

NOAH BECKER'S

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"THE BEST ART IN THE WORLD"

Whitehot Recommends: Rosa Loy: Herbarium at Lyles & King



Rosa Loy, Herbarium, Installation View, 2023.

Rosa Loy: Herbarium
Lyles & King
May 18 through June 24, 2023
By WM, June 2023

From the press release:

Lyles & King is pleased to present Herbarium, an exhibition of paintings by Rosa Loy (b. 1958, Zwickau, Germany). This is her second exhibition with the gallery. Rosa Loy's paintings feature intimate scenes of women in the company of other women. Imbued with a sense of the fantastic, her work contains visual echoes of classic fairytales, many of which find their origins in Eastern Europe—as the artist herself does. In amongst the sylphs and spirits, her human characters connect and commune in the most natural of settings. Given our current realities, it's possible to perceive Loy's painted universe as an optimistic response to our material world in turmoil. Loy herself is clear to allow the viewer their own space to form any interpretation of her paintings' messages. "I paint from the inside out," she explains. "Painting is subjective and very personal, and I only make an offer of beauty."

A herbarium is a collection of preserved plant specimens, pressed and dried between layers of card or paper. With the exhibition's title in mind, this body of work also serves as an alternate form of preservation, whereby the artist has created a non-linear collection of her own thoughts; a compendium of her imagination and interior images gathered during her daily commute to her studio through her hometown of Leipzig, in the state of Saxony on the eastern edge of Germany. Given Loy's coming of age within the confines of the former GDR, there are formal elements and parallels that on a surface level recall compositions found within the region's prominent Socialist Realism movement: humans endeavor, directionally and collectively. But Loy's divinations look towards a more spectral and radical utopian vision, where any 'work' is in service of wonder and a broader connection to the natural world. Here, Loy's work can be seen as a continuation of Romanticism, whose ideals of freeing the mind from the established, and a preference for the organic, have been strongly rooted in this area, long before any iron curtain was either hung or draped. WM