

# Les Femmes Folles

WOMEN IN ART

**Susan Lizotte, artist**

June 8, 2015



“BORDER”, 42” X 62”, OIL AND SPRAY PAINT ON CANVAS



1500”, 40” X 60”, OIL ON CANVAS

**Susan Lizotte shares with LFF about being an artist in LA, her inspirations and process, her latest project exploring misuse of power, and more...**

**Where are you from? How did you get into art?**

I am a native of Los Angeles. My second daughter could draw before she could write her name and I would draw with her for hours. I love painting and we would paint together also. I sought out artists to mentor me and have been very lucky.

**Tell me about your inspirations, process.**

I’ve been inspired by Mark F. Blaxill and his book “The Age of Autism: Mercury, Medicine and a Manmade Epidemic.” I’ve been inspired by art history that I can mine to use for my own paintings. I have collaged together lots of different compositions trying to work through what works best visually. Once I have found compositions that I love, then I will paint different versions of my composition using the collaged version as a starting point. Then I will often be inspired to paint other versions more spontaneously using past versions more as a mental reference.

**Tell me about your current/upcoming show/exhibit/project and why it’s important to you.**

My current project is my series entitled Mercury which tackles misuse and abuse of power. It’s really important to me to finish working through my ideas. My starting point in time is 1492 when Columbus “discovered” the New World Mercury the element started to be used by 15th century doctors against syphilis, carried back by Columbus and his men. Using symbols, painting language and color from that time has been really interesting to play with in my own paintings and then mixing painting language and materials currently in use and using each as a foil has been an exciting journey.

**Do you think your city is a good place for women in art? Do you show your work elsewhere/is there a difference in how your work is received?**

Los Angeles is an amazing place to be a woman artist right now! Of course the gallery representation continues to have a male bias. I think that we are seeing progress and a huge surge in art and artists living and working in Los Angeles. I have shown my

work elsewhere and have not yet noticed a difference. Perhaps I don't yet have enough experience to know!



"LARA", 48" X 30", OIL ON CANVAS

**If you could make one wish for art today, what would it be?**

I wish there could be even more opportunities for artists to show their work! Artists working together to put on group shows can foster an enormous sense of community, which in turn opens doors to other opportunities!



"SEEKING TREASURE", 40" X 60", OIL AND SPRAY PAINT ON CANVAS

**What do you think is the most important issue facing artists—and/or artists who are women—today?**

I think a major issue is getting their work seen. Gallery representation is skewed towards men, not that this is new. If women artists started opening up more dialog to work together, support each other and curate things together perhaps we can create our own vision of the future.

**Ewing's advice to aspiring artists was "you've got to develop the skill of when to listen and when not to;" and "Leave. Gain perspective." What is the most helpful advice you have received?**

Rebecca Campbell once told me that you can never be afraid to work through a painting, that the fear of ruining it needs to be overcome. If the painting is indeed ruined, then you can always start it all over again, and if you don't overcome your fear you may not make it great. Stay loose, have fun and lose your fear!

[www.susanlizotte.com](http://www.susanlizotte.com)

[www.durdenandray.com](http://www.durdenandray.com)

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Les Femmes Folles is a volunteer organization founded in 2011 with the mission to support and promote women in all forms, styles and levels of art from around the world with the online journal, print annuals, exhibitions and events; originally inspired by artist Wanda Ewing and her curated exhibit by the name Les Femmes Folles (Wild Women). LFF was created and is curated by Sally Deskins. LFF Books is a micro-feminist press that publishes 1-2 books per year by the creators of Les Femmes Folles including *Intimates & Fools* (Laura Madeline Wiseman, 2014) and *The Hunger of the Cheeky Sisters: Ten Tales* (Laura Madeline Wiseman/Lauren Rinaldi, 2015). Other titles include *Les Femmes Folles: The Women* 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014 available on [blurb.com](http://blurb.com), including art, poetry and interview excerpts from women artists. A portion of the proceeds from LFF books and products benefit the University of Nebraska-Omaha's Wanda Ewing Scholarship Fund. See the latest call for work on the [Submissions page](#)!