

MARIANNE VAN LENT

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PRIMA MATERIA

MARCH 3 - MARCH 28, 2015

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THE
PAINTING
CENTER

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Prima Materia

Filtered through memory, my work examines the mysterious forces of the physical world and investigates our fragile position in the universe through the intersection of natural and technological modalities. I construct places, worlds, cosmologies that are represented both in the outer world of nature and the inner world of the psyche. Creating a multi dimensional collision of realms, the glimmer of unexpected openings provides inspiration for the process of painting. My painting process relates to the process of transcendence and transformation in which magic occurs through abstraction.

Within the picture plane pictorial fields give way to iconic shapes, shifting images float in and out of space, suggesting apocalyptic conditions. The iconography of the physical landscape has become an interior landscape, incorporating the most fundamental structure of nature, the cell. Derived from autobiographical sources, the work reflects a historical, social, cultural and personal awareness.

The narrative moves between reality and fiction. Contradictions and ambiguities are echoed in formal relationships. The play and contrast of line, form, color, point of view and spacial relationships are all subject to interpretation. The threat of the imbalance of our natural world lurks behind the picture plane. Pictorial fields are sometimes shifted and perspectives skewed. Visual perceptions of light and color suggest a place or a state of mind. Light and space create a transformative element evoking a metaphysical reality and an unconscious sensibility. The practice explores issues of order and chaos, conflict and harmony, abstraction and representation, rationality (science based) and irrationality.

I use stencils as archetypal symbols from the collective unconscious, botany and biology, employing a personal cryptogrammatic language to create an encoded narrative. Stencils create a rational and depersonalized mark (an imposition of man on nature) that works contrapuntally to the expressionistic and gestural mark making created in my paint handling. Color is unbridled but often refers to botany in green and biology in red. The surface interest of the paintings adds to a notion of timelessness and a suggestion of the ancient and evolved nature of the earth's landscape and history. Employing a fresco secco technique, the images are detached and set adrift from their original context, giving consideration to both ancient and recent history.

I have become intrigued by cosmology, a branch of metaphysics dealing with the nature of the universe, a study of its origins and the eventual fate of the cosmos. My process of abstraction in painting relates to the process of transcendence and transformation in alchemy which was not so much about the transformation of base metals into gold, as the creation of a new wisdom of being, the homunculus.

The process of creation becomes more or at least as important as the nearly unattainable goal of transcendence. Reaching becomes the manifestation and reinforcement of vision for the preist, shamen, magician and artist.

Willem de Kooning has described the glimpse of inspiration informing his content. "Content is a glimpse of something: an encounter like a flash. It's very tiny – very tiny content---it could change all the time. Each new glimpse is determined by many, many glimpses before. It's the glimpse that inspires you --- I notice those are always my moments of having an idea "

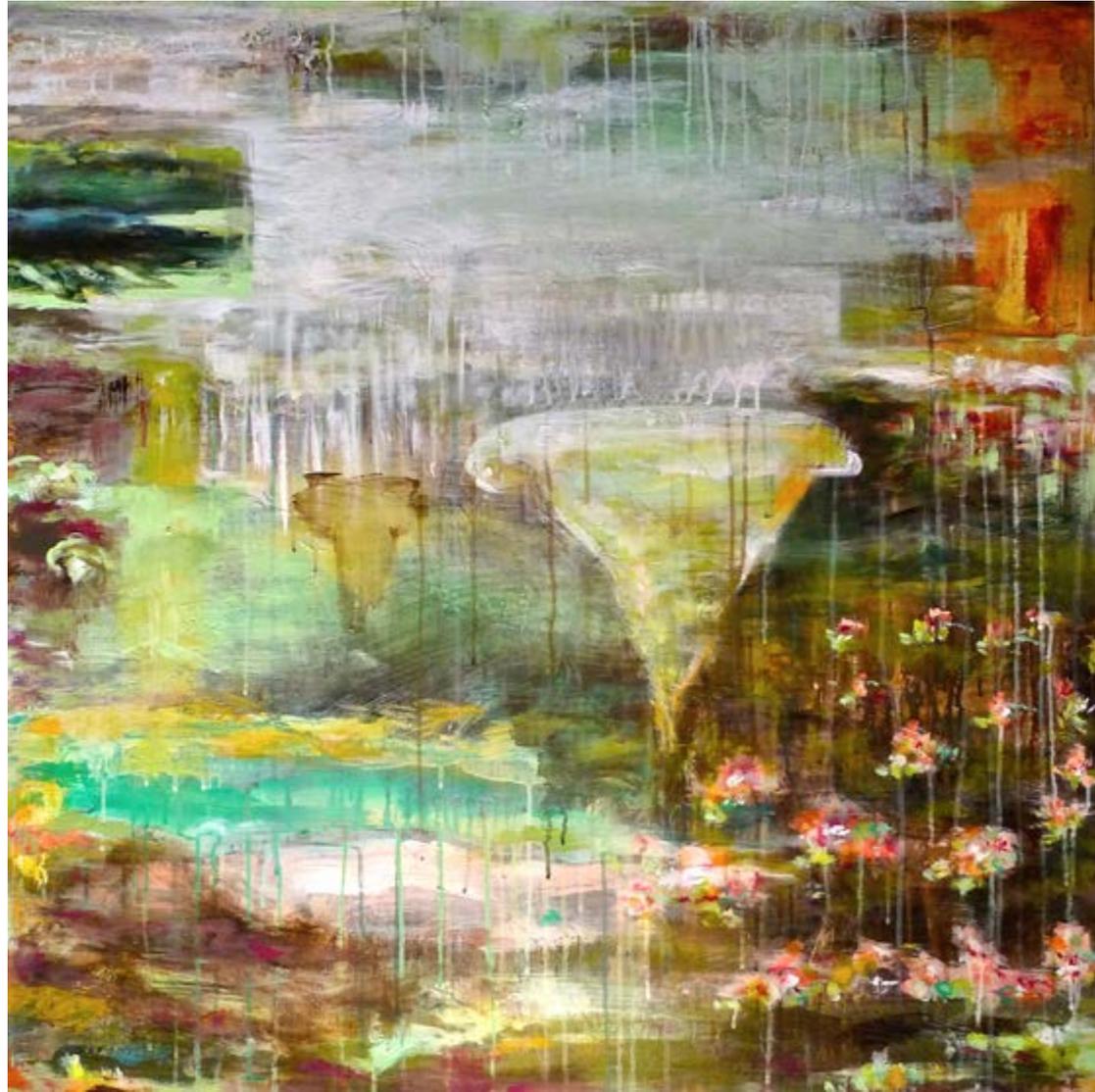
The iconography addresses mystic phenomena found in nature. In "Fire on the Water" the moment is captured in the glade, a recurring image, suggesting sacred space, sanctuary and separation. Fire on the water is a mirage found in nature; fata morgana in a metaphysical sense. The mirage is idolized into a mysterious purity: a sublime point of contrast between the spiritual and material realms. I had the inspiring privilege of witnessing the phenomenon outside my studio window on the Hudson River one summer day. It was a vision but it was real.

The painting, "The Golden Horn" refers to the horn shaped Bosphorus Strait. In the twelfth century the inlet was instrumental in making Venice a super power through the spice trade. Golden refers to the riches brought into the city through the bustling historic harbor as well as the rich yellow light blazing upon the estuary waters as the sun sets over the city. Venice, its history and its magical light have always held the magic of "a dream of place", a source of inspiration for me.

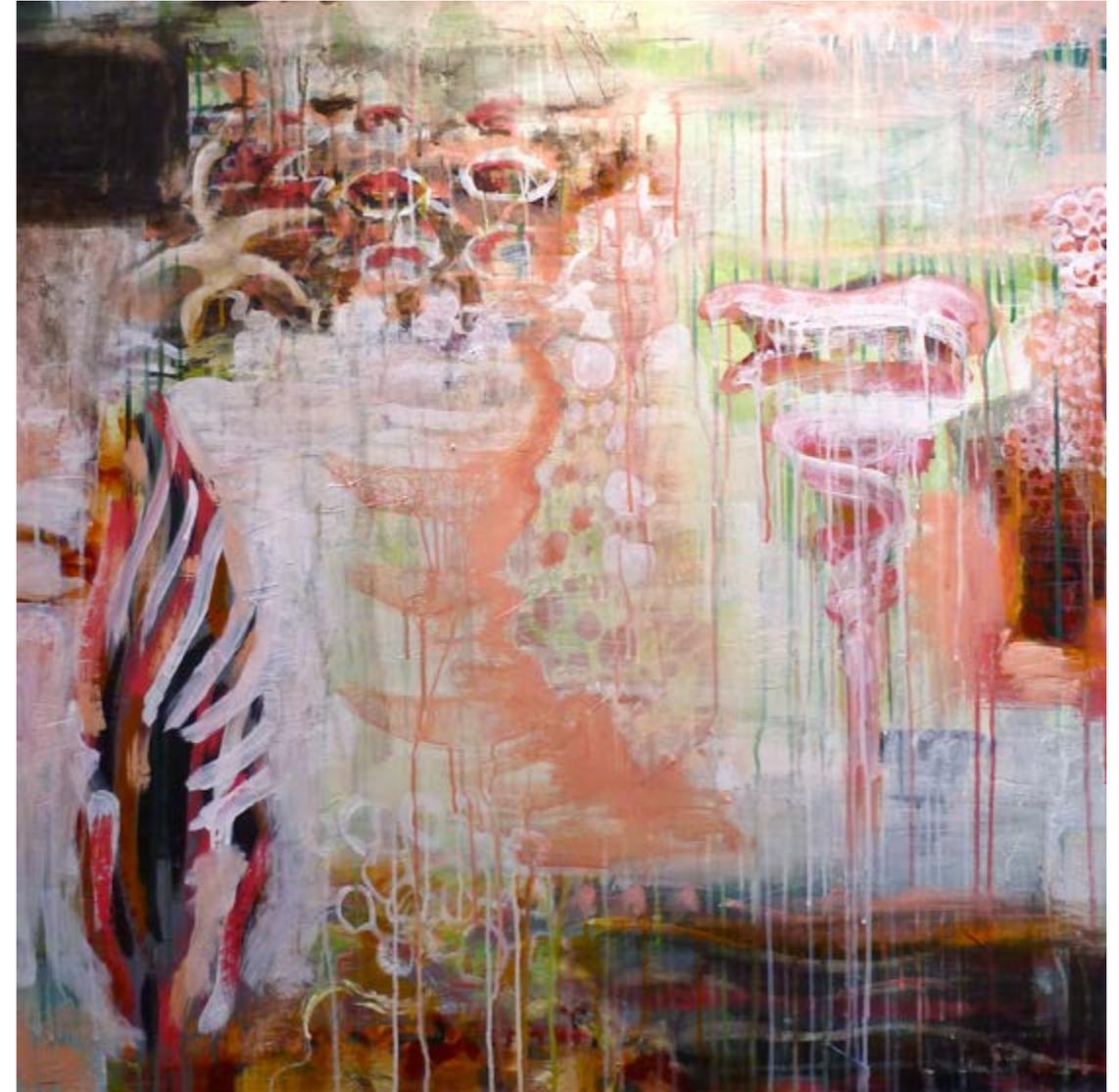
The VAS image as an archetypal symbol often recurs in these paintings as a V form representing at once the ancient vessel and the whirling phenomena of dervishes and tornados. The icon is steeped in and loaded with metaphysical magic. Carl Jung explains the nature of the vas as the vessel excepting the prima materia (the four elements). In alchemy transformation starts with the unconscious content (prima materia) and ends with the realization of the self. Jung wrote: "Into an egg shaped retort, the unum vas, vas bene clausum (well shaped vessel) or vas hermeticum (also called the uterus) went the prima materia, there to cook over a low flame (heating or cooking with meditation)" The image has deep personal mystery and meaning for me in reference to my own body's ecology.

The eternal riddle encompasses points in time; it considers decay and rejuvenation. It's innermost secret is revealed in the "other", the spirit world - the ancestral footprint walking behind us.

Marianne Van Lent, 2015



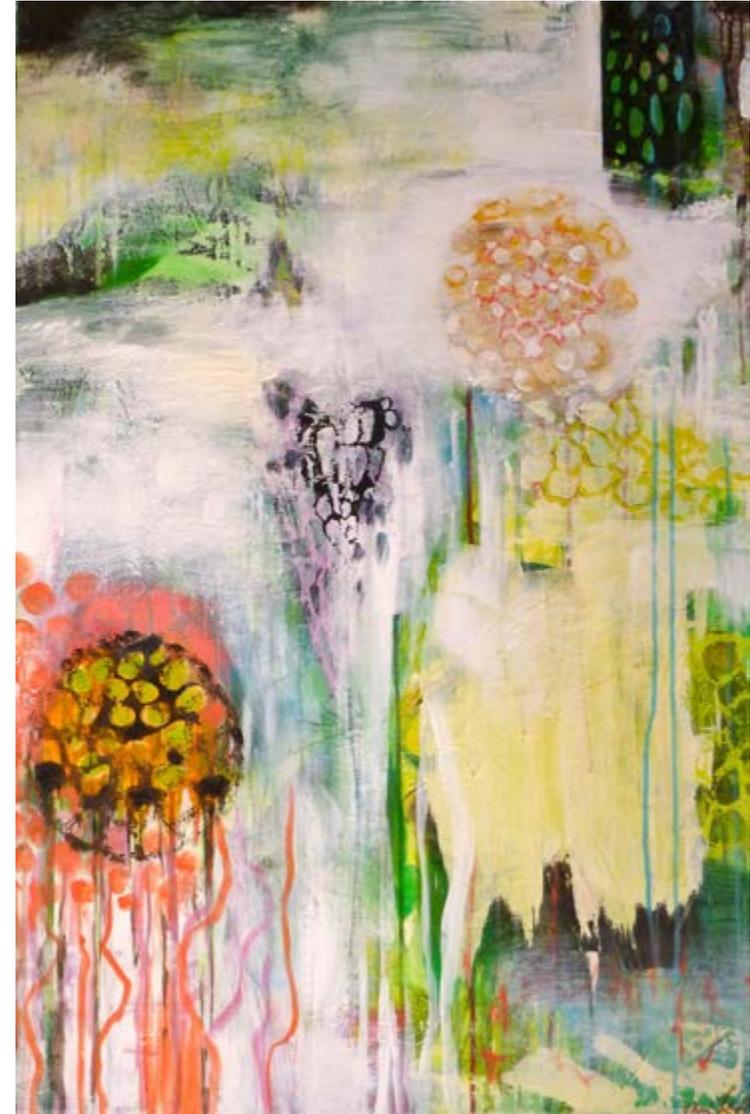
Vas, 2014, fresco secco and dispersed pigment in polymer, 36" x 36"



Botany/Biology, 2014, fresco secco and dispersed pigment in polymer, 36" x 36"



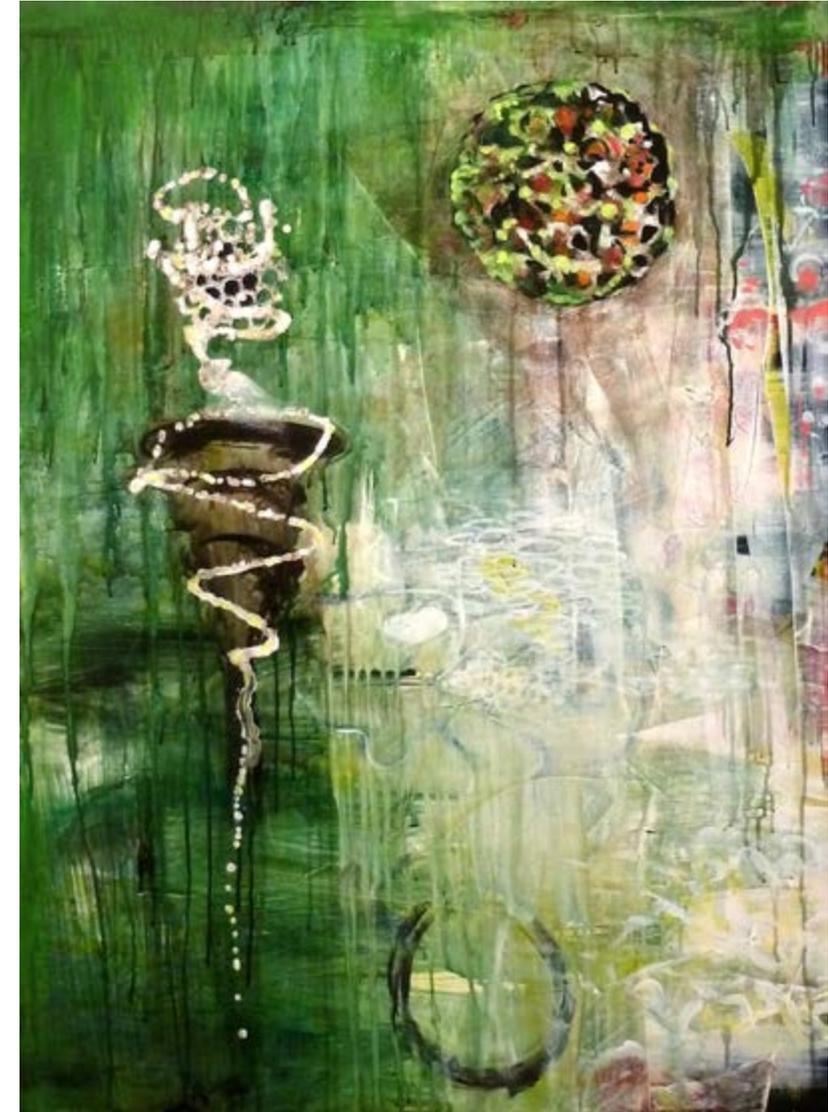
Vas Hermeticum, 2014, fresco secco and dispersed pigment in polymer, 24" x 36"



Landscape With Vas, 2014, fresco secco and dispersed pigment in polymer, 24" x 36"



Sapped (Calcined Oxide), 2014 fresco secco and dispersed pigment in polymer, 30" x 40"



Forest, 2014, fresco secco and dispersed pigment in polymer, 30" x 40"



The Golden Horn, 2014, fresco secco and dispersed pigment in polymer, 30" x 40"



Venetian, 2014, fresco secco and dispersed pigment in polymer, 48" x 48"



New Jungle, 2014, fresco secco and dispersed pigment in polymer, 48" x 48"



Shifting Ecologies, 2014, fresco secco and dispersed pigment in polymer, 8" x 10"



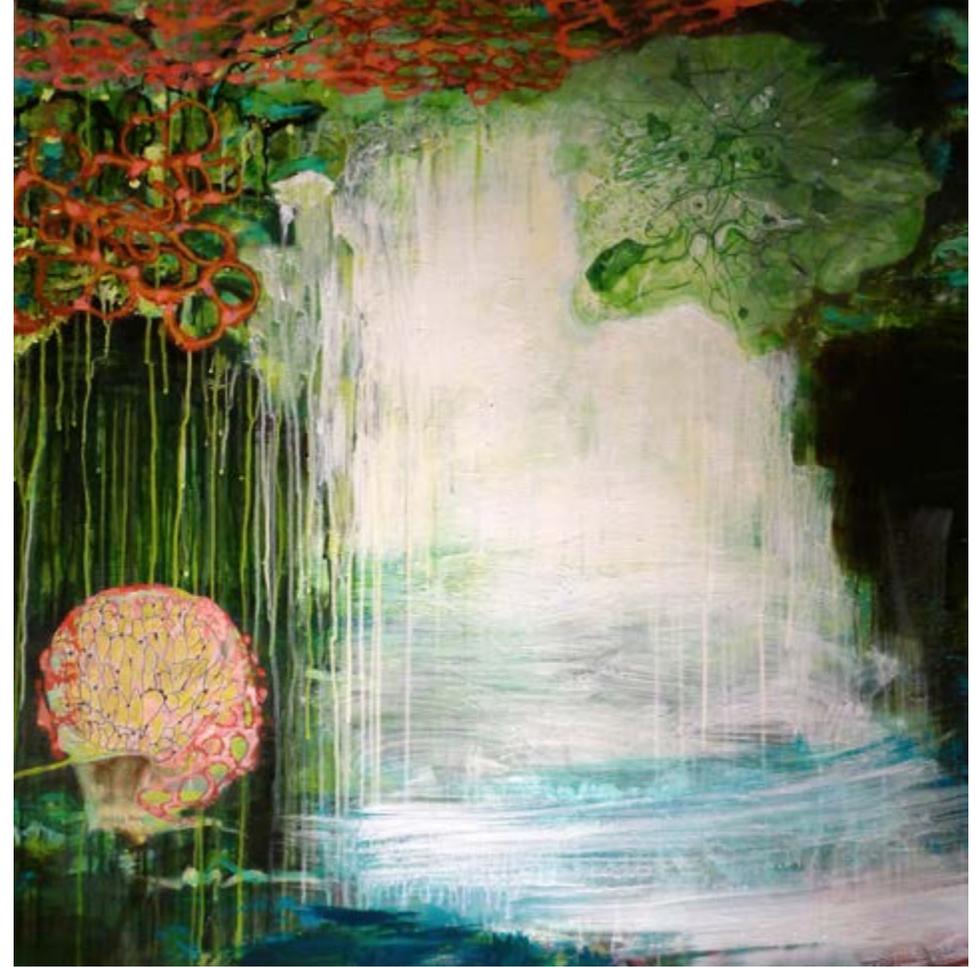
Errors in Process of Replication, 2014, fresco secco and dispersed pigment in polymer, 24" x 24"



Spinning, 2014, fresco secco and dispersed pigment in polymer, 24" x 36"



Jellyfish, 2014, fresco secco and dispersed pigment in polymer, 38" x 50"



Vaporous, 2014, fresco secco and dispersed pigment in polymer, 36" x 36"



Rose Garden, 2014, fresco secco and dispersed pigment in polymer, 40" x 54"



Fire on the Water, 2014, fresco secco and dispersed pigment in polymer, 40" x 54"



Marianne Van Lent was born in Ithaca NY in 1950. She has been a working artist in New York and Athens, NY on the Hudson River for most of her adult life exhibiting widely in the United States and Europe. Additionally she was a textile/print designer for ten years on Seventh Avenue, a food stylist assistant, and then developed a successful decorative painting business using paint glazes and Venetian plaster in commercial and residential spaces including murals and public art. She currently teaches workshops in painting and cooking.

Solo exhibitions include The Painting Center, Galerie Cerulean online, Deborah Davis Fine Art, Hudson, NY, Ulla Surland Gallery 11, Fairfield, CT, Wesley Lake Gallery, Asbury Park, NJ, Markel/Sears, New York, Fox and Fowle Gallery, New York, Brown, Harris Stevens, New York, The Pharmacy, New York, Galveston Artists Guild, Galveston, TX, Galerie Kubinski, Stuttgart, Germany, Tyler Lungotevere Gallery, Rome, Italy.

Van Lent's work has been included at Watson Macrae Gallery, Sanibel, FL, AIR, New York, Hudson River Museum, Yonkers, NY, BACA, Bklyn, NY, Louis Meisel Gallery, New York, The Clocktower, New York, SSCB Worldwide, New York, Long Island University, New York, Lake Gallery, Lake Tahoe, CA, M Gallery, Catskill, NY, Bric Gallery, Catskill, NY, The Athens Cultural Center, Athens, NY, Columbia Council of the Arts, Hudson, NY, Greene County Council on the Arts, Catskill, NY, Edward Hopper House, Nyack, NY, Columbia/Greene Community College Gallery, Hudson, NY, Olana Regional, Hudson, NY, AIC Gallery, New York, Trabia/ MacAfee Gallery New York, Windows on White, New York

Selected public and corporate collections that own her work are The Zimmerlee Museum, New Brunswick NJ, ALEA, LLP, American Airlines, American Express Corporation, British Airways, Delta Airlines, Chase Manhattan Bank, EF Hutten Collection, Fox and Fowl Architects, Hartford Life Insurance, Donna Karen New York, Morgan Guaranty Trust, MTA, Art for Transit, David Rockwell, Rockwell Group Architects, W Hotel Groups, Saatchi & Saatchi Collection, David Parsons Dance Company, and Taco Bell Collection.

Van Lent has received Fellowships and Grants from Cornell University, NYSCA, The Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Residency Grant, NYSCA Community Teaching Grant, Athens, NY, MTA, Arts for Transit, H.A.N.D.S., Bronx, NY, Percent for Art, CityArts Inc, New York, Artists Space, New York and Creative Time, New York. She has recently curated two exhibitions at The Painting Center, New York: *Natural/ Constructed Spaces* and *Shifting Ecologies*.

A graduate of Tyler School of Art, Van Lent holds a BFA in fine arts and an MFA from Cornell University with a graduate teaching fellowship. She has taught at Pratt Institute: Color and Light in the Graduate Industrial Design School, Poly Prep Country Day School, Freshman and Advanced Drawing and Painting and AP Art History. Painting workshops include Art School of the Berkshires, Stockbridge MA, The Athens Cultural Center, Athens, NY and Greenwich House on the Square, New York.

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