



Annie Lapin, *Veil and Seers*, 2022. Acrylic, oil, and oil stick on linen, 82 x 96 in.

## **Annie Lapin**

### ***Contours of the Vast***

November 12 - December 17, 2022

Opening Saturday, November 12<sup>th</sup>, 5-8pm

Shulamit Nazarian is pleased to present *Contours of the Vast*, a solo exhibition of new paintings by Los Angeles-based artist Annie Lapin. This will be the artist's second solo exhibition with the gallery, on view from November 12 through December 17. This presentation will span both exhibition spaces at the gallery.

Annie Lapin is known for her paintings that visually combine art-historical tropes of landscape, figuration, and abstraction. By merging these prominent genres, Lapin is able to distort representations of history, compress geological space and time within a single picture plane, and explore how both our bodies and minds shape how we perceive the world around us. *Contours of the Vast* unites these ideas through a series of paintings on canvas that range from the intimate to the monumental, alongside a new series of framed paintings on Yupo paper.

# Shulamit Nazarian

## Los Angeles

Initiating each painting with generous pours of paint and liquid graphite, Lapin's abstract marks become the armature around which pictorial space is built. Punched with *trompe l'oeil* forms, photographic blur, and references to the sublime imagery of Western landscape painting and photography, the polyvalent scenes conjure a sense of mystery and fervor. An abstract form will quickly become part of a body or the extension of land. Polychromatic skies—sourced both from the artist's photo archive and visual media online—are rendered with hyper-realistic detail, while figures are consumed into epic environments that emerge from color fields. These various references coalesce into a fractured yet coherent depiction of our world. Lapin has created an experience akin to our own perception: one that is littered with conflicting information that must logically connect.

The title *Contours of the Vast* takes on multiple meanings within the exhibition. As the works invoke the early painting and photography of the American West, particularly of California, the title refers to the use of expansive landscapes as a tool to give shape to a mysterious and seemingly infinite world, full of promise and allure. It also addresses the immensity of information, past and present, that influences our current cultural experience. Overlaying centuries-old mythic imagery with a matrix of digital materials stored online, each painting confronts the viewer with colliding visual narratives that illustrate a throughline from the reimagining of ancient traditions to the glut of online data documenting our every moment.

Lapin shares, "My practice imagines a painting not as a representation of a place or thing, but rather an image of our longing to understand our world, which builds on and defines itself over time, like the contours of our historical narratives and myths. When seen this way, landscape painting becomes a hall of mirrors, reflections of reflections of our past, stories about the world, and stories about ourselves intermingled with geological events."

Led by intuition, Lapin's paintings unfold like history itself. Her initial pours are decisively not gestural; the paints move across the surface according to their varying viscosities. While nodding to Expressionist and Modernist forms, emotion and idealism play a lesser role here. The marks and puddles align instead with the indifferent motions of geological time—lava forming archipelagos, melting glaciers engulfing land, quakes shaping mountains, wind and waves unveiling monoliths, and so on. In this process, geological and cultural time become compressed, referencing the various changes to our climate and natural world in millennia past, while also acknowledging societies' impact on the climate today and into the future.

By composing various cultural and ecological references around an initial framework of abstract, intuitive pours of pigment, Lapin reveals our mental inclination to create order from chaos. Our senses search for meaning and our minds seek to provide logic through stories. Though the figures are often subsumed by the surrounding environment, Lapin's paintings amount to a faithful portrait, not of any one individual but rather of a cultural psyche in its perpetual state of development. Vignettes from history collapse against flashes of the everyday, just as our memories and experiences continually come together to define culture. Although the body dematerializes in these imaginaries, Lapin poses this porousness as a relieving liberation. "There is a comfort in overcoming the vulnerability of our boundaries," she shares.

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## Los Angeles

*Contours of the Vast* restages the cognitive processes we use to write history and define humanity, inviting us to reflect on the stories we tell every day.

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Annie Lapin (b. 1978, Washington, D.C.; Lives and works in Los Angeles, CA) received her Master of Fine Arts from the University of California, Los Angeles in 2007, her Post-Baccalaureate Certificate from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2004, and her Bachelor of Arts degree from Yale University in 2001. Select solo exhibitions include Shulamit Nazarian, Los Angeles, CA; Miles McEnery Gallery, New York, NY; Josh Lilley, London, England; Annarumma Gallery, Naples, Italy; Weatherspoon Art Museum, Greensboro, NC; Honor Fraser, Los Angeles, CA; Yauteppec Gallery, Mexico City, Mexico; and Museum of Contemporary Art, Santa Barbara, CA. Group exhibitions include the USC Fisher Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA; Bruce Museum, Greenwich, CT; Hilger Contemporary, Vienna, Austria; Museo di Capodimonte, Naples, Italy; Sargent's Daughters, New York, NY; LA Louver, Los Angeles, CA; and the Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase, NY.

Lapin is the recipient of the Falk Visiting Artist Award at the Weatherspoon Art Museum in Greensboro, NC and she has been awarded residencies at Anderson Ranch Art Center, Snowmass Village, CO; Grand Arts, Kansas, MO; Burren College of Art, Ballyvaughn, Ireland; and Chautauqua Institute, New York, NY. Her work has been featured in *Art in America*, *Modern Painters*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Harper's Magazine*, *Art and Antiquities*, *Artnews*, *Hyperallergic*, *Artsy*, and *New American Paintings*.

Annie Lapin's work is included in the permanent collections of the High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA; Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Overland Park, KS; Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach, CA; Rubell Family Collection, Miami, FL; Santa Barbara Museum, Santa Barbara, CA; Weatherspoon Art Museum, Greensboro, NC; and Zabłudowicz Collection, London, England.