

INTERSECTED NATURE

THE RITUALS OF JENA THOMAS

"One of the things that I love about landscape painting is it in such a constant and complicated state of flux, that attempting to capture it becomes of an act of perception rather than an act of replicating. As a painter you are left with no choice but to straddle the worlds of representation and non-representation."

Jena Thomas

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To assume that we approach the natural world, its environment, and the harmony between them from a rationally human consciousness leads us to reflect on our ephemeral temporality compared to the perennial timelessness of the whole. The natural can never be exactly replicated by art, for it reveals itself to us in its unmistakable presence and its continuous, subtle transformation. It can only be interpreted, read, written, and represented from its ungraspable self, with the intention of imbuing it with meaning—a new significance formed at the intersection of the seen and the unseen, the known and the unknown, the expected and the unexpected.

The natural, as seen by our eyes, places us in an engagement with our own ritualized act, which involves a succession of non-communicative operations and acquires meaning in the artistic process by rendering visible what, by its very essence, is unobservable.

These aspects inevitably come together in the experience of artist Jena Thomas, who, through her gaze, transforms the natural via a plastic-reflective action. There is an intertwining of significant elements in this process that allows us to interpret, in cultural and aesthetic terms, the qualities of the represented and the inherently human.

In *Intersected Nature*, Thomas expresses her individual act of ritualization, in which the natural inserts itself. The artist conceives a necessary search for harmony with that “other” which manifests itself out there, in its innocent presence. Accessing it—and what it contains—generates a special relationship that reflects how humans approach their environment, in that inevitable intersection where, as the artist asserts, “(...) consciously or unconsciously, the innate impulse to ‘leave our mark’ emerges; that need to assert our personality, a natural and universal instinct as we strive to carve out a place for ourselves.”¹

¹Personal exchange with Jena Thomas. *Alvarez Gallery Archive*, 2025

A place, completely our own, which we must interpret as an environment constructed by human thought through contrivances such as surveillance cameras or digitalization instruments. In the representation of landscape painting, such artifices highlight a state of constant, complex flux, where, while attempting to capture the natural, new intersections emerge that configure, as Thomas argues, an act of perception rather than a mere replica of the surroundings. Thus, the artist shapes the space where the expression of the visible and the non-visible, representation and non-representation, converge.

Intersected Nature traverses the boundaries of the visible while intending to present familiar, yet strange landscapes; unreal chromatics and characters from the animal world, observed from the seemingly impersonal gaze of a surveillance camera or through lenses designed to detect others in the darkness. In this detached observation, these silent creatures find a way to return the gaze, in an almost unreal game of interaction between human and animal.

In these intention-loaded landscapes, Thomas seeks the extraordinary in those unexplored places which, along with the chromatic iridescence, highlight what human nature has inadvertently built—a presence that manifests itself in an observant distance, with the need to leave its mark.

Each work in *Intersected Nature* expresses the ritualization of the human toward the natural, born from an awareness of a mysticism generated by the luminosity that springs from artificiality, emerging at the intersection of both. It's at this intersection that the artist focuses her research, exploring how the natural crosses paths with the human, with its technological surfaces and digitized distortions.

Thomas understands this space of technological, artificial transformation of the natural, this ephemeral quality that coexists with its permanence and its inevitable, imperceptible transience. The artist places it before our eyes to lead us to the presence of others, drawn from the natural and capable of coming to life in the intersections that reveal them in new, always surprising harmonies.

WORKS



Jena Thomas
Share
2024
Oil on canvas
89" x 78"

Jena Thomas
Curfew I
2024
Oil on canvas
50" x 48"





Jena Thomas
Curfew II
2024
Oil on canvas
50" x 48"

Jena Thomas
Trespassers
2024
Oil on canvas
46" x 48"





Jena Thomas
Rare Hunt
2024
Oil on canvas
46" x 48"

Jena Thomas
Caught
2024
Oil on canvas
48" x 60"





Jena Thomas
Blending In
2024
Oil on canvas
48" x 60"

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Asumir que nos aproximamos a lo natural, a su entorno y a la armonía que se produce entre ambos desde una conciencia racionalmente humana nos conduce a reflexionar sobre nuestra efímera temporalidad frente a la perenne atemporalidad del todo. Lo natural jamás puede ser replicado con exactitud por el arte, pues se nos manifiesta en su inconfundible presencia y en su continua y sutil transformación. Solo puede ser interpretado, leído, escrito y representado desde su ser inasible, con la intención de dotarlo de sentido, de una nueva significación formada en la intersección de lo visto y lo no visto, de lo conocido y lo desconocido, de lo esperado y lo inesperado.

Visto por nuestros ojos y ante nosotros, lo natural nos ubica en el encuentro de una acción ritualizada propia, que elabora mentalmente una sucesión de operaciones no comunicativas y adquiere significado en el hacer artístico al convertir en visible lo que, por naturaleza, es inobservable.

Estos aspectos se unen inevitablemente en la experiencia de la artista Jena Thomas, quien, con su mirada, transforma lo natural a través de una acción plástica-reflexiva. En este proceso se entrelazan significantes que nos permiten interpretar, en términos culturales y estéticos, las cualidades de lo representado y de lo propiamente humano.

Thomas expresa en *Intersected Nature* su individual acción de ritualización, en la que lo natural se inserta. La artista concibe una necesaria búsqueda de la armonía con ese otro que se manifiesta allá afuera, en su inocente presencia. Acceder a él –y a lo que contiene– genera una relación especial que refleja cómo el ser humano se aproxima al entorno, en esa inevitable intersección en la que –como afirma la artista–, “(...) consciente o inconscientemente, emerge el impulso innato

de “dejar nuestra huella”; esa necesidad de afirmar nuestra personalidad, un instinto natural y universal cuando nos proponemos hacernos un lugar.” Un lugar, solo nuestro, que debemos interpretar como un entorno construido por el pensamiento humano a través de artificios como cámaras de vigilancia o instrumentos de digitalización. En la representación de la pintura de paisaje, dichos artificios evidencian un estado de flujo constante y complejo, donde, al intentar capturar lo natural, emergen nuevas intersecciones que configuran, como argumenta Thomas, un acto de percepción en lugar de una mera réplica del entorno. Así, la artista configura el espacio donde confluyen la expresión de lo visible y lo no visible, la representación y la no representación.

Intersected Nature transita entre los límites de lo visible con la finalidad de presentarnos paisajes conocidos, pero extraños; cromáticas irreales y personajes provenientes del mundo animal, observados desde la aparente mirada impersonal de una cámara de vigilancia o a través de lentes destinados a detectar a otros en la nocturnidad. En esa observación distante, estos personajes silentes encuentran la forma de devolver la mirada, en un juego casi irreal de interacción entre lo humano y lo animal.

En estos intencionados paisajes, Thomas busca lo asombroso de esos lugares inexplorados que, junto a la iridiscencia cromática, evidencian lo que inadvertidamente ha construido lo humano: una presencia que se manifiesta en una distancia observante y con la necesidad de dejar su huella.

Cada obra en *Intersected Nature* expresa la ritualización de lo humano hacia lo natural, creada en la conciencia de una mística generada por la luminosidad que brota de la artificialidad, emergente en la intersección de ambos. Es en esta intersección donde la artista centra su investigación, explorando cómo lo natural se cruza con lo humano, con sus superficies tecnológicas y sus distorsiones digitalizadas.

Thomas conoce ese espacio de transformación tecnológica y artificial de lo natural, esa cualidad efímera que coexiste con su permanencia y su inevitable e imperceptible temporalidad. La artista lo coloca ante nuestros ojos para conducirnos a la presencia de otros, extraídos de lo natural y capaces de cobrar vida en las intersecciones que los revelan en nuevas armonías, siempre sorprendentes.

¹ Comunicación personal con Jena Thomas. Archivo Alvarez Gallery, 2025



BIOGRAPHY

Jena Thomas (1987-)

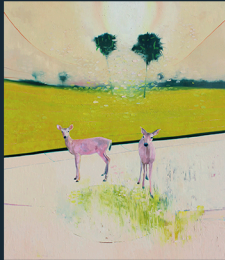
Jena Thomas has been awarded the Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant in 2025.

Thomas has exhibited extensively in Florida and the Northeast, with exhibitions at the Alvarez Gallery, Boca Raton Museum of Art, Context New York, Art Palm Beach, and Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art. Featured in Creative Quarterly magazine and the art publication New American Painting, Thomas is a recipient of the Ruth Katzman Scholarship from the Art Students League of New York and winner of the 701 Center for Contemporary Art Prize. She was also a finalist in Miami University's Young Painters Competition. Thomas received her Bachelor of Fine Arts from Massachusetts College of Art and Design in Boston, MA, and her Master of Fine Arts from the University of Miami in Coral Gables, FL.

Jena Thomas's work engages in a contemporary dialogue with concerns about land development. The artist assembles a perspective that concerns how human beings "idealize" what nature is and use this as a basis to create artificial environments for us to exist within. However, at times, these perfectly fabricated environments can be deceiving. It is no longer just an issue of domesticating the land to make it livable. Instead, Thomas is concerned with the way we transform our world into a suburban theme park. Through synthetic colors and naturalistic landscapes, she seeks to capture the unnatural oddities of spaces such as swimming pools, miniature golf courses, and the medians used to decorate highways.

Jena Thomas is exclusively represented by Alvarez Gallery

WORKS LITS



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Share
2024
Oil on canvas
89" x 78"
\$ 48,983.00 USD
Available



Jena Thomas
Rare Hunt
2024
Oil on canvas
46" x 48"
\$ 15,579.64 USD
Available



Jena Thomas
Curfew I
2024
Oil on canvas
50" x 48"
\$ 16,935.00 USD
Available



Jena Thomas
Caught
2024
Oil on canvas
48" x 60"
\$ 20,321.28 USD
Available



Jena Thomas
Curfew II
2024
Oil on canvas
50" x 48"
\$ 16,934.00 USD
Available



Jena Thomas
Blending In
2024
Oil on canvas
48" x 60"
\$ 20,328.21 USD
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Jena Thomas
Trespassers
2024
Oil on canvas
46" x 48"
\$ 15,579.64 USD
Available

Elizabeth Marin Hernández, Ph. D
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