

Lucas Johnson

Selection of Paintings 1970-1996

July 1 – August 12, 2023

Moody Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of paintings by Lucas Johnson (1940-2002). Johnson has been represented by Moody Gallery for almost fifty years since the gallery opened in 1975. *Selection of Paintings 1970-1996* marks the gallery's sixth exhibition of his work since his death, in addition to twelve solo exhibitions he held during his life. The subjects in his work are always from his imagination, shaped by his love of the ocean, his awe of nature, and most of all, his humanism. Walter Hopps, the Menil Collection's founding director, described Lucas as an imagist, a term he defined as "art that employs recognizable images in fantastic or unreal juxtapositions ... constructed in the same way as poetry, using imagery as visual metaphors."

Lucas Johnson was born in Hartford, Connecticut, raised in southern California, and died in Houston, Texas. He never took formal art classes and taught himself to draw and to paint. In the 1960s he moved to Mexico City and was more interested in the human condition than the prevailing Minimalism and Conceptualism dominating the United States' art world at that time. Johnson began to exhibit in public cultural institutions as well as galleries and was represented by Galeria de Arte Misrachi in Mexico City and David Gallery in Houston. After moving to Houston in 1973, he was represented by Covo de longh (1976-78) and by Moody Gallery (1975-present).

Johnson's work can be seen in many collections including the Menil Collection, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Houston Airport System, Art Museum of Southeast Texas, Houston Art Museum of South Texas, San Antonio Museum of Art, Wichita Falls Museum, Amarillo Art Center, New Orleans Museum of Art, New Mexico Museum of Art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Smithsonian Institution, and the Brooklyn Museum. His work has been shown in numerous solo exhibitions including at the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston and Galveston Arts Center (1994), Station Museum (2005), Rockport Center for the Arts (2004), Museum of East Texas (2001), Art Museum of Southeast Texas and Art League Houston (1996), the Serpentine Gallery, London (1987), Shenzhen Art Institute, Shanghai, China (2016), and many institutions in Mexico.

In 2006 the Houston Artists Fund published the book *The Art and Life of Lucas Johnson* with a preface by Walter Hopps, an essay by art historian Edmund P. Pillsbury, and chronology by Patricia Covo Johnson, which is available at Moody Gallery.

Moody Gallery is open Tuesday - Friday 10:30 am - 5 pm and Saturday 11 am - 5 pm. Lucas Johnson: *Selection of Paintings 1970-1996* can also be viewed online at moodygallery.com. For more information, please call or email the gallery at 713-526-9911 or info@moodygallery.com.