

<http://lindawarrenprojects.com/stanley-lewis-don-southard-jeremy-long-megan-euker/>



## **Stanley Lewis, Don Southard & Jeremy Long // Megan Euker**

September 11, 2009

Painters Painting: Stanley Lewis, Don Southard, Jeremy Long

Project Space: New paintings by Megan Euker

Friday September 11th, 2009 – October 10th, 2009

Artist Reception: Fri. Sept. 11th – 6-9pm



Linda Warren Gallery is proud to kick off the fall art season with a three-person exhibition featuring Stanley Lewis, Don Southard, and Jeremy Long in “Painters Painting.” These three like-minded artists and teachers, spanning three decades in age, grapple with similar concerns, challenging themselves in subject matter, in an effort to create works that are original, inventive and sympathetic to the tradition of painting. Through their processes, methodologies, and personal inspirations, they pursue the task of painting to its highest levels, demonstrating not just a keen awareness and knowledge of the medium, but also respect and dialogue with the history of art. Post-abstract figuration best describes their thinking and practice as they employ abstraction in structure and metaphor to achieve perceptual representations of reality, as well as work toward furthering painting’s importance in the contemporary art world.

For those not familiar with Stanley Lewis, Stanley is “the Painter’s painter” – the highly regarded, safe to say, revered artist and teacher who has inspired

decades of painters from colleges and universities throughout the country – some of which are painters represented today in this gallery. His participation and attendance at this exhibition is a cause for celebration and a rare and exciting treat, for he is hardly away from his round the clock pursuit of his art. He is widely considered one of the strongest landscape painters living today. With an uncompromising approach, Lewis works out doors and often in his own backyard throughout the year, striving to capture for himself the direct perception of nature, where he takes the ordinary and transforms it into the grand pictorial realizations that are before us today. For it is not the “what” that is depicted in a painting or drawing that matters, but the “how.”

The “how” is striking surfaces – thick, battled, retooled, revisited, and ripped apart. These are part of his method to get each work (many of which take entire seasons or years to complete) to a point where he can feel satisfied and “get where he needs to go”. Details, forms, nuances, abstractions, struggles, tensions, rhythms and harmony are in constant motion on his canvases – reflecting passing time, changing light and shifting perceptions and realizations. On display in this exhibit will be some of the highly realized works that take years to complete, as well as wonderful smaller paintings and studies and never before exhibited large scale black and white paintings on paper. These latter works are inventions Lewis works on in the early hours of the morning to grapple with the motifs he explores out doors – compositional and spatial issues and memories of what he both saw and what he knows. All of these paintings, his works on canvas to masterful drawings, are all pursued in

Lewis' process: surfaces rich with the history of forceful modifications – additions, destructions and complete transfigurations, which culminate in works that resonate like poetry.

Don Southard, an Associate Professor of Painting at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago for more than 20 years, has his own legion of fans. Southard's choice of subject matter varies, and is more contingent on what will capture and sustain his own interest long enough to take a piece to its hard-fought resolution; however, objects from the banal and mundane are his forte and serve to steer the viewers' visual attention onto the painting itself and dissolve the notion of narration or psychology. Through Southard's painstaking decisions regarding color, form, light, space, surface and perspective, the plasticity of its own inner relationships emerge. Presented in this exhibition will be selections from the still-life genre, one of his more favorite themes to play with, along with transcriptions from Old Masters works inspired by Ingres, Jan Steen as well as Fayum mummy portraits.

Jeremy Long, the youngest of the three and Assistant Professor at Ithaca College, is creating his own flock of followers. In his newest works, the monumental figurative paintings, "Delivery" and "Ithaca Home", Long continues in the vein of his last solo exhibition at the gallery, using himself, his family and immediate environment as subject matter and inspiration to utilize and experiment with all the tools employable by a post-abstract figurate; history, perspective, color, scale, geometry and narrative are invoked in various measures to address motifs spanning centuries of art tradition,

including the 17th, 20th, and of course, 21st century. In “Delivery”, Long’s newest piece, personal events inspire the problems which emerge for this work, that being how to involve a “figure” intentionally left outside the main pictorial space with the figures within. Long’s manipulation of geometry is cubist in thought and abstraction, involving a whole cross reference of information; this combined with the emotional and psychological concerns produce demanding works that engage the viewers in fascinating, and challenging ways – providing a multi-layered decadent inundation to the senses and significant visual pleasure.

Stanley Lewis received his BFA from Wesleyan University in 1963 and was a recipient of a Danforth Fellowship while earning his MFA from Yale University in 1967. Starting in 1969 Lewis taught at Kansas City Art Institute and continued for 16 years, followed with Smith College from 1986-1990 and then American University from 1990-2003. He has taught summers at the Art School at the Chautauqua Institution since 1990. In 2005, he received a Guggenheim Fellowship and in 2007 he had a major retrospective at the Museum in the Katzen Art Center at American University. Don Southard received his BFA in 1978 from the University of Iowa and his MFA from Yale University in 1982. He has been a guest lecturer and instructor at numerous colleges and universities such as The International School in Umbria, Italy, The Chautauqua School of Art, and he has been a Professor at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago since 1987. Jeremy Long received his BFA from The Kansas City Art Institute in 1995 and his MFA from American University in 2001. He

sought out and studied with Stanley Lewis at The Chautauqua School of Art for four summers and again at American University. Jeremy was highly influenced and inspired by both Stanley Lewis' work and strength as a Professor. Jeremy Long has taught at Knox College, The American Academy, Assumption College, and currently is an Assistant Professor at Ithaca College in New York. In addition he has also taught summers at The Chautauqua School of Art. Jeremy Longs' work is currently in many prestigious private and corporate collections, including most recently a most ambitious 30-foot painting commissioned by Kirkland and Ellis in Chicago.

Project Space:



It is not by chance that Megan Euker exhibits this month in the Project space. Euker, a recent graduate of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where she received both her BFA in 2005 and MFA in 2007, is a young and remarkable

painter. Euker returned last month from Italy after having spent a year there on a Fulbright Scholarship. Some of the fruits of her continued concern and research involving ritualistic human interaction and behavior are on display in this exhibition. Ongoing is her investigation of culturally specific bathing and water immersion rituals, as well as a new and compelling motif she discovered, practiced and observed while in Italy: the Brazilian dance/martial art technique called “Capoeira” – a very physical, spiritual, social and actually violent practice that involves music, movement, dance, and rhythm as well as tremendous focus. Euker, who has been a student of both Lewis and Southard, is extremely aggressive and obsessive with her work, working exhaustively to capture all the nuances of her subject matter, which involve both landscapes and figure. Often Euker repaints the entire canvas over and over (in many cases very large scale) in order to work wet on wet and incorporate every element in the painting to work as a whole. Euker, now back in Chicago, began teaching painting and drawing at the College of Dupage this fall.