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ARTIST TO WATCH: Juliette Losq Captures the Ominous Beauty of Abandoned Places

Language

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Courtesy Theodore:Art

Juliette Losq's "Lookout," 2012

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by Allison Meier

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Juliette Losq / Courtesy the Artist

In her depictions of derelict landscapes, **Juliette Losq** aims to place her viewer on edge. Her dense ink drawings create worlds at the breach of nature and the urban, where dark forests creep up to buildings in ruins, their walls hexed with graffiti; and where stagnant water that reflects both serenely and grotesque flows beneath empty bridges. The British artist has an incredible talent for capturing the unease and appeal of abandoned places, and this month she opens her first solo exhibition in the United States at **Theodore:Art** in Brooklyn.

“I’m generally drawn to work where the landscape, whether populated or not, is an active element rather than a backdrop,” Losq told ARTINFO. Her background is in art history, literature, and fine art, studying at an impressive multitude of institutions, including Newnham College at the University of Cambridge, the Courtauld Institute of Art, Wimbledon College of Art, and the Royal Academy of Arts in London. It was there that she met **Stephanie Theodore** of Theodore:Art, who has worked with several alumni of the RA program as part of her efforts to showcase emerging European artists in the US.

Losq’s drawings, which include the intricate and intimate as well as large-scale works and installations, are inspired by her collection of Victorian ephemera, science fiction films, vintage daguerreotypes, and a range of diverse interests. She cites as influences Rococo painter **François Boucher**, who transformed vegetables and corals into roccaille arrangements, and Victorian artist **John Atkinson Grimshaw**, whose paintings hold a distinctly old world, voyeuristic feel. Also a “huge fan of the ‘Wolf Man’ and ‘Frankenstein’ films,” Losq admires the way these 1930s and ‘40s horror movies were based in reality, but formed parallel worlds “where the uncanny can coexist with the mundane.” She fuses all these influences with her own photographs taken during explorations of overgrown and forgotten places, resulting in drawings composed of fragments from all these realities.

Her exhibition at Theodore:Art, “Lucaria,” features a drawing inspired by a type of Victorian optical toy in which different cards could be reordered to generate different scenes. Entitled “Myriorama,” it interweaves images from the internet with Victorian crime journals and street art into a triptych of flourishing trees and discarded objects, with two curious characters lurking almost out of sight. They “suggest that the landscape may not be entirely of this world,” a feeling she conveys in the accompanying smaller waterscapes. All of these works hover between safety and security, littered with scraps of the modern world’s trash and ruins, shadowed by the subtly threatening overgrowth of nature. Through her work, Losq brings out the dichotomy of the abandoned spaces on the borders of our cities and towns, untamed areas that bring us to the enticing and threatening brink of the unknown.

[Juliette Losq: “Lucaria”](#) is at Theodore:Art, 56 Bogart Street, Brooklyn, New York, October 20 to December 1, 2012. Opening is October 20, 6 – 9 pm.

[*Click here to see a slideshow of Juliette Losq's work.*](#)

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