

Jessica Williams
Under the Shadows of Purple Mountains

Lapislazuli is pleased to announce „Under the Shadows of Purple Mountains“, an exhibition of new paintings by Jessica Williams. The exhibition presents a focused, intimate series of paintings made over the past year. An opening reception will be held on December 17 from 19:00h to 21:00h

Drawing loosely from the American lyric tradition invoked by the phrase “purple mountain majesties,” the work subtly inverts that promise of grandeur, shifting attention from spectacle to proximity. These paintings feel suspended between landscape and portrait, between the domestic and the mythic, grounded in observation yet charged by psychological drift. They sit comfortably within contemporary painting while resisting its velocity, favoring slowness, intimacy, and a heightened attentiveness to light. References hover at the edges, from Turner’s dissolving horizons, Redon’s inward glow, and the soft dream logic of symbolist color, while the work remains grounded in the lived present.

Over the past year, Williams has worked almost entirely outdoors, painting beneath a large elm tree in her backyard. This period coincided with her first year of motherhood, a time that fundamentally altered both her sense of time and her way of seeing. Long hours spent outside allowed light, shadow, and changing weather to shape the work directly, producing a practice rooted in duration, repetition, and quiet dissolution. The elm’s shifting canopy became both shelter and filter, its shadows moving across the surfaces of the paintings as they were made.

For „Under the Shadows of Purple Mountains“, Williams presents three paintings that reflect this mode of working. Color functions as psychic space, registering mood, attention, and the disorientation of early motherhood. Sunlight presses gently into the scenes as both illumination and atmosphere. The works suggest a world viewed from slightly beneath itself, where the act of looking becomes an intimate, absorbing condition rather than a means of mastery.