

Susan Eley
Fine Art

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

MAY 25, 2014

Lydia Janssen: A Course Change

June 19-September 5, 2014

OPENING RECEPTION: THURSDAY, June 19, 6-8 pm

We are delighted to present *Lydia Janssen: A Course Change*, on view from June 19-September 5, 2014. The exhibition, consisting of nine large-scale paintings, is Janssen's debut solo exhibition in a New York City gallery. Janssen currently lives in Singapore, but will be in New York for the opening reception on Thursday, June 19, 6-8 pm.

Janssen begins each painting with a gessoed canvas on which she outlines animals in broad strokes of charcoal. The animals, seen in parts or whole, are caught and stilled on canvas, while also cantering across the surface. Janssen demonstrates a masterful voice in her ability to find both stillness and action all at once. The animals are suspended in swaths of soft pastels, pinks, and baby blues, painted in surprising tandem with fiery oranges and deep reds.

Cows, horses and rabbits take wild, long strides across the canvases, marked with iconic imagery of the Wild West—a horseshoe, an American Indian feathered headdress, a gun, and random letters and numbers. The symbols come to the artist in a stream of consciousness form, pulled from a fertile, active imagination. There's a narrative in the paintings, if you can move your eye swiftly enough to catch it. The stories of wild, barely contained animals are conjured with oil paint, charcoal, and pastel, scrubbed and rubbed with the artist's choice tools of palette knife and paper towel, as she eschews conventional paintbrushes.

Janssen, born in Lansing, Michigan, received a BA from Sarah Lawrence College. After graduation, she moved to New York City to pursue her dance career. The artist has always moved between two passions and careers of modern dance and painting. After receiving training and guidance from Merce Cunningham muse Viola Farber-Slayton, she performed in New York with modern dance troupes Pam Tanowitz Dance Company and Jordana Toback. After two dislocated knees, at age 19 and 22, Janssen's dance career took a downward spiral and she returned with more fervor to her art making.

From 2005-2007, Janssen studied at New York's Art Students League with Larry Poons and Ronnie Landfield, among other top teachers. She found a kinship with Poons, who emphasized a rigor in color, speed and technique that reminded her of

the intensity of training with Russian ballet teachers. “Larry instructed us not to move back from the canvas to see what we had done for the first hour of class, but insisted that we keep painting,” recalls Janssen.

While she continued to heal from her dance injuries, Janssen studied and painted, but remained angry with her body for forsaking her. Looking back at that productive, yet emotionally charged time, Janssen acknowledges that her body has always been her motivation as a painter. Feeling a physical lack of freedom to move has informed Janssen’s work ever since her injuries.

Since becoming a mother and experiencing pregnancy and breastfeeding, Janssen has made new discoveries about her body. While she often feels that she is just a physical form with parts for feeding and nurturing, there’s also a celebration in the new physical role she plays. Janssen has exhibited throughout the US, has had work included in dance, film and television productions and has private collectors worldwide.



Lydia Jansen, *Milkparts*, 60”x48”



Lydia Jansen, *Checkmate*, 62”x50”

IN OTHER NEWS:

Lisa Cooper Curates Front Room

Lisa Cooper, director of Elisa Contemporary Art in Riverdale, NY, has guest curated an exhibition in the Front Room of Susan Eley Fine Art called "Fleeting." On view from June 19-July 31, "Fleeting" features equestrian paintings by Arizona-based photorealist Ken Peloke and abstracted figurative paintings by Hawaiian artist Connie Firestone. For more information about "Fleeting," please email:

lisa@elisaart.com



Elisa Contemporary Art
www.ElisaContemporaryArt.com
changing the world through art



UK Association of Women Art Dealers (AWAD) Launches a New York Chapter

Susan Eley and Lisa Cooper are delighted to co-chair the NY Chapter of the Association of Women Art Dealers (AWAD). Founded by Susan Mumford in London (2009), AWAD, a non-profit company, facilitates business and collaborations between art dealers, gallerists and art consultants. Our vision is to be the premier international network for women in the business of buying and selling art. Following the model of its sister organization in London, AWAD NY will meet on a monthly basis, with our first meeting scheduled for Wednesday, June 18, 9:30-11:30 am, at Susan Eley Fine Art. **AWAD Membership:** Three levels of Membership are available: Full, Associate and StartUp. [See more on becoming an AWAD Member.](#)

