



A CLOSE LOOK INTO THE MIND OF SHANNON CARTIER LUCY

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INTERVIEWS

CRISTINA SAMPER

After a 10 year-long break from producing art Shannon Cartier Lucy released a series of realistic paintings that reflect an entire new side to her artistic talent. The series titled *The Ever Flashing Strap* was exhibited in Nina Johnson Gallery, Miami April-May 2020. These intimate suburban scenes in methodical style present a dichotomy in the viewer's mind as they express a directly contradicting and anonymous scene. Pastel palettes take over scenes of every-day American household compositions, always with a blatantly absurd reality that cannot be ignored. A fishbowl sitting on a gas stove with the flames on, a ballerina stretching while a man rests his feet on her back as he reads, a woman leaning on a couch with a machete laying on her chest, a woman holding a pair of scissors to her left wrist. The viewer is presented with these paintings and suddenly time stops. The melancholy and numbness of her subjects take charge, and for that moment the viewer becomes the subject. Lucy mentioned how her thinking process, her troubled past, and her childhood release the depictions of the "familiar and the unfamiliar at the same time".

Tell us a bit about yourself. Where are you from and how did art first come into your life?

I grew up in Nashville, Tennessee. I spent two decades in New York and Los Angeles before settling back here in Nashville.

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Has your work always taken on the style it currently embodies?

Actually, painting in this realistic painterly manner is quite new and honestly unexpected for me. I had for years been producing text paintings and painting in a whole different way. The themes, the mood, though, I'd say, are relatively the same.

What is the first thing you do when you start a work?

Panic, haha!

I always feel a slight nagging sense of dread. That THIS is the painting that is going to be a complete failure.

But literally, when I start a painting, I start by loosely sketching out the image in paint in monochrome only on Day one. Then, I walk away from the painting, spending the rest of the day plowing through all the self-sabotaging thoughts. Then I really start painting the next day.



Naptime, 2018, Courtesy of the artist and Lubov, New York

Walk us through a day in the studio

Right now, I have just moved into a new 'old' house, inside of which I am in the process of building my studio. It's a complete mess, so I have no routine yet, which makes me feel unhinged! Normally, I straighten up a bit, put on

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music, burn a little palo santo (because I love rituals) and start mixing my paint colors. On a good day, I'll paint 3 hours or so, take a lunch break and then return for the afternoon. I prefer working with direct sunlight, so I generally paint only in the daytime. The colors are really not the same with artificial light.

From where do you draw your inspiration?

For the artwork I make, there is no specific place from which I draw inspiration. As I peruse the internet, something might catch my attention and I'll save an image or take a note. I have thousands of pictures in folders to draw from and assemble for a painting.

Your work has a very intimate and almost surreal style. Can you tell us more about where that style originated?

This is a question I have a hard time answering. I suppose I could psychoanalyse myself and find a source for my art, but I'm not really interested in knowing why I come up with these ideas or paint the way I do. I guess my style has come naturally over the years as a result of the life I've lived and the culture I have ingested and the particular way I see the world. I paint what excites me and interests me. Other than that, it's kind of a mystery.

I will say this, though- I do feel more connected to myself making art in the way I'm doing right now. I'm not trying to affect anything that is not me, if that makes sense. I'm being genuine and sincere. That is probably what you're finding intimate in my paintings, perhaps.

If you could share a coffee with any artist, dead or alive, who would it be and why?

Hmm, well, I could tell you an artist I admire, but as we all know, that person may not be a very interesting person to hang out with. I'd definitely pick someone really funny, because I love people that make me laugh. This is such a boring answer, but Jerry Seinfeld. I have a super crush on Seinfeld, especially after watching that show *Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee*.

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What source material do you base your work off of?

I paint from life, photos I take myself, found photos, screenshots, old magazines, film stills, etc.

What's next for you?

Artwise, I have an upcoming show in late November in Paris at Galerie Hussenot, then a solo show in London with Soft Opening next spring. Also, I just bought my first house on five acres of land, so I plan to set up a nice sunny studio on the edge of my woods and grow a garden. Then I never have to leave my house and I can really start living the dream!

At the end of every interview we like to ask artists to recommend a friend whose work you love and would like us to interview next. Who would you suggest?

My friend Brad Phillips is someone whose work I loved immediately when I was introduced a few years ago. I definitely feel a kinship and think that we share a similar way of looking at things. A few years ago, we traded artwork, as so many artists do. The word painting I got from him says, "All Woman, All Cry."

<https://www.artofchoice.co/a-close-look-into-the-mind-of-shannon-cartier-lucy/>

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