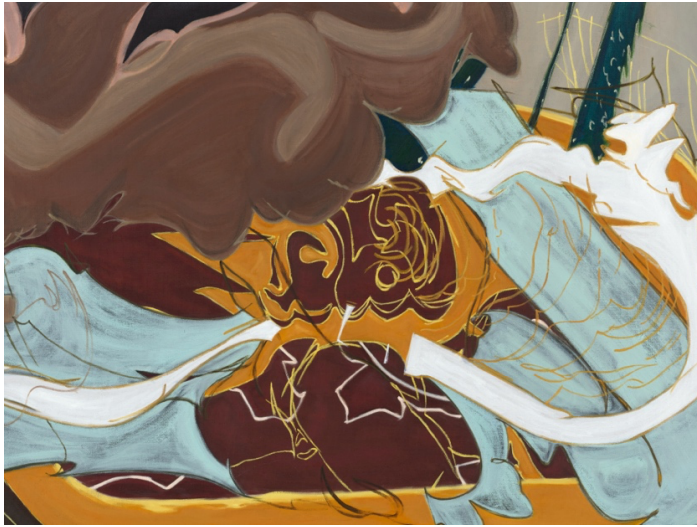


GALLERY WENDI NORRIS



Lisa Jo: Ecology of Fear

May 22 - July 12, 2025

After Lisa Jo

By Dodie Bellamy

The figure takes a sip of lukewarm coffee, slopping some on the table. The viewer clenches before the figure's sharp-edged messiness. Fed up with all the fragments and contradictions the viewer cops a feel, poking the figure's curve with a greasy finger. To be marketable, a figure should seduce the viewer, should pretend to ignore the viewer's invasions. This makes the figure feel like a femme, and the figure hates that. The viewer can't reconcile how a creature with a cunt could be this intimidating. The figure sits in a midwestern cafe, eating food that's all wrong. Horribly salty Hoppin John soup—shreds of bacon floating in a broth of lentils rather than black eyed peas. On the street lightning spastically blinks on and off, and in the distance thunder rumbles. Should a siren sound, the figure has been told, that means hide in a basement. When the figure googles if it's safe to take a shower during a rainstorm, opinions are mixed. There's a story of somebody washing their face in the sink when lightning strikes the house, then zaps through the plumbing, through the somebody's body, and out their asshole. The figure pulls out a spiral-bound notebook and writes that down. In 2017 there were 16 deaths from lightning strikes, and none of the victims were bathing. In fact, all of them were outdoors, generally in open, flat areas where a standing human holding a golf club or shotgun "can be the nearest thing to a cloud." Hanging from a vintage gold-filled chain around the figure's neck is a Victorian baroque pearl, set horizontally in gold. The pearl is puffy and bubbled—freakish in a different context—but here a cute cumulous cloud. The pearl is paired with a late 19th Century French cross comprised of six roughly cut diamonds encased in silver. On the back is a layer of gold so no silver touches delicate flesh. The combo of cloud pearl and cross suggests Blake—a V of yellow light shoots out ancient of days dazzling the chest. The figure enjoys wearing a cross. The viewer looks at it and makes assumptions, and since the viewer tends to fear Western religion—those assumptions give the figure power. The figure thinks of it not as a cross but a crossroad. Lighting incense and a drippy indigo candle, the figure touches the necklace and summons the liminal. On the night before the new moon, the figure gathers sweepings from the kitchen floor, walks to the 3-limbed intersection at the end of the block and sprinkles the sweepings as an offering to Hecate. Hecate gobbles up refuse—the unwanted, abandoned, discarded—systems on the verge of falling apart.

GALLERY WENDI NORRIS

Dodie Bellamy has written for numerous art magazines and catalogues. Semiotext(e) has published two collections of her essays, "When the Sick Rule the World" (2015) and "Bee Reaved" (2021). In 2023, she was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship for nonfiction.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

The work of Lisa Jo (b. 1983, Los Angeles, CA) occupies an ambiguous terrain that resists definitive categorization and insists on a tension between representation and abstraction. Born in Los Angeles, CA, the artist takes inspiration from both film noir and the glaring sunshine of Southern California, creating paintings that tap into an elusive foreboding and destabilization. The meticulously painted works generate initial impressions of flatness, which belie their intricately layered and kinetic compositions. Mediating a process of revealing and concealing, in which images appear to be on the verge of collapse, the paintings exist between recognition and cognition.

Jo's works have been the subject of solo and two-person presentations at Paris Internationale, Paris, France (2024); Galerie Molitor, Berlin, Germany (2024); David Lewis, New York, NY (2022 and 2023); Efremidis, Berlin, Germany (2021); Braunsfelder, Cologne, Germany with Laurent Dupont (2020); and Plymouth Rock, Zurich (2019). Additionally, the paintings have also been featured in group exhibitions including Kunsthalle Zürich, Zurich, Switzerland (2023); The Downer, Berlin, Germany (2021); Fitzpatrick Gallery, Paris, France (2019); and other galleries and institutions.

The artist currently lives and works in Berlin.

ABOUT GALLERY WENDI NORRIS

Gallery Wendi Norris champions visionary artists of the 20th and 21st centuries. Grounded by its decades-long relationships with these luminaries, the gallery represents those artists whose nomadic, intuitive, and intellectually rigorous practices interrogate the aesthetic, scientific, and philosophical movements of their time and whose work flows across disciplines, continents, and generations.

The gallery is committed to advancing the legacies of historically significant estates while cultivating the current generation of artists, including María Magdalena Campos-Pons, Leonora Carrington, Chitra Ganesh, Enrique Martínez Celaya, Wolfgang Paalen, Alice Rahon, Dorothea Tanning, Remedios Varo, and Peter Young. Through its landmark exhibitions, museum collaborations, scholarly monographs, public programming, and meticulous stewardship, the gallery has been credited with recontextualizing art history by ushering artists into the canon. Working in concert with major museums and private collectors, Gallery Wendi Norris builds expansive and enduring collections for its array of international clients.

Gallery Wendi Norris was founded in 2002 and is headquartered in San Francisco's historic Jackson Square.

GALLERY WENDI NORRIS

Media Inquiries:

Daniel Rechtschaffen, Gallery Wendi Norris

daniel@gallerywendinorris.com

Vyoma Venkataraman, PR Butter

vyoma@prbutter.com

Image: Lisa Jo, "In the Cut" (detail), 2025. Oil on linen, diptych. 70 x 106 in. Photo by Eric Tschernow.
Image courtesy of the artist and Gallery Wendi Norris, San Francisco.