

ALEXANDRE GALLERY

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Lois Dodd: Day and Night

On view through April 2

Vincent Smith: Seventies New York

Extended through April 2



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Vincent Smith: Seventies New York

Alexandre Gallery is pleased to announce two exhibitions: *Lois Dodd: Day and Night* and the extension of *Vincent Smith: Seventies New York*. Both exhibitions remain on view through April 2, 2016.

This exhibition, her twelfth with the gallery, will present twenty-three recent small-scaled paintings on panel and larger scale paintings on canvas that depict Dodd's familiar motifs such as gardens, houses, interiors and views from windows, in the context of day and night. Dodd's paintings are freshly focused on light and the changing seasons through their timely categorization. In a 2013 review of Dodd's work, the critic Roberta Smith wrote, "She always searches out the underlying geometry but also the underlying life, and the sheer strangeness of it all." Dodd, now eighty-seven, is an iconic figure of the early New York Tenth Street art scene, along with her contemporaries, such as Alex Katz and Philip Pearlstein.

Lois Dodd studied at the Cooper Union in the late 1940s. In 1952 she was one of the five founding members of the legendary Tanager Gallery, among the first artist-run cooperative galleries in New York. Dodd is an elected member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the National Academy. In 1992 she retired from teaching at Brooklyn College. It has been said that her work is an example of New England simplicity, like Shaker furniture or small-town eighteenth-century churches. Since 1954 her work has been the subject of over fifty one-person exhibitions. In 2012 the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art organized a traveling retrospective of Dodd's work titled "Catching the Light." Alison Ferris writes in the accompanying Kemper catalogue:

Dodd's sophisticated spontaneity and an extraordinarily refined understanding of the elements of composition invite us to enter her paintings with ease. Once there, we discover

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the complexity of a composition that holds our interest and, in turn, invites us to slow down as Dodd has, to observe, absorb, and contemplate. In this way Dodd's gift to us in her paintings is the opportunity to pause in a world fraught with nonstop frenetic energies. We can escape from the ordeals of modern life to places like Maine, where nature appears to offer the potential of transformation. But transformation, Dodd generally shows us, is not intrinsically related to place, but rather, is possible in what we make of our extraordinary, if not sometimes mundane, everyday world.

Alexandre Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of Vincent Smith's (American, 1929 – 2003) work from the early 1970s. This focused show will include six medium-sized paintings and one woodcut print that depict tenements and streets during this tumultuous period in New York. Using his mature style of layering the canvas with rough sand-thickened paint and collage elements to create stucco-like surfaces in bright deep brick reds and blacks, Smith captures the rhythms and intricacies of the city in his signature expressionist social realist style. Each includes a figure or more, often seen through a window or doorway, seemingly trapped or imprisoned in their surroundings. Titles include *Home From Vietnam*, *On a Sunny Day*, *The Projects*, and *The Super*.

The noted artist and art historian David C. Driskell has written on this work:

. . . what is gently revealed is an impressive and dynamic display of black history, memory and creative workmanship in a very unique visual experience. Compositions . . . bring us face to face with the social circumstance of a nation, indeed, a people who are poor, hungry, deprived and limited by the seemingly unchanged social order.

In a 2004 obituary for Vincent Smith the *New York Times* wrote:

Mr. Smith, who had more than 25 one-man shows was among about a dozen prominent members of the Black Arts movement of the 1960s and 70s. A figurative painter with an often subtle, social thrust, he placed his subjects in a stylized way against geometric, textured and intricately colored backgrounds. He stood as an expressionist bridge between the stark figures of Jacob Lawrence and the Cubist and Abstractions represented by black artists like Romare Bearden and Norman Lewis.

Smith was a Brooklyn native who spent time working as a railroad and postal worker before serving in the Army. He turned seriously to painting in 1953. In 1956 he was awarded a scholarship to attend the Skowhegan School. In 1969 the Studio Museum in Harlem presented the first museum exhibition of his paintings.

For further information or images, please contact the gallery at 212-755-2828 or at inquiries@alexandregallery.com