



Rene Lynch. *Secret Life of the Forest (After Dark)*, 2007, oil on canvas, 48" x 60"



JENKINS JOHNSON GALLERY

Rene Lynch: SECRETS

March 6 – April 26, 2008

Jenkins Johnson Gallery

464 Sutter Street San Francisco, CA 94108

t: 415.677.0770 f: 415.677.0780

sf@jenkinsjohnsongallery.com www.jenkinsjohnsongallery.com

tuesday - friday 10am – 6pm, saturday 10 am – 5pm

Jenkins Johnson Gallery announces a solo exhibition of painter Rene Lynch's *Secrets*, which includes work from the series' *Secret Life of the Forest*, *Gaze*, and *Wonderland*. The exhibition opens with the artist's reception on Thursday, March 6 from 5:30 – 7:30pm in San Francisco and will run through April 26, 2008. The exhibition can also be viewed at jenkinsjohnsongallery.com. Exhibition brochure available.

Between the age limits of nine and fourteen there occur maidens who, to certain travelers, twice or many times older than they, reveal their true nature which is not human, but nymphic (that is, demoniac); and these chosen creatures I propose to designate as "nymphets." In fact, I would have the reader see "nine" and "fourteen" as the boundaries - the mirry beaches and rosy rocks - of an enchanted island haunted by those nymphets of mine and surrounded by a vast, misty sea.- Vladimir Nabokov, Lolita

In her exhibition *Secrets*, Rene Lynch confronts us with a provocative exploration of young girls on the verge of womanhood. Girls such as those that are often seen in fashion magazines and main stream cinema and other forms of mass media. Favorite subjects of artists like the influential French painter Balthazar Klossowski de Rola, (1908-2001) and author of the infamous, *Lolita*, Vladimir Nabokov. The artist draws upon other cultural influences such as classical contemporary American painting and photography, kitsch, and current events that all take part in depicting the beauty and impending decay of this theme.

The series, *Secret Life of the Forest*, presents a larger than life view into a vast and complex place. A territory that is teeming with life and growth, but a dark and intimidating place for any trespassers. Writers and imaginaries of monumental science fiction novels and fairytales have long been enticed by the forests' endless curiosities and fascinations, as is Lynch, who creates a visual discourse between this magical, mysterious place and a nymphet navigating her way, fearfully, into the next chapter of life. Perhaps it's the forest's incantation or the fear of the unknown that comes from within each subject that makes these girls so magnetic. Their body language is awkward, a turned in shoulder and angled foot, but as she so innocently stands there she unabashedly stares straight at the viewer confronting him or her with an undiscovered sexuality and volatile innocence. As Lynch points out in her work that she manipulates the *desire and desirability inherent in this age of adolescence - that powerful and vulnerable stage of life full of sexual and intellectual yearning, when a child begins to break free and desires, like Alice in Wonderland, to see what is beyond the looking glass.* Clad in delicate nightdresses each girl stands alone and adrift, her innocence juxtaposed against the forest. The viewer becomes a voyeur looking into these scenes. As described by the artist, *The young girls are a metaphor for innocence and vulnerability, protectors of untrammelled nature. The forest they inhabit is at once a refuge from, and a symbol of the dark unknown, both of the unconscious and the greater darker side of our present world, menaced by terrorism, wars and global warming.*

Secrets also includes two other extraordinary series, *Gaze* and *Wonderland*. In *Gaze*, Lynch depicts several portraits of adolescence girls, but rather than the vacuous eyes of the models in fashion spreads, Lynch offers a fresh perspective and illustrates her subject confronting the viewer and creating an interconnection between the two. She portrays a personality and essence in each portrait to create a conceptual portrayal of adolescence. *Wonderland* is a reference to Lynch's backyard in Brooklyn and the ever active microcosmic cycle of life that occurs there in the summertime and illustrates a child's fascination and imagination in such a setting. This series of watercolors is a thoughtful and precious depiction of children stumbling upon the tiny dramas of insects and frogs, a sensual and dreamlike experience to witness; like falling down the rabbit's hole.

Lynch has an incredible ability to take rich imagery from her imagination or sources in fine art or children's books and dexterously adapts them into a painting. Her work references the theatrical settings of contemporary photographer Loretta Lux, the dynamic color scheme of Maxfield Parrish or the sexually charged works of Egon Scheile and Balthus.

Rene Lynch's work has recently been noted in the *New York Times*. She has shown at HPGRP in Tokyo, Haus der Kunst (Contemporary Art Institute), Munich; Galerie Kaysser, Munich; Kenise Barnes, New York; AG Gallery, Brooklyn; HPGRP, New York; Metaphor Contemporary Art, Brooklyn; Hunterdon Museum of Art, Clinton, NJ; La Cité des Arts, Paris; Atelier Lacourière-Frélaud, Paris; Parsons School of Design Gallery, Paris; Abroms Art Center, New York; LIU Gallery, Brooklyn; Center for Book Arts, New York; Artist's Space, New York; Pierogi Gallery, Brooklyn; and White Columns, New York. Additionally, she exhibited new paintings at scopeNY, scopeHamptons, Bridge Miami, and Tease Art Fair in Cologne.