



Tourists, 2021, Acrylic and mixed media on canvas
45 1/2 x 68 3/4 in. (115.6 x 174.6 cm)

ADAA: THE ART SHOW | BOOTH A7 | NOV 3-7, 2021

Mernet Larsen

James Cohan is pleased to present new and recent works by Mernet Larsen at the 2021 edition of The Art Show, organized by the Art Dealers Association of America. The fair is open to the public from November 4-7, with a VIP Preview on November 3.

For over six decades, Larsen has created narrative paintings depicting hard-edged, enigmatic characters that inhabit an uncanny parallel world filled with tension and wry humor. Drawing from influences that range from the non-objective geometries of Russian Constructivism to Bunraku puppet theater and Indian miniatures, her works take compositional cues from art of the past, as springboards for figure-paintings that speak to the anxieties of the present.

Larsen employs various spatial systems that often contradict. Combining reverse, isometric, and conventional perspectives, she casts everyday scenarios—like passersby on a city street, or the attendants in a municipal courtroom—into a vertigo-inducing version of reality akin to our own. As curator Susan Thompson has written about her work, “to step into Mernet Larsen’s world is to step off a ledge.”

Central to Larsen’s painting process are studies that riff off her various source compositions, such as works by El Lissitzky, which operate as parameters for free-association. These preparatory works on paper often examine the

facial expression of a single character, or the spatial orientation of a particular scene. Through these painterly meditations, Larsen slowly builds geometric structure into a psychological arranging of space.

Mernet Larsen (b. 1940, Houghton, Michigan) has exhibited extensively since the late 1970s and has been the subject of over thirty solo exhibitions, including *Mernet Larsen: The Ordinary, Reoriented*, Akron Art Museum, 2019, and *Getting Measured: Mernet Larsen, 1957-2017*, Tampa Museum of Art, 2017. She has been featured in more than seventy group exhibitions, including presentations at the National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington D.C., the American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York, NY and multiple other exhibitions in London and New York. Her work is in numerous collections, including the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, CA; the Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA; the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA; the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN; the Alford Collection of Contemporary Art, Cornell Fine Arts Museum, Rollins College, Winter Park, Florida; the Israel Museum, Jerusalem, Israel; and the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia, the X Museum, Beijing, China, among others. Larsen received her BFA from the University of Florida, and her MFA from Indiana University. She lives and works between Tampa, Florida and Jackson Heights, New York.

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