuals appearing as three dimensional, how sugarcoated nostalgia is far from historic reality, our human desire to save face and glaze over emotions, an interactive opportunity for an audience to break the installation's barrier and become part of the work, and the challenges of displaying full editions of prints at the same time. The professors at the time said it was one of the best shows the gallery exhibited to date.

It was my undergrad senior show, but I went ahead and did a thesis. The show unearthed many family secrets and unpleasant memories, and nearly tore my parent's marriage apart. The year it took to produce was so strenuous and stressful that it drove me to dark places and landed me in a psychiatrist's office. It was that show which made me realize my art could be revealing and powerful

Of jewelry?

I originally elected to take a Lost Wax Casting/Jewelry & Metal Smithing class as part of my fine arts degree, and when I felt the block of wax in my hand, I was hooked. I loved the idea that wax became metal. Hard wax to liquid wax, liquid metal to hard metal, just by temperature. I took

as many classes as possible and assisted my professor as his student supervisor, in that respect I received special training. I created my first Sculpturing in 1999 and remember my professor looking down at the ring I carved in disbelief and said he's never seen anything like it before. That's when I knew I was on to something.

The concept to that piece wasn't as deep as it is now, it was a giant castle ring based on Sleeping Beauty's Castle at Disneyland. During that first project I remember thinking to myself, "Someday I'm going to do a series of Disney inspired works to be sold exclusively at Disneyland!" I still want to do that actually... I think they'd be a hit.

"Pioneering"



My first piece of art jewelry with a substantial message was “Pioneering” in 2009. It’s about the use of alternative fuels over fossil fuels, specifically the use of ethanol over oil for cars. Over time, I packed more layers into the works and really pushed the envelope conceptually.

What’s your favorite piece (or pieces) you’ve made and why?

Any piece that heals me from distress so I’m forced to move beyond that experience. For example, something bad happens, I sit and stew about it for a while, dissect why it makes me feel icky, put it in physical form, make a work of art, send it off into the world, and tell myself, “Okay, you’ve completed the process for that experience. It’s done. It’s out. You can no longer be dragged down by it anymore. You’ve released yourself from it and are no longer allowed to complain about it, so move on.”

What’s been your favorite art experience?

My favorite experiences always involve events with the best art, artists, and individuals in the art world whom I deeply respect. Showing at and attending Art Basel Miami Beach is always incredible, and the VIP opening Vernissage is a riot.

Early in my career, I submitted images of my work to Julie’s Artisan Gallery on Madison Ave in NYC. After undergrad I had to take a 6 year hiatus, and although I’d been brainstorming and creating new work for years, I hadn’t really begun to put my work out there and into the gallery system. Receiving Julie’s immediate response saying she loved my work reiterated that I was on the right track. It was a huge confidence boost given the rooted history her gallery had in NYC over a 40 year time span. I was really fortunate to have been represented by Julie Schaefer-Dale, and honored to be one of her artists until the gallery closed its doors in 2013.

I also think one of my favorite art experiences will come in the next few months. This fall, I’m showing a new piece for “Cat Art Show LA 2: The Sequel” among artists whose work I’ve admired and respected for years. Artists like Marion Peck, Mark Ryden, & Tim Biskup. The show is produced by Susan Michals who came up with the show’s concept and Daniel Salin who produced Banky’s “Barely Legal” show and Mr. Brainwash’s exhibition in “Exit Through The Gift Shop”. My piece is based on the presidential cats of Abraham Lincoln and Rutherford B. Hayes- truly excited to be involved in this year’s installment.



“Unabridged Paper Doll Diner”



"Pampering"

Why jewelry?

I used to create giant, space eating sculptural installations like the one aforementioned, chock full of symbolism, underlying narratives, and complex layered themes. Guests entered the installation and interacted with it, becoming temporary characters in the piece itself from the audience's point of view. I enjoyed creating massive works like that, but size and space became an issue. That problem presented a surprising solution: make my sculptures smaller while still maintaining an element of interactivity with the work. Hence the inclusion of jewelry, or sculpture able to be worn on the body. The main challenge was to create a meaningful body of work, smaller in size, without compromising on the symbolism, narrative, and layers I shove into every square inch of my work. I loved the idea that my sculpture was now smaller, and could accompany it's wearer on adventures out in public, rather than giant installations that waited inside a building for the audience to come to it. I had to do sculpture that large to create sculpture as small as I do now.

That concept is a huge reason why I continue to focus my sculpture on the smaller, wearable scale. The guest still becomes part of the piece just like in the installations. So art jewelry seemed only fitting. Intended to be worn, the wearer shares the ideas with those they encounter by chance throughout their day. I think this idea of mobile art, or the idea that the person wearing it in essence becomes the gallery, enhances the wearer's experience beyond just owning it. Early on I discovered my rings offer extended experiences like this that spread beyond the wearer. When a piece is worn in public, it's eye catching to those that come in contact with the wearer. A dialogue is sparked about the ring as the observer asks the wearer what the piece means. This opens a door to discussing the message of the piece, encouraging an exchange of communication, opinions, and ideas between two people. This extended experience is powerful, effective, engaging, and is one of the main motivations behind my overall body of work.

How do you approach your pieces?

Each piece begins with a philosophy or way of life that describes a current event, politics, pop culture, a personal story, or narrative. I pair it with words that contain the word “ring” usually as a suffix or gerund in the title of the piece. Each piece is a reflection of understanding human ingenuity, behavior, and habits. Observing peoples’ habits helps me understand why my work is being created, what purpose my work serves, and what role my entire body of work plays in the mix of it all. Lately the pieces have had a biographical narrative, especially the works in my solo show at Seattle’s Twilight Gallery “The Spinster & The Carpenter.” I also have to take design into consideration from a wearable point of view so that the piece remains interactive, and compositionally so the form conveys the message properly. While emphasis on functional design is present, sculptural form and substance of message always takes priority.



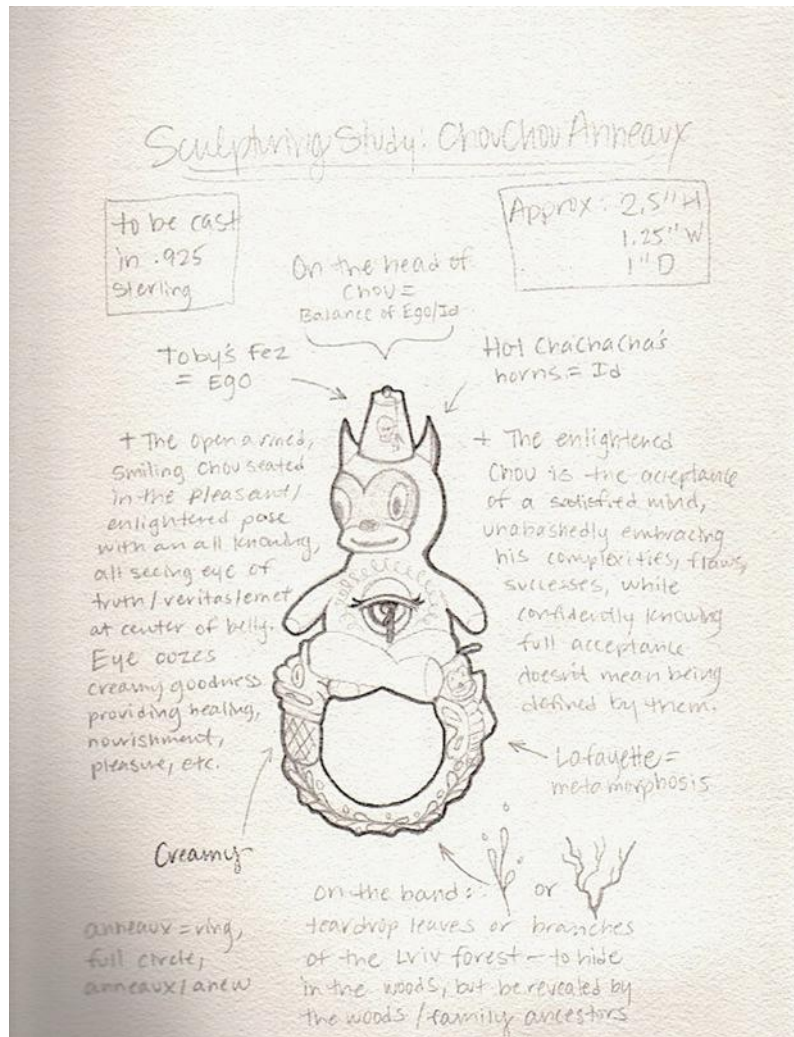
“Harbinger”

What inspires you?

Injustice, adversity, and discarded objects. Failure and the ability to rise above past, present & future struggles also inspires me. I’ve never had financial means to really feel comfortable, so part of my drive comes from seeing how far I can take my work on as little as possible. It might be that rags to riches mentality that plagues me, but the inane desire for success is potent and ever present. Another mission of my work is to change the collective mainstream view into seeing that jewelry can be an accepted conduit of fine art, associated with meaning and substance. Bridging the fields of Fine Art with Art Jewelry is always on the back burner. That aim drives a huge portion of why I do what I do.

Who would you most like to design a piece for? what would it be?

I'm working on a few collaborations right now, and thrilled to do so. Kukula and I are partnering on a limited edition pendant that encapsulates some of her iconic paintings. She's so wonderful to collaborate with! I'm also doing a series of smaller, functional LEGO inspired rings cast in silver that are actually compatible with LEGO pieces for Eric Nakamura of Giant Robot. I'd also love to collaborate with Gary Baseman. We've begun early talks about a piece based on his Chou Chou character, and I have faith it'll come to fruition in the future when our busy schedules align. The concept is filled with symbolism inspired by the character's deep evolution in Gary's work. And of course, Mark Ryden. Partnering with him is bucket list worthy.



Chou Chou Anneaux Study Sketch

Ai Wei Wei recently liked one of your pieces, depicting him; what inspired the ring and what was it like to get his recognition?

The backstory for “Censoring”: Ai Wei Wei’s head is cut open as he lies on his back, trapped by the Great Wall and unable to leave the country, while Lilliputians watch his every move. The Gulliver’s Travels metaphor compares the People’s Republic of China to a Lilliputian government, not governed according to rational principles. Ai Wei Wei’s enormous size (metaphorical and influential) makes him both expensive and dangerous for the government. He lies on a piece of land in the shape of Sichuan Province, a nod to his sculpture “Map of China” and his role as activist following the Sichuan Earthquake which claimed 80,000 lives. The band is made of sunflower seeds, each different and hand sculpted like his famous installation. Under the band is a 1 yuan piece, with the words Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo, translated to the People’s Republic of China. The year 2011 is carved into the coin symbolizing when the Chinese Government first arrested Ai Wei Wei among 50 other freethinkers labeled as dissidents.

His detainment, lasting 81 days, was another hostile and aggressive attempt by the Chinese government to silence and censor Ai Wei Wei. The piece is a fully wearable ring cast in 5.45 troy oz. / 155g of .925 sterling silver, and ended up being 2.25” x 2” x 1.5”. It’s currently on available through Freehand Gallery c/o Craft in America in LA.

It’s silly that something as simple as a few social media likes can bring about a sort of validation or personal approval to the piece. In essence, it’s a digital pat on the back from one of the most influential artists of our age, and I’m still on cloud nine from his recognition.



Ai Wei Wei



Jewelry is an area that's thought of as a "female" arena, do you think that affects your work?

No, in fact I haven't deeply considered that perception with my work! So many aspects of life is gender neutral and I guess I subconsciously squash Art

Jewelry into a genderless arena also. Most of my collectors are male, and many of my colleagues in the field are male also. Looking outside myself, I can see how the mainstream sees the field as primarily "female", however I think time will wash that away since gender identity is a topic currently in the spotlight. If there's a difference in how others view my work, it's my responsibility as the artist to find common ground and help as many people as possible to understand it, I believe.



Casting Process

What's next for Rebecca Rose?

A career changing opportunity is about to happen 2 weeks from now at a think tank in Chicago. I've been invited to present to the department heads and directors of major councils specializing in the fields of Fine Craft all over the country. The 20 invitees represent the American Craft Council, Craft in America, The Design Museum of Boston, American Craft Magazine, Ornament Magazine, crafthaus, and many other movers and shakers with sharp minds all coming together to discuss and influence the future of Fine Craft for the better. So wish me luck- big concepts in the works!

RICHARDSON

SCULPTOR



SCULPTURE

Coffin Skull

Aluminium wall relief

5 1/4 H

JEWELRY

Ouroboros Ring

Stainless steel



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