

LOIS LAMBERT GALLERY **CYNTHIA SITTON**

at Bergamot Station
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Santa Monica, CA 90404

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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"Fables of Rhyme or Reason"

September 18, 2021 – November 7, 2021

Opening Reception Saturday, September 18th, 6-9pm

SANTA MONICA, CA – Lois Lambert Gallery will be exhibiting Serena Potter and Cynthia Sitton's **"Fables of Rhyme or Reason"** opening September 18, 2021.



*"She Delighted In Them", Oil on linen/
panel, 18"x 24"*



*"It Was The Sparrow That Told Her", Oil
on linen, 48"x 60"*



*"The Soft Of Clover", Oil on linen/panel,
9"x 12"*

Cynthia Sitton's **"Fables of Rhyme or Reason"** features figurative paintings influenced by the liminal space of fantasy and reality. In her detailed canvases, Sitton pairs realistic portraits with familiar emblems of fairytale and unreality, producing a conversation about the nature of reality as colored by mental illness.

Sitton says of this new collection: "It is my love letter". The impetus of her work is her own daughter, who is now 39, but has struggled with mental illness for more than twenty-five years. Drawing from this tender well, Sitton creates two coexistent realities. One draws from her lived experience: she portrays figures clothed in drab gowns, evoking the sterility of a hospital environment. This clinical setting is, however, not what it seems. Sitton uses the vivid colors of MRI imaging to break away from the expected realism of the place. She turns this naturalistic world on its head, subverting expectations of what is real and what is fantasy.

Sitton is fascinated by the link between clinical psychology and literary fairy tales: "we use self-delusion on a small scale and a large scale and that's how we exist." In creating this second reality which rivals the hospital setting, she turns delusion to illusion. Using naturalistic colors and realistic portraiture, Sitton depicts the fantasy world she wishes she could give her daughter. Drawing from the "Legend of the Bird Queen" tale, she depicts a central figure-- a girl inspired by her own daughter's visage-- chronologically traversing a fantasy world. This "unreality" is most real to Sitton, both in its concept and its construction. In her process, Sitton draws inspiration from the objects that surround her: plants from her own garden, birds she has dreamt of, and friends and family who she has posed in hospital gowns. In its conception and execution, the work is deeply personal, reflecting Sitton's positionality as a painter and as a mother.



"She Heard Their Whispers", Oil on linen/panel, 7' x 4'

This new show marks both a break and a continuation of her prior work. She continues to center female figures and perspective, saying "I don't think you'll ever take the feminist out of me." Her centering of women's stories feels both political and poetic. In depicting this sensitive narrative, Sitton fights stigma surrounding mental illness with her powerful emotion and delicate imagery.

Cynthia Sitton received her BFA and MFA in Fine Arts at the Laguna College of Art and Design. She has exhibited work at the Wausau Museum of Contemporary Art (Wausau, WI), the Hilbert Museum (Orange, CA), and at the Laguna Beach Museum (Laguna Beach, CA). In her painting, Sitton takes inspiration from comic books, film, and other narrative mediums. She also draws from unorthodox sources such as music, found objects, and from her own dreams.