

An abstract painting featuring a complex, dark, branching structure resembling a coral reef or a network of roots. The structure is composed of thick, dark lines with small, colorful, circular elements (possibly representing bubbles or small organisms) attached to them. The background is a textured, light brown and beige wash with visible brushstrokes.

Michael Lombardo
Pearl Snap

May 16 – June 21, 2025

NOON Projects
951 Chung King Road
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Thursday to Saturday
Noon–5pm
And by Appointment

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NOON Projects Presents

Michael Lombardo *Pearl Snap*

May 16 – June 21,
2025

Opening Reception:
May 16, 2025
6–9pm

951 Chung King Road
Los Angeles, CA 90012

NOON Projects is a gallery in Chinatown, Los Angeles. Our program showcases artists who work from the heart, with a focus on queer-ness, the divine, the natural world, craft, and social practices. We host an ongoing program of dinners, concerts, meditation groups, and community happenings.

We aim to create a welcoming space for artists and the community to connect and flourish. Please come by and see us – you are very welcome here.

Away from this red dirt town,
I'm gonna make a joyful sound.
— Emmylou Harris, "Red Dirt Girl"

Michael Lombardo's home, perched on a hillside in Northeast Los Angeles, is brimming with the things he collects — scuffed cowboy boots and cracked-open geodes, conch shells with curling pink insides, red Oklahoma rose stones, rhinestoned clip-on ties, pearl-button satin shirts, black and white photographs. He is drawn to artifacts of the American West and his own past, objects both humble and dramatic, ornate and ordinary, like opening lines of stories, or songs.

Below, in a space he built beneath his house, Lombardo enshrines these objects in paint.

His sculptural paintings, meticulously jigsawed and upholstered in stretched linen, are luminous, glinting things, made from wood, cloth, oil, and dirt. Shimmering in melon ochres and pale, limpid pinks his subjects are incarnations of California light. A satin Nudie blouse, a Western bandana, a blooming rose are held in reverent focus, their tightly-cropped compositions pressed close to the surface, like relics under glass.

Lombardo frames quiet details — the cursive handwriting in *Conch III*, the faint stain on the folds of *N. Turk* — fossilized traces of intimate histories we've never been told, but can feel. Because they're ours, too. We grow up and still dream of our childhood house. We hold a conch shell up to our ears to hear an old ocean roaring, and then shellac it for the mantle. We drive full speed away from the town we grew up in, but the dirt is still under our fingernails. We steal our boyfriend's shirt.

In French, *souvenir* means "to remember." It is memory that sanctifies our objects, imbuing them with weight, with story. Pearl Snap is a monument to memory, but one that acts as oracle. Lombardo points by painting, as if to say, "Look. Here. This is where liberation lives."

In this world, a worn Emmylou Harris T-shirt becomes a modern relic. The soft insides of an overripe fruit recall Caravaggio's *Boy with A Basket of Fruit*, reminding us that rendering something in a state of decay can still find desire blooming within. Here, a honky tonk, lit just right, can be as radiant as a Papal palace, and salvation might be found in the bar, the orchard, the shore, the studio — the places we can hide and still see.

In a culture that rushes toward explanation, Lombardo's work insists on presence. The paintings remind us that devotion doesn't need grandeur; it only needs attention. That home might be a place, but it's also a practice. That in this tender, tactile world, faith — whether in grace, in country, in memory, in dirt — is worth holding up to the light.

Lombardo's work suggests we are only as good as what we touch and what touches us. What we walk on. What we pick up off the beach in the middle of the night. The things we handle are lit with our life force. To frame them, Lombardo gives them a voice.

—Emily Bernstein

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Michael Lombardo
N. Turk, 2025
Oil on linen
18 x 16 in. | 45.7 x 40.6 cm





Michael Lombardo
Clam Shell, 2025
Oil on linen
19 x 37 in. | 48.3 x 95 cm





Michael Lombardo
Tammy, 2025
Oil on linen
32 x 31 3/4 in. | 81.3 x 80.6 cm





Michael Lombardo
Recuerdo, 2024

Oil on linen

18 1/4 x 43 3/4 x 3/4 in. | 46.4 x 111.1 x 1.9 cm





Michael Lombardo
Pearl Snap, 2024
Oil on linen
18 x 16 in. | 45.7 x 40.6 cm





Michael Lombardo
Emmy, 2024
Oil on linen
14 x 12 in. | 35.6 x 30.5 cm





Michael Lombardo
Rose I, 2024
Oil on linen
7 x 7 3/4 in. | 17.8 x 19.7 cm





Michael Lombardo
Conch II, 2025
Oil on linen with dirt
9 1/2 x 12 3/4 x 3/4 in. | 24.1 x 32.4 x 1.9 cm





Michael Lombardo
Conch III, 2025

Oil on linen with dirt

11 3/4 x 8 1/2 x 3/4 in. | 29.8 x 21.6 x 1.9 cm





Michael Lombardo
Christmas Jim, 2025
Oil on linen
11 x 9 in. | 27.9 x 22.9 cm





Michael Lombardo
Compost I, 2025
Oil on linen
6 x 5 in. | 15.2 x 12.7 cm





Michael Lombardo
Compost I, 2025
Oil on linen
6 x 5 in. | 15.2 x 12.7 cm



Biography

Michael Lombardo



Michael Lombardo (b. 1990, Norman, Oklahoma) makes paintings that depict objects and ephemera associated with the American West and the Great Plains. Regional references and allusions to memory appear across his body of work, capturing fleeting moments and significant heirlooms carefully rendered in his highly detailed and magnified compositions.

Traces of landscape appear throughout, charging the canvases with a keen sense of time and place. Red dirt, for example, unique to Oklahoma's iron-rich soil, is collected from Lombardo's visits back to his birth state, providing not just a formal texture to the canvas but also a gesture to home that materially provides an autobiographical layer to the works.

Light is also utilized as formative material in Lombardo's tableaux, foregrounding the sheen of a satin pearl snap shirt, the glisten of its rhinestones, and collected weathered sun-drenched rose rocks from the flat, rugged terrains in which he visits.

Lombardo distorts the imagery and the perspectives of the classic objects sourced from his personal collections and experiences, allowing him to transform recognizable mise-en-scènes into vivid explorations that celebrate the quiet moments of cherished regional memory and fleeting everyday life.

Michael Lombardo has been the subject of solo and group exhibitions at The Hole, Los Angeles (2024); Barbati, Turin (2023); Cadet Capela, Paris (2023); 1226, Dallas (2023); G/ART/EN Gallery, Como, Italy (2023); and Brackett Creek Exhibitions, New York (2022). Lombardo lives and works in Los Angeles.

CV
Michael Lombardo

Born 1990 in Norman, Oklahoma
Lives and works in Los Angeles, California

Education

2014 BFA Painting, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, Rhode Island

Solo and 2-Person Exhibitions

2025 *Pearl Snap*, NOON Projects, Los Angeles, California
2023 Solo Booth, Barbati Gallery, Artissima, Turin, Italy
2023 *Cactus Bloom, Clip-On, Cufflinks, Wrangler*, Cadet Capela, Paris, France
2022 *BOBBY LA & Institut für Bild und Objekt* for Michael Lombardo & Anthony Renda, Brackett Creek Expositions, New York, New York
2015 *Faux Casual, LUPA*; a collaboration with Diablo Rosso and Frau Lamb, Panama City, Casco Viejo

Group Exhibitions

2024 *Becoming a Swan (Going Through the Veil)*, NOON Projects, Los Angeles, California
2024 *Hollywood Dream Bubble: Ed Ruscha's Influence in Los Angeles and Beyond*, The Hole, Los Angeles, California
2024 *Clipper Cuts*, Private Apt, Brussels, Belgium
2023 *Untold Stories*, Garten Gallery, Como, Italy
2023 *The Range*, 12.26 Gallery, Dallas, Texas
2023 *Imperfect Paradise*, Barbati Gallery, Venice, Italy
2022 *Brackett Creek Invitational*, Brackett Creek Expositions, Bozeman, Montana
2021 *Via Sanborn & Sunset*, BOBBY LOS ANGELES, Los Angeles, California
2019 *Guy & Gals*, BOBBY LOS ANGELES, Group Show - Los Angeles, California
2016 *Artist Issue, Jerónimo*, a collaboration with GOGO mag and nine featured artists, Panama City, Casco Viejo
2014 *Busman's Holiday*, Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, Missouri
2014 *Arte Panameño Ayer & Hoy*, Museo de Arte Moderno, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

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