

Laura Lit

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Northern - Southern

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Laura Lit

profile

Laura Lit (b. Dallas, Texas, 1979) educated first as a painter (BFA Rhode Island School of Design), then studied Special Effects Makeup for Film and Television at Vancouver Film School. In her twenties she worked in film and in art and architectural restoration, self-educating in a breadth of techniques from carpentry to the most subtle brush work. In her thirties she studied medical prosthetics and worked in props and prosthetics for film. In 2015 she dedicated herself to her art full-time. A material bravado and spiritual curiosity hallmarks her artwork.

Lit's early work is portraiture: hyper-natural oils, defiant tan-lined nudes on canvases pierced with needle and thread. (*Women and Their Work*, 2017).¹ In 2017, after a challenging pregnancy, Lit began her portraits of spirit forms. The work is of an artist of an intense visual concentration and absolute command of technique painting what she sees the second she shuts her eyes. (*After Images*, Northern-Southern, 2018).²

2018, Lit began working sculpturally: hyper-real miniature busts of women perched on gallery pedestals, skin painted. (*Likeness*, Northern-Southern, 2019).³

During the pandemic, able only to work in short bursts, Lit drew. Once a week for fourteen weeks, she produced a new spirit portrait, depictions of the visions presented at the end of meditation. (*Fuzzy Forces*, Northern-Southern, 2020).⁴ Almost immediately after completing the drawing series, Lit returned to the studio, and began her current vein of work: animal-sized reliefs, fleshed realizations of the spirit forms. (*Far In*, Northern-Southern, 2021).⁵

Lit is an active participant in the exceptionally vibrant art community blossoming in Austin, Texas. She shares with her scene a devil-does-not-care sincerity, and a wild wedded to patience and craft.

—Phillip Niemeyer



1. Bess II, 2013, oil on canvas, 30x48 inches



2. 1, 2017, acrylic and oil on canvas, 30x40 inches



3. Redhead, 2018, paperclay, acrylic, oil, 5.5x8x7 inches



4. Red Bean, 2020, colored pencil on paper, 9.5x11 inches



5. Transfusion, 2020, wood, paperclay, acrylic, oil, 37x29x2 inches

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Laura Lit

in her own words

“I have been making art for as long as I can remember. In the early part of my career I always saw myself as an artist who relied on reference material. I never felt comfortable drawing from memory, much less drawing in an abstract style. I labelled myself as a “Realist Painter” and painted mostly portraits and figures. I really believed that was that. Then in 2016 I did a couple of abstract paintings for a restaurant here in Austin. I loved not thinking too much about it, and just doing and making whatever was in my mind. I made pieces based on whatever kind of vibe I wanted to create within a specific space. Abstract paintings, drawings, and now sculpture have been my focus ever since.

“During the pandemic, I learned how to draw these images from my subconscious by meditating. It became a way to cope with the awfulness and chaos of what was happening in the external world, to express difficult emotions, and process traumas. I could always go to my inner mind and be comforted by playing with shapes and colors, usually right before I fell asleep. I developed a new relationship with my subconscious. I started seeing it not as something beyond my control or something to be scared of, but as a drawing tool—a way to have reference material at any given time. I only needed to commit the time to access it and trust it. Translating those images to paper, canvas, and later to relief and three dimensional sculpture came naturally.

“I have found that figure painting/drawing and abstract sculpture actually have many things in common—creating a skeleton, with proper proportions and just the right gestural feel, is the most important part in both practices. With my sculptures, the base is usually wood, and then foam and paperclay and then paint and resin—much like building up musculature and skin and details to a human form.”

—Laura Lit