

LEILA HELLER GALLERY.

ELIZABETH THOMPSON
STORIES FROM THE EVERGLADES
JANUARY 7 – 28, 2012

Opening Reception in Chelsea on Saturday, January 7, 6 to 8 p.m.



Elizabeth Thompson, *Undulation*, 2010, Oil on linen, 41.5 x 66 in (123 x 168 cm)

New York City – Recent paintings by Elizabeth Thompson will be on view at Leila Heller Gallery from January 7 through 28, 2012. Celebrating a primeval wilderness, *Stories From the Everglades* will present paintings and watercolors depicting the vast serene and fragile ecosystem in South Florida. A portion of the proceeds from the exhibition will benefit conservation of the Everglades.

Inspired by the unique beauty of this extraordinary “river of grass” unique to North America, Elizabeth Thompson moved from New York City to a small town in Florida in 2006 after becoming an artist in residence at the Everglades

National Park. The exhibition includes nine large oil paintings on linen as well as smaller works and watercolors.

As Thompson notes, “My current paintings continue to explore my fascination with the Everglades, but now include possible but improbable narratives. They continue the theme of poetic isolation. I regularly visit different parts of the Everglades as it is not very far from my house, and this place always offers inspiration, peace and, spiritual comfort for me.”

In her recent body of work, Thompson calls attention to man’s dynamic yet troubled relationship to nature with vivid scenes that show an abandoned Mercedes partly submerged in a swamp in *Cocaine Cowboy*, 2011 and the non-native pythons which dangerously offset the ecosystem. A nude post-modern couple appears to be shaken by man’s destruction of the natural world in *Expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Everglades*, 2011. Yet there is also optimism: hints of a delicate coexistence between man and nature in *The Encounter*, 2011, which depicts a nude beauty next to a downy white egret.

“My hope is that the paintings plant seeds of appreciation for this amazing ecosystem and natural phenomenon. Appreciation is fundamental in getting people and voters to do what they can to preserve and protect. My hope is that these paintings, which depict details selected from a vast wilderness, trigger a connection with the Everglades – an ecosystem that although altered and threatened, is still magically dynamic. These painting also act as a protest, a warning that this unique habitat might be lost,” she writes.

Elizabeth Thompson lives in Ocean Ridge, Florida, and Paris. Her work has been shown at numerous national and international institutions including the Norton Museum of Art, Palm Beach, FL; McKay Art Museum, San Antonio, TX; and the Museum of Modern Art, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Ever since 1976, when she won a competition to paint a series of oil tanks on the Hudson River, she has painted mural commissions in Zimbabwe and Mexico City among many others. In the early to mid –1980s, she was an artist in residence at MoMA PS1, Long Island City, NY, as well as the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.

For more information, please contact Lauren Pollock at Lauren@leilahellergallery.com or call 212-249-7695.

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Leila Heller Gallery

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