



Gorgon's Delight by Louise Williams





**Louise Williams**





Louise Williams Reflection



## Louise Williams

I have been photographing people and places around the San Francisco Bay Area for much of my life. Originally inspired by the formal nineteenth century portraits in my grandmother’s albums that I pored over as a child, I am drawn toward dreamy, timeless images and sensual light. In addition, surrealism calls to me. Innuendo and ambiguity, as well as the expansion of possibility and reality, delight me. My images are narratives, though the interpretation of them is completely up to the viewer’s whim. They are open to everyone’s imagination.

Until the advent of digital photography, I primarily worked in black and white film, custom printing and selenium toning my images. Currently, I work digitally, in both photographing my subjects and processing the images. The digital darkroom has allowed me to maintain artistic control over color images, expanding my visual expression to include a variety of subjects and enhancements, while giving voice to the magic of my imagination. My most current work employs scanned images as well as photographs. Many layered, they invite a closer look. There is always something in them to uncover and enjoy.

My work has been exhibited in the San Francisco Bay Area at numerous galleries, including The Marin Society of Artists, The Marin Art Fair, Falkirk Gallery, and the Bartolini Gallery at the Marin Center. Online galleries include Manhattan Artists International, Exhibitions Without Walls, Light Space and Time, and The Center for Photographic Arts. My images have won several awards including Best in Show, First Place, Special Recognition, Best in Competition, Award of Excellence, and the Jack Fulton Award. In May of this year, three of my images will be included in the Julia Margaret Cameron 2019 Women in Photography exhibit to be held in Barcelona.

My published work includes two books: Squatters and The Silver Lining.

I live on the edge of the San Francisco Bay with gulls and cormorants for neighbors. I have 1 husband and 2 sons. I consider my husband my collaborator. My sons are my greatest teachers.

***Tell us why you decided to become a visual artist and what has been your source of inspiration.***

***Louise response:***

“I have always been an artist in my soul. There was never any “deciding”. For me, having eyes to see and the drive to create is part of my package. They just came with the territory. As a child, I was an arranger of found things, flowers, shells and whatever caught my eye. Creating stories with my pictures was a form of play.

My grandmother inspired my love of beautiful things. My best friend’s mother encouraged my creativity when I made books for her of drawing paper with Wint-o-green Lifesavers stuck on to create the shapes for flowers, balloons, wheels, and the sunshine. Edward Steichen’s exhibit, “The Family of Man”, which came to San Francisco when I was ten as well as the photographs in my grandmother’s vintage photo albums inspired me to become a photographer. Ruth Bernhard taught me to see light. Her sensibility vibrated with mine. She kept magical things, milkweed flowers, tiny shells, and objects generally overlooked by others in glass cigar tubes. She could see what others missed, mostly because she saw light and shapes so clearly. She understood the thrill of looking through the lens when light resonates. She once waited two years for the light to shine on a glass doorknob in her bedroom in San Francisco. It had passed too quickly for her to capture when she first saw it, but she wrote down the date. The next year fog had settled in so she had to wait yet one more year. You can see that doorknob today in her archives.

As a digital artist, I am inspired by surrealists, particularly Dali and Magritte. I am drawn to the magic and impossibility of their art as well as the irony and ambiguity. Expanding perception is thrilling to me. It’s not always the intellect that perceives. For me, there is a playful, not always nice, impulse that informs my images. Finally, my friend, artist Kathryn Dunlevie, also inspires me, simply by sharing her vision and celebrating mine.”

***Tell us about your artistic process for creating work. Is the process for each series the same or different?***

***Louise response:***

“My process for creating a body of work comes on like a storm. At first, I tend to get an itchy feeling, a sense that I need to make something. It feels like a prodding and it’s exciting and uncomfortable at the same time. There’s a kind of fear attached. Usually, I don’t know what will evolve. Sometimes I see an image while meditating and that gets me going.

If I haven’t been gifted with an image, I go to the computer and noodle around my archives for images that call out to me. Sometimes a background gets me going. Sometimes it’s “characters.” I might make one or two images before I know what I’m onto. Once I see what it is, I become obsessed and work like a madwoman on others that speak to the theme. I might make as many as twelve images or as few as six. I always know when I’m done because the creative process stops being fun and feels stilted.

Once, when I was ill, I read a book and knew exactly what I wanted to do. Once the death of a dear friend inspired a body of work. Sometimes I stumble upon something by accident. But always, once I’m working, I work very intensely, waking often at 4 in the morning, being called to the computer to work.

During the process of creating a body of work, I always show each image to my husband, who has a very different way of seeing than I. He always presents questions that I must consider. In arguing my point, I begin to learn more about each image, understanding its layers of meaning. Very often he supplies an idea that enhances the piece, adding more irony or depth to it. I could not consider an image complete without the step of my husband’s critique.

There is also an important part of the process which requires patience and faith and that’s when nothing, absolutely nothing is speaking to me. I have learned to think of the “dry” times as incubation periods. They are a challenge but they are part of the process and they are very real. Weathering them is not fun, but one has to know, beyond any doubt, they will pass. Being an artist of any sort requires a great deal of faith.”



Historical Blindness by Louise Williams





Love at First Sight by Louise Williams





Do I Dare by Louise Williams

Tell us what you're hoping to convey to your audience when you exhibit your work.

Louise response:

"I suppose, above all, I hope that my art catches the viewers' attention and inspires them to explore. Under the best circumstances, I hope it delights viewers and makes them think.

Some bodies of work intended to remind audiences of the joyful whimsy and magic we experienced as children. Some attempt to touch a chord and open people to the pathos of the human experience. Some more recent images address the current gloom that wafts like a cloud over our daily experiences. They suggest we are all in this together as human beings.

If there's humor in my work, I hope the viewer laughs. If there's beauty, I hope it pleases. If there's irony, I hope it strikes a chord. I hope my work stretches the viewer's imagination and conveys ideas that are new and engaging."

Has gallery representation been an intricate part of art career or has worked independently been more beneficial to your career? Or has a combination of both styles worked best for you?

Louise response:

"I find that gallery representation is thrilling. I enjoy openings and discussing my work with visitors. I am often driven to enter competitions which have been beneficial to my career. Currently, I find that I'm submitting my work to more online galleries. Placing in a competition is a feather in my cap and adds to my resume. That being said, the impetus to make images comes from within. I would continue to work even if I wasn't showing, whether in a brick and mortar gallery or online. "

***For more information visit Louise's website at <https://louisewilliamsimages.com>***





Slacking Off by Louise Williams



Louise Kleinsorge Williams  
*Images*



Once Upon a Time



Sweet Nothings



Celebration



Whisper in the Wind



After the Ball



Love at First Sight



The Journey



The Dance



Louise Williams work on exhibit