

About the Artist

Jena Thomas is an emerging contemporary artist who, after completing her MFA at the University of Miami, already boasts an impressive exhibition record. Recent accolades include being selected as one of the 40 top MFA students in the country by New American Paintings Magazine. Thomas was chosen out of over 750 applicants for the title. She was also a finalist for the William and Dorothy Yeck Award and received the Ruth Katzman Scholarship from the Art Students' League of New York.

Thomas's work portrays ethereal and somewhat strange landscapes that explore the ways in which man alters the natural world. Constructs such as pools, patios, and train tracks serve as visceral boundary lines between the fabricated and the organic, and feature prominently in her work. Soft colors invoke a dusk light sensation, depicting the world in that liminal stage between light and darkness. It is that nearly supernatural glow that fabricates a "luscious otherworld that is teeming with weird individuality."

However, even the stillness of her scenes lack menace. Rather, they demonstrate a standstill in time; a moment that is captured in the softness of twilight before life begins to emerge. Intentionally, Thomas produces a strange-yet-familiar image that plays with perception. Though stylistically beautiful and seemingly serene, each canvas opens up the sensation that what man has created and designated as his habitat is somehow rooted in the absurd.

Thomas is a graduate of the MFA program at the University of Miami and received her Bachelor's degree at the Massachusetts College of Art and Design in Boston. She has exhibited extensively in Florida and New England, with recent exhibitions at the Boca Raton Museum of Art, Lowe Art Museum, FatVillage Projects, and at Art Palm Beach.

EDUCATION

- 2015 – MFA University of Miami-Miami, FL
Graduate Teaching Assistant Fellowship in Painting
- 2009 – BFA Massachusetts College of Art and Design, Boston, MA
Double Major: Painting/ Art History; Graduated with Honors and Distinction
- 2005 – Maryland Institute College of Art and Design
Summer Painting Intensive

SOLO EXHIBITIONS / TWO MAN SHOWS

- 2017 – Liminal Landscapes, Fernando Luis Alvarez Gallery, Stamford, CT
- 2016 – New Narratives, Converse College, Spartanburg, SC (upcoming)
- 2016 – Jena Thomas: Solo Exhibition, Fernando Luis Alvarez Gallery, Stamford, CT
- 2015 – Thesis Exhibition, Wynwood Gallery, Miami, FL
- 2015 – Artificial Oasis @The Projects: Contemporary Art Space, Ft. Lauderdale, FL
- 2014 – Manmade Summer, Fernando Luis Alvarez Gallery, Stamford, CT
- 2013 – Jena Thomas: Solo Exhibition, Green Monkey, Miami, FL

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2016 – 701 CCA Prize Finalist Exhibition, Center for Contemporary Art, Columbia, SC
- 2015 – Building Culture Equity, Sacred Heart University, Fairfield, CT
- 2014 – 5, Fernando Luis Alvarez Gallery, Stamford, CT
- 2014 – PULL, Wynwood Art Space, Miami, FL
- 2014 – 63rd Annual All Florida Juried Exhibition, Boca Raton Museum of Art, Boca Raton, FL
- 2014 – 52nd Annual Juried Exhibition, South Florida Cultural Center
- 2014 – Water is Life, Coral Gables Museum, Coral Gables, FL
- 2014 – Lowe Art Museum, University of Miami Masters Candidates Exhibition
- 2014 – Finalist Exhibition, Young Painters Competition, Miami University, Oxford, OH
- 2014 – You Are Here, Armory Art Center, West Palm Beach, FL
- 2013 – Home, Grin Event Space and Gallery, Providence, RI
- 2013 – New Works, University of Miami CAS Gallery, Coral Gables, FL

- 2013 – 62nd Annual All Florida Juried Exhibition, Boca Raton Museum of Art, Boca Raton, FL
- 2013 – 6th All Media Juried Biennial, Hollywood Arts and Culture Center, Hollywood, FL
- 2013 – Annual Juried Exhibition, Lowe Art Museum, Coral Gables, FL
- 2013 – Salon d'Refuses, CAS Gallery, Miami, FL
- 2012 – Incoming MFA Show, CAS Gallery, Miami, FL
- 2009 – Beg Borrow Steal, La Montagne Gallery, South Boston, MA
- 2009 – Senior Show, Godine Gallery, Massachusetts College of Art and Design Boston, MA
- 2009 – All School Show, Juried by Joseph Ketner, professor of Contemporary Art at Emerson
- 2009 – Midnight Blooming Fund, GASP Gallery, Boston, MA
- 2008 – Six Degrees of SOA, Curated by Carolyn Sickles, Lake Worth, FL
- 2008 – All School Show, Juried by Paul Stopforth, professor at School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA
- 2007 – Midnight Blooming Fund (In Collaboration with the School of the Museum of Fine Arts) GASP Gallery, Boston, MA
- 2007 – All School Show, Juried by Emily Eisenberg, La Montagne Gallery, Boston, MA

ART FAIRS

- 2016 – Art Hamptons, Long Island, NY
- 2016 – Art Context, New York, NY
- 2016 – Art Miami, Miami, FL
- 2016 – Art Palm Beach, Palm Beach, FL
- 2014 – Seafair, Miami International Art Fair, Miami, FL
- 2014 – Miami International Art Fair (MIA), Miami, FL
- 2014 – Art Palm Beach, West Palm Beach, FL
- 2013 – Art Palm Beach, International Art Fair, West Palm Beach, FL
- 2013 – Miami International Art Fair (MIA) Sea Fair: The Mega Yacht Venue, Miami, FL
- 2012 – 5th Annual Canes Fair, Wynwood Project Space, Miami, FL

GRANTS, RESIDENCIES, FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS

- 2016 – 701 CCA Prize Finalist, Center for Contemporary Art, Columbia, SC Finalists
- 2015 – Teaching Assistant Award, Finalist, University of Miami, Miami, FL

2015 – Leadership Award, Finalist, University of Miami, Miami, FL
2015 – Vermont Studio Center Scholarship Recipient, VT
2014 – Vytlacil Artist Residency, Art Students League, Recipient of the Ruth Katzman Scholarship, Sparkhill, NY
2014 – University of Miami, Coral Gables, FL
2014 – Young Painters Competition, Finalist, Miami University, Oxford, OH
2013 – Graduate Fellowship, Teaching Assistantship, University of Miami, Miami, FL
2013 – Painting Art Department Award, Annual Juried Exhibition, Lowe Art Museum, Coral Gables, FL
2009 – Presidential Scholarship, Massachusetts College of Art and Design, Boston, MA
2009 – Patrick Gavin Painting Award, Boston, MA
2009 – Art History Auction Award, Boston, MA
2009 – Student Leadership Award, Boston, MA
2009 – International Arts Travel Grant (Egypt), Boston, MA
2008 – Artist Supply Award, Massachusetts College of Art and Design, Boston, MA
2008 – All College Show Painting Department Award, 2008 – Massachusetts College of Art and Design, Boston, MA
2006 – Honorable Mention, Massachusetts College of Art and Design, All School Show, Boston, MA
2006 – Student of the Year Scholarship Award, Studio 2006 – Foundations, Massachusetts College of Art and Design, Boston, MA

PRESS AND PUBLICATIONS

Studio Visit Magazine, Summer 2017 Issue (upcoming)
New York Times, “Things to do in Connecticut”, June 9, 2016
Jena Thomas: The Studio Project, LINEA The Artist’s Voice, March 25, 2016
Sleek Magazine, “We’re Going to Miami: Interview with Jena Thomas” October, 2016
New American Painting, Juried Exhibition in Print, MFA Edition, Issue. 123, 2016
All Florida Artists at the Boca Museum, Art South Florida, August 13th, 2014
Two Coats of Paint, Sharon Butler, August 14, 2014
New American Painting, Juried Exhibition in Print, MFA Edition, Issue. 111, 2014

GALLERY & WEB AFFILIATION

Fernando Luis Alvarez Gallery, Stamford, CT

InSitu Works, Online Marketplace, Backed by the Rockefeller Foundation, New York, NY
Sleek Magazine, Online Representation, Sleek Art-New York, NY/ Berlin, Germany

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2016-present Assistant Professor of Painting and Drawing Converse College, Spartanburg, SC
Responsible for teaching 2D Design, Drawing I-IV, Painting I-IV, Senior Seminar and Senior Exhibition.
2015-2016 Adjunct Professor of Drawing, New York Film Academy, Miami Beach, FL
2015-2016 Lecturer of Painting and Drawing, University of Miami, Miami, FL
2015-2016 Art Instructor, Teens College, Miami Dade College, Painting and Drawing, Miami, FL
2012- 2015 Graduate Teaching Assistant (Instructor of Record) Drawing I, University of Miami, Miami, FL
2012 - 2015 Art Center South Florida, Figure Drawing, Painting, and Summer Instructor, Miami Beach, FL
2012 Continuing Education and Pre-College Instructor, Painting and Drawing, Lyme Academy College of Fine Art, Old Lyme, CT
2008-2009 Pre-College Instructor, Summer drawing intensive, Massachusetts College of Art and Design, Boston, MA

LECTURES / ARTIST TALKS

2017 – TALK 20, Hub Bub Artist Residency, Spartanburg, SC
2016 – Converse College, Spartanburg, SC
2015 – Artificial Oasis, Box Contemporary Gallery, Ft. Lauderdale, FL
2014 – Art Students League of New York, White Plains, NY

CONTACT

Fernando Luis Alvarez

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Monday: by appointment

Tuesday - Saturday: 11AM - 6PM