

Rebecca Campbell

Romancing the Apocalypse

On view at L.A. Louver: 10 March – 16 April, 2011

Opening reception for the artist: Thursday, 10 March, 6-8 p.m.



(left) Rebecca Campbell, *Beauty 2*, 2011, oil on canvas, 20 x 12 in. (50.8 x 30.5 cm)
(right) Rebecca Campbell, *Beauty 3*, 2011, oil on canvas, 20 x 12 in. (50.8 x 30.5 cm)

Venice, CA---- L.A. Louver is pleased to present *Romancing the Apocalypse*, an exhibition of new paintings by Los Angeles-based artist, Rebecca Campbell.

Our times demand that we embrace paradox. In response, instead of parsing out the incompatible, my experiment is the opposite. I seek the radiant, the abject, deliverance and damage in concert. These paintings are a manifesto for rapture, in spite of, or even in debt to, the abyss.

----- Rebecca Campbell

Rebecca Campbell's new body of work is a meditation on extremes. Her subjects are drawn from both nature: the ephemeral light of rainbows and the radiance of young girls, and the man-made: the spectacular light of fireworks and the power of the atomic bomb. As Campbell states, "The paint needed to be fierce, lean and fresh. I try to understand the atomic blast through heat, light, obliteration and full spectrum doom. I try to understand the rainbow through the mud it arcs against, suspension of pigment in oil, and a utopia flickering in and out of cliché. I try to know a woman's beauty as much from a window through her skin as from the shine of her mouth."

Campbell captures the energy of her subjects using broad, sweeping brushstrokes, and a rich, varied palette, in over a dozen, smaller-scale paintings (no larger than 20 x 12 inches). These singular subjects, are accompanied by two large paintings (4 x 8 feet and 5 x 7 feet), each of which explores a complex psychological drama and extremes of sensory experience. In one, a young woman sits in a half-filled bathtub, fully clothed and holding a cake decorated with a spider's web. She is attired in a silky dress of fiery hues that seems to melt in the water; her eyes are fixed on something unseen by the viewer; her expression is neutral. An open window shows a mountain on fire in the distance. Campbell states: "Perhaps it is precisely because the mountain is on fire that the charged water of the bath is such comfort. It is the expense of the dress that makes its ruin sweet *dulce de leche*. It is the reverie of looking away that allows one to absorb the gravity of the catastrophe."

Rebecca Campbell was born and raised in Salt Lake City, the youngest of seven children in a strict Mormon family. By age twelve, Campbell was questioning the parameters of the church and the role it ascribed to her gender. Her critical eye infused her art, which she actively pursued from young adolescence, and that ranged from sculpture and installation, to painting and drawing. In 1990, Campbell left Utah to study at Pacific Northwest College of Art, Portland, Oregon, where she earned her B.F.A. She returned to Salt Lake City in 1994, and for the next four years worked as an independent exhibition curator while continuing her art practice. In 1998, Campbell received a residency at the Vermont Studio Center, and in 1999 moved to Los Angeles, where she earned her MFA from UCLA in 2001.



Rebecca Campbell, Boom 3, 2010, oil on canvas, 20 x 12 in. (50.8 x 30.5 cm)

In addition to California, Campbell's paintings have been exhibited across the United States, from New York, Vermont and Florida, to Ohio, Utah, Colorado and Oregon, and overseas in Madrid, Spain, and Basel, Switzerland. Upcoming, Campbell's work will be seen in *Broodwork* at the Ben Maltz Gallery, Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles, April 30-June 11, 2011. Her work will also feature in the two-person exhibition *Rebecca Campbell and Angela Ellsworth; A Peculiar People*, at the Phoenix Art Museum, September 3, 2011 – January 23, 2012, which will be accompanied by a catalogue.

Romancing the Apocalypse is Campbell's fourth solo exhibition at L.A. Louver.

Concurrently on view at L.A. Louver

First Floor Galleries **Terry Allen *GHOST SHIP RODEZ: The Momo Chronicles***. Installation, sculpture and works on paper inspired by the life of Antonin Artaud and his fateful journey by sea in 1937 from Ireland to France.

Skyroom **Joel Shapiro** (sculpture)