

Austė

*A Mistaken Style of Life*

September 24 - November 5, 2022

Under a Moorish Arch she stands,  
Holding a Saphyre in her hand,  
In the Shadow  
Her hand casts,  
Squirrels  
Shuffle Leaves like Cards.

The ferret, the Weasel,  
Spit lizards and fieldmice on Thorns  
through still beating Hearts  
Her beige dress is torn from a Run!  
With Hooligans,  
In purlieus.

excerpt from *Hooligans in Purlieus*, Austė, 1984

Lomex is pleased to present a survey of works by the artist Austė (b. 1950), many of which are shown for the very first time.

*A Mistaken Style of Life* is an overview of the artist's cross-disciplinary practice spanning nearly forty years. It traces Austė's unique aesthetic that fuses elements of Lithuanian folkloric art, Punk, No Wave, and European Surrealism, while charting her history as a stalwart presence in the East Village and Downtown art scenes.

Born in Detroit, the child of Lithuanian refugees, Austė's memories of her childhood fairy tales informed her work as a performer (under the header Cococello Club), her variegated literary productions, and her wildly expressive paintings and works on paper.

Upon moving to New York from Chicago in 1979, Austė's images cascaded across the landscape of the city. Initially exhibiting with the Hamilton Gallery, she performed in spaces as varied as 8 BC, Palladium, and Pyramid Club. She went on to show in numerous venues, including Ronald Feldman Gallery, PS1, Artists Space, 56 Bleecker, and more recently with Mitchell Alpus Gallery (2009), and Greenspon (2016). Her work expanded outside the confines of these spaces: in 1986 she was invited by Simon Doonan to create a suite of massive tableaux occupying the windows at Barneys New York; and in 1988 designed sets for the theatrical production *Champagne, Glamor, Glory, & Gold* directed by Taylor Mead.

Austė's visual output speaks to the overlooked roots of Punk and New Wave aesthetics in divergent strains of European modernism, in Expressionist painting, and in Surrealist landscape. Representing decades of artistic production, the works today appear fiercely new.

*with special thanks to Amy Greenspon and Fayette Hickox.*