



Juror's Comments

Dan Cameron

Founder and Director, Prospect New Orleans

What does it mean to say that a work of art comes from somewhere? In a great number of cases in the U.S., for example, the distinction may be of little apparent significance at

all. Not every artist has control over where s/he lives, and some artists create work that is determinedly the same, whether they are living nomadic or sedentary lives, or regardless if they prefer mountains to cities or the plains to the coasts.

In the not-so-distant past, most American artists were expected to live out their formative years with the knowledge that New York was the 'only' place to live and work. That definition has only recently expanded to include Chicago and Los Angeles, as well as bohemian pockets of the U.S. like Santa Fe, New Orleans, and Marfa. Unfortunately, at least one commonly shared piece of knowledge that most of the globe relies on to forge ahead – that it no longer matters where on the planet artists opt to live and work, as long as they're productive – seems to have had a hard time gaining traction in the U.S. There are invariably greater levels of cultural production in some corners of the nation than others, and artists might still be the first to sniff out new approaches to homesteading, whether in Montana or Montauk, but there is always a steady peer pressure that propels a substantial proportion of the best and brightest toward the biggest cities, the strongest lights, and the truly stellar art museums and collections.

Although I've traveled in the South all my life, currently live parttime in New Orleans, and in 1995 organized a regional museum exhibition at New Orleans Museum of Art about contemporary artists in the South, I confess to being at a loss to understand exactly what the designation means. Perhaps that's because I'm also a lifetime New Yorker (with a few years in Ohio, Virginia, and Kentucky as a young child), and as such have long since internalized the double standard by which art from the largest cities is referred to as American art, while art from anywhere else is 'regional.'

One thing that my experience in selecting artists for the present edition has reinforced is a growing understanding of the South as a place where painting and drawing remain all but unchallenged in their primacy within the visual arts. What one finds is a broad range of artists in relative solitude within their studios, working slowly to cover flat surfaces, more or less as they've done since the beginning of time. Obviously there are innumerable and significant sculptors, object-makers, installation artists, and photographers active throughout the South, but something about painting seems considerably more in sync with the environment.

Not surprisingly, representational work is the predominant genre, and nearly half the work included is figurative—albeit with much variety. The most prominent subgenre represented here is what might be called Neo-folk, or a cultivated variation of the *nail*, which seems like an homage to the great self-taught artists of the South. This tradition is well represented in the work of Ananda Balingit-LeFils, Jason Galbut, Brian Haverlock, Marcus Kenney, and Kyle White. The next most populous group of figurative painters practice a kind of eroticallytinged brand symbolism, as found in the work of Rachel Bone, Kathleen Loe, and Monica Zeringue. Nearly as pronounced is the amount of figurative work with an aggressively Pop twist, from Beth Edwards'

Kathleen Loe

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b. 1953 Franklin, LA

Residencies

2005 American Academy in Rome, Italy 2003 Vermont Studio Center, Johnson, VT

Professional Experience

2010 Editor and Contributing Writer, Alchemy of Light
1999-08 Director of Painting and Critical Studies, Anderson Ranch
Arts Center, Snowmass Village, CO

Solo Exhibitions

2011 New Work, Kathleen Loe, Barrister's Gallery, New Orleans, LA
 2009 Screened, Western Wyoming College Gallery, Rock Springs, WY
 1995 Kathleen Loe, New Work, Henry Feiwel Gallery, New York, NY
 Through Darkness and Water, Kathleen Loe 1984-1994,
 McClean County Museum, Bloomington, IL

Group Exhibitions

2010 Under the Influence of Fashion and Finance, Frederick R. Weisman Museum, Malibu, CA
 NOLA, Laura Rathe Fine Art, Houston, TX
 Like A Prayer, Barrister's Gallery, New Orleans, LA
 2008 Up Close, Kathryn Markel Gallery, New York, NY
 Kathleen Loe, Teresa Cole, John Westmark, Gallery
 Bienvenu, New Orleans, LA

Publications

2009 New Orleans Art Review, Recent Work from Five Louisiana Artists
 1987 ARTNews, Studio: Kathleen Loe

Collections

Frederick R. Weisman Art Foundation Jersey City Museum Simon & Schuster, Inc.

Represented by

Gallery Bienvenu, New Orleans, LA David Floria Gallery, Aspen, CO The atmosphere of the Deep South in which I was raised was permeated with secrecy and illusion. Family surveillance, church hypocrisy, and a Mandarinesque social system produced a keen awareness that life was being designed behind many delicate screens. For years I've been living in Northern cities and the Western high country. This first group of paintings since my return to New Orleans functions as a decryption for veiled meanings, using forms that suggest the most sensual of emotions: anticipation.

The work is a synesthesia of early visceral experiences: the secular sound of a screen porch door slamming; the guillotine slide of the confessional screen; the suffocating, intoxicating smells of liturgical incense; iridescent dragonflies on hidden ponds; fragrant red and pink roses in bowls of water by my bed; the disturbingly erotic and punishing presence of embellished chasubles; greenness as the color, smell, and texture of outside; holy water and lace on the heads of women and girls; red lipstick, blue TV light, red clay, black dirt, white oyster shells, white panties; whispered betrayals.





Kathleen Loe Shock | oil and wax on canvas, 60 x 60 inches



 $\label{eq:Kathleen Loe} \textbf{Wait } \ \, \text{oil, spray paint, and wax on canvas, } 60 \times 60 \text{ inches}$



Kathleen Loe

Hide oil and wax on canvas, 108 x 48 inches