

# LOIS LAMBERT GALLERY

at Bergamot Station  
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loislambertgallery.com

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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*Rosebuds*, wearable sculpture, dried rosebuds, flexible metal screening, bicycle helmet, cardboard, foam, fabric, glue, 55" x 20" x 30"



*Mask with Branch*, photograph, acrylic mount frame, edition of 10, 30" x 20"



*Sweet Gum Balls*, photograph, laminate mount frame, edition of 10, 45" x 30"

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# MELISSA MEIER

## *Nature's Masquerade*

July 13, 2024 – August 31, 2024

Opening Reception Saturday, July 13th, 6pm-9pm / Special Fashion Show, 7pm-8pm

SANTA MONICA, CA - Lois Lambert Gallery presents *Nature's Masquerade*, the most recent exhibition of work by artist Melissa Meier.

Meier's first series in this exhibit, *Skins* consists of wearable sculptures made from fragile organic materials including grains of rice, dried pasta, pistachio nut shells, flowers, and porcupine quills, among others. "I am committed to using materials that decompose, molt, and otherwise degrade as a means of symbolizing our precious time as humans."

For months, Meier works meticulously and intuitively to create her sculptures, all the while taking inspiration from the material itself. "The organic material dictates the composition, structure, and mood of the work. Before I get started, I try to live with the material so I can understand how fragile it is. I also research its historical meaning or symbolism. Once a piece is complete, I photograph it on the model." Initially, Meier used photography simply as a way to document her volatile creations. Now, Meier uses photography to further express the narrative content in her mixed media assemblages. Though the natural adornments of each costume will fade over time, the organic materials can be replaced as the structure remains.

Much of Meier's inspiration comes from her childhood in Brazil and her international travels. The extravagant costumes of Carnival and the history of other cultures continues to influence her today, as her work investigates themes of disguise, ritual, female empowerment, and self-created mythology.

Alongside her wearable organic constructions, *Nature's Masquerade* presents a collection of ceramic sculptures from Meier's *Masks* series. Using clay, ceramics, and glass eyes, Meier fabricates oversized masks that convey a range of emotions. She then stages models with the masks and photographs them in unusual, dream-like environments.

Much like the dresses and headpieces in her *Skins* series, Meier's masks appear to breathe and live, whether a person is posing behind them or not. With each mask, Meier works to capture the private emotions that are expressed when one is alone. Rather than relying on masks to conceal and disguise one's identity, Meier uses her masks as a way to express authentic emotion and explore a true sense of self. "My art work is an exploration of both the natural world and the self. The organic constructions are just another form of expression and revelation that needs to be peeled away, as are the masks. They look like different themes, but to me, they are telling the same story."

Meier received her B.A. in Illustration from the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, CA in 1991. Her work has been shown at the Oceanside Museum of Art in Oceanside, CA and galleries in New York, NY; Boston, MA; Los Angeles, CA; and Sao Paulo, Brazil. Meier was chosen for Sotheby's Young International Artists group show and auction in Tel Aviv, Israel; Vienna, Austria; and Chicago, IL.

MELISSA MEIER, *Nature's Masquerade*