

# eric firestone gallery

For Immediate Release:

## Lauren dela Roche No Man's Land

Eric Firestone Gallery  
40 Great Jones Street | New York, NY 10012  
May 1 – June 15, 2024  
Opening Reception: Wednesday, May 1, 6:00–8:00PM



Lauren dela Roche | *Infinity Pool* | 2024  
acrylic on found cotton feedsack and acrylic varnish  
91 x 175 in.

Eric Firestone Gallery is pleased to announce *No Man's Land*, its first solo exhibition with artist Lauren dela Roche (b. Santa Rosa, CA, 1983). For the show, dela Roche has made her largest paintings to date, up to 14 feet wide. Found, mended, and repurposed cotton feed sacks are her surfaces – giving the paintings a complex tactility that corresponds to their rich patterning and figuration.

Lauren dela Roche is a self-described queer punk feminist whose autodidactic approach integrates a broad range of references, including zines, European modernisms, and autobiography. While largely self-taught, her consumption of visual culture and art history allows her to draw upon long traditions of art history, remixing Egon Schiele's line drawing with the influence of transgressive cinema and Karen Finley's performance art, Persian miniatures, Greek mythology, and folklore into her own iconic, fresh style. Growing up in the Bay Area of California and living for periods in both Seattle, WA, and Asheville, NC, dela Roche has resided in the Midwest since young adulthood and

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Lauren dela Roche in her studio, 2024

currently lives and works near St. Louis, MO.

The paintings depict multiplying and echoing views of a nude woman, who becomes a recurring central character. She appears in dream-like environments of ancient Greek archways, Matissean-patterned wall tapestries, and amongst larger-than-life butterflies, snakes, and swans. The female figure in dela Roche's paintings is elongated, with rouged cheeks, stockings, and long raven hair. More than representing any specific person, the female form is a multiplicitous symbol for dela Roche, signifying, for example, Mother Nature.

Symmetry and mirroring is utilized to great effect, and the paintings act as Rorschach tests for the viewer. The woman can be read simultaneously or alternately as sexually in control, vulnerable, powerful, and safe. Likewise, are the snakes symbols of danger and sin, or do they simply weave the scene together as they wind through it? Swans may be symbols of wisdom and love, but throughout art history, they are depictions of the violent Greek mythological story

of Leda and the Swan. Lilies also multiply throughout her paintings; in the Bible, they symbolize purity and innocence. There are suggestions of healing: in the repeated motif of the red bow of the stockings, linear elements resembling stitches on the body, and the mending of the feed sacks overlaid on the figures' flesh.

Dela Roche's work has deep ties to the land and agriculture. Her parents come from families who originally immigrated in search of farming opportunities in the United States, growing potatoes in the Midwest. For nearly a decade, dela Roche lived off the land in Northern Minnesota, building a cabin solely out of found materials and becoming fully self-reliant through farming. Collecting and mending cotton feedsack textiles by hand before applying paint, dela Roche reflects on her time working—and making art—during harvest time. Each surface is imbued with her enduring curiosity about their unique agricultural histories.

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69 Tearz is a slow fashion brand of hand-made, hand-painted unique garments co-founded by dela Roche. In 2012–13, dela Roche was awarded the Jerome Emerging Artist Fellowship at the Jerome Foundation, Minneapolis. Between 2013 and 2021, dela Roche exhibited with Bockley Gallery, Minneapolis, MN. Dela Roche was the recipient of the Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters and Sculptors Grant in 2018. In 2021, she was selected for the Bed-Stuy Art Residency in Brooklyn, NY. Her work is found in the collections of the Minneapolis Institute of Art and the North Dakota Museum of Art.



Lauren dela Roche | *Seed Eater* | 2024  
acrylic on found cotton feedsack and acrylic varnish  
73 x 93 in.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a fully illustrated exhibition catalog with an essay by Robert Cozzolino.

## **Lauren dela Roche: No Man's Land**

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**For further information, contact: [press@ericfirestonegallery.com](mailto:press@ericfirestonegallery.com)**