

# THIS 'ME' OF MINE

Curated by Jane Boyer



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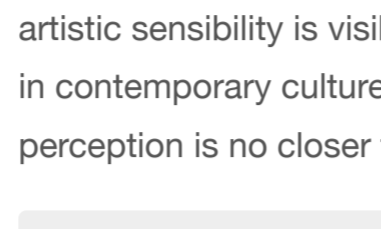
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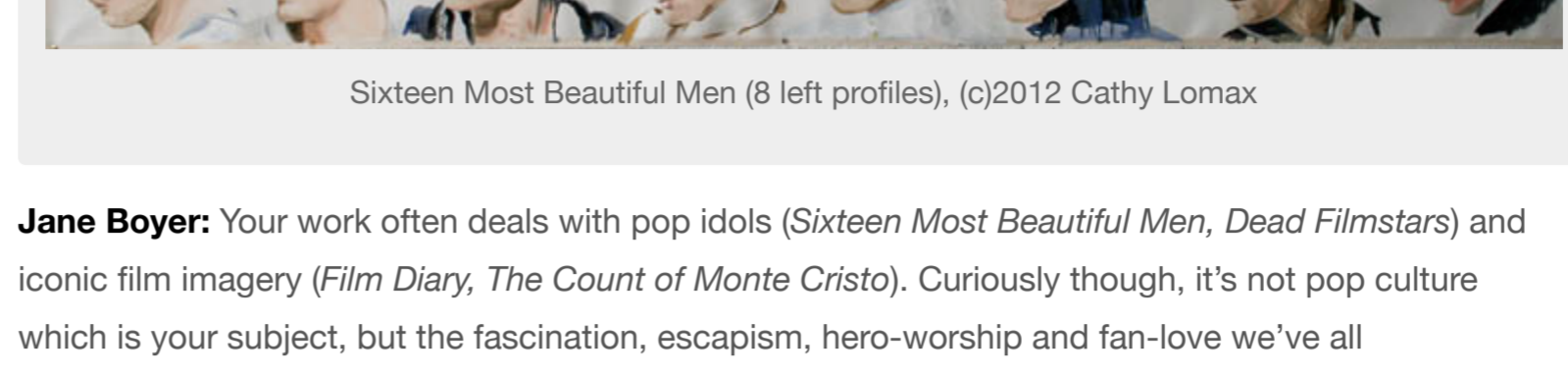
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## A PERFECT WRAPPER

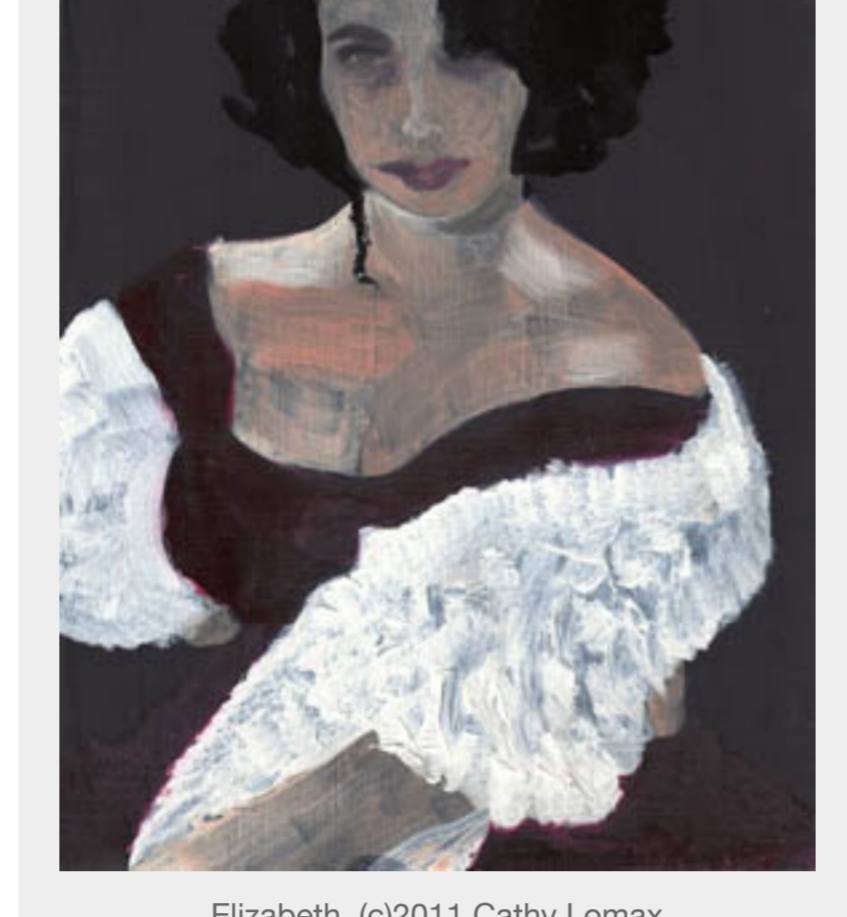


Cathy Lomax runs Transition Gallery, a Hackney Gallery 10+ years in establishment, and she is the publisher of Garageland and Arty magazines in addition to being a full time artist. She is fully immersed in the contemporary art world in London. These many strands are as much a part of her practice as painting and indeed, much of her personal and artistic sensibility is visible in each of these endeavours. This shift to multiple practices is common in contemporary culture now, but the source and intensity of personal experience, observation and perception is no closer to exposure.



Sixteen Most Beautiful Men (8 left profiles), (c)2012 Cathy Lomax

**Jane Boyer:** Your work often deals with pop idols (*Sixteen Most Beautiful Men*, *Dead Filmstars*) and iconic film imagery (*Film Diary*, *The Count of Monte Cristo*). Curiously though, it's not pop culture which is your subject, but the fascination, escapism, hero-worship and fan-love we've all experienced. What fascinates you about our psychological propensity to fascination and 'longing for something unobtainable'?

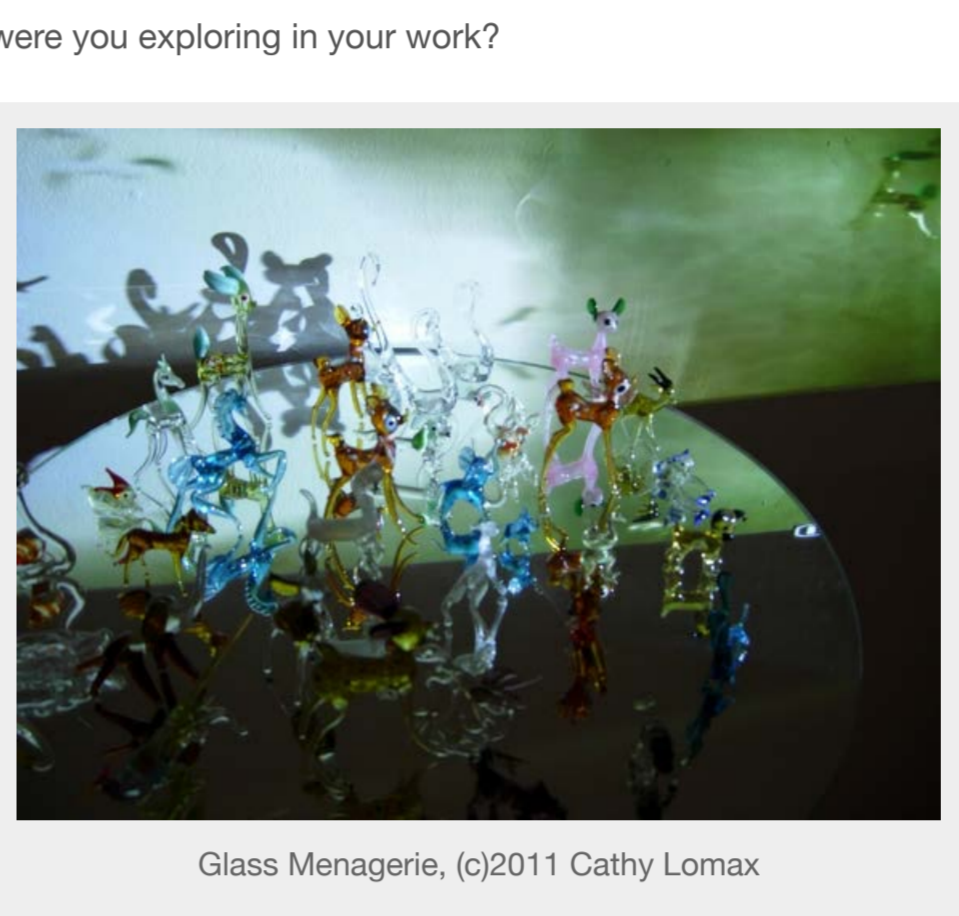


Elizabeth, (c)2011 Cathy Lomax

**Cathy Lomax:** I think that pop culture in general is just a wrapper for supplying the things that the market demands – i.e. what we want. These things do not change much; they are excitement, desire, escapism etc. So with this in mind I let my self lead the direction of my work by following what it is that I am drawn to. I do not like to think that I am in any kind of elevated position in my commentary on my subjects; I am in and amongst the subject matter. Looking deeper into what it is I am interested and fascinated by, it is apparent it is something that I do not actually want but rather that it is something I can think about and live out in my head – probably because this is the safest way to do it. This is what led me to the *Film Diary* as film for most people is the most intense way to experience other lives and worlds.

**JB:** Tell us more about your piece, *Glass Menagerie*. Tennessee Williams' play, *The Glass Menagerie*, which is the inspiration for your piece, looks at many of these issues of longing, fragility and nostalgia, but also issues of control, desire and a fervent denial of reality. What were you exploring in your work?

**CL:** It is quite a hard piece to talk about as it has a very fragmentary meaning. I am a big fan of Tennessee Williams' work generally and always take the chance to see his plays when they are being performed. Val Xavier in Tennessee Williams' 'Orpheus Descending' says 'No body ever gets to know no body! We're all of us sentenced to solitary confinement inside our own skins for life!' – which just seems to contain so much truth. My *Glass Menagerie* piece is full of personal references and connections which mean nothing to anyone else but hopefully make the work into something that has a certain poignancy. It is formed from a collection of glass animals which I sourced from eBay. These animals are doppelgängers of a set one of my relatives had and I remember admiring them as a child but not being able to touch them.



Glass Menagerie, (c)2011 Cathy Lomax

**JB:** In your interview with Ayla Lepine, curator for *Past in Present* at the Courtauld Institute last year, you and she discuss the problem with nostalgia as 'an alienation from the present'. You say, 'I prefer the idea of *sensucht*, a German term that is more associated with a unique feeling you might get about people, places or events that can be almost impossible to communicate to anyone else – like how a favourite song makes you feel.' Is it the uniqueness of the feeling or the fact that it is incommunicable which appeals to you?

**CL:** It is the feeling of *Sensucht* itself that I am attracted to (as everyone probably is). It is about finding something or someone that you feel something special for – it could be described as a butterflies-in-the-stomach feeling. Often if you communicate this the specialness disappears, this makes trying to produce art about it very difficult as it is such a personal, delicate concept. So I make work about things that I feel something for and don't enforce my feelings about them or pin things down too

precisely. I am hoping to leave an openness – I do not want to force my feelings or interpretation about the imagery. I aim to imbibe the work with a contemplative quality.

**JB:** In your Arty 21 article, *Dark*, there is a quote by C.S. Lewis from his essay, *The Weight of Glory*, 'I am almost committing an indecency. I am trying to rip open the inconsolable secret in each one of you – the secret which hurts so much that you take your revenge on it by calling it names like *Nostalgia and Romanticism and Adolescence...* the secret we cannot hide and cannot tell though we desire to do both. We cannot tell it because it is a desire for something which has never actually appeared in our experience'. Do you think this *Sensucht* feeling is under siege by the phenomenon of social media communications with the public sharing aspect of it? It seems to me the secret feeling of *Sensucht* is related to another time and to discrete ways of communication – a time when we still whispered. Might it become extinct with new ways of communicating?

**CL:** I think it is the case that social media challenges the specialness of *Sensucht* if only by speeding up the time it takes to find out every bit of info and every little nuance about a person, song, film, event etc. However it does also enhance the specialness in some ways by creating communities of like-minded people who run blogs or write fan fiction. I realise that this changes the *Sensucht* connection a little as the special connection becomes a shared secret but it can still be a secret from the outside world.



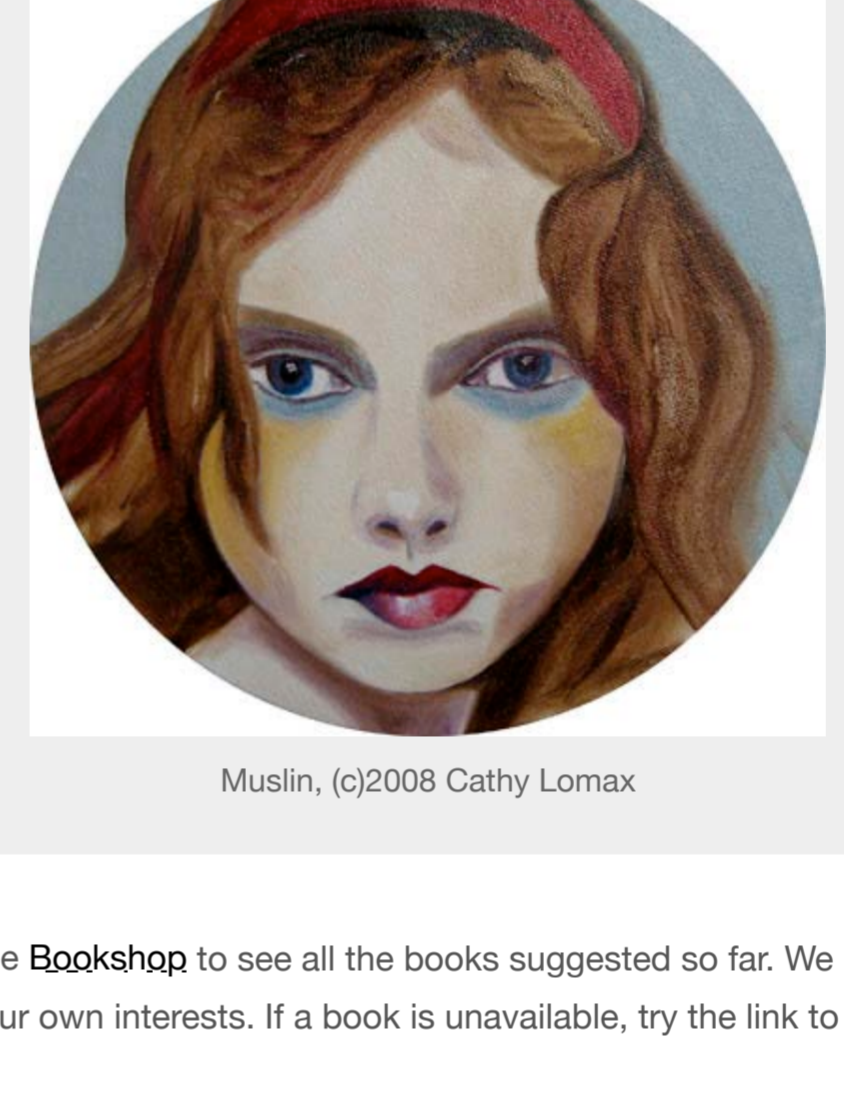
the Way He Liked Me to Look, (c)2011 Cathy Lomax

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Muslin, (c)2008 Cathy Lomax

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### Cathy's suggested reading:

- England is Mine, by Michael Bracewell
- Stars, by Richard Dyer
- Blonde, by Carol Joyce Oates
- Mystery Train, by Greil Marcus
- From the Beast to the Blonde, by Marina Warner
- The Sound and the Fury, by William Faulkner
- Austerlitz, by WG Sebald
- Cries Unheard, by Gitta Sereny
- Last Train to Memphis, by Peter Guralnick
- The Women we Wanted to Look Like, by Brigid Keenan
- The Drawings of Holbein in the Collection of His Majesty the King at Windsor Castle, by KT Parker, Phaidon Press, 1945
- The Andy Warhol Diaries, edited by Pat Hackett
- Visual and Other Pleasures, by Laura Mulvey

### Cathy also has a suggested film list:

- Letter From an Unknown Woman (Max Ophuls, 1948)
- The Pirate (Vincenzo Minnelli, 1948)
- The Misfits (John Huston, 1961)
- Twilight (Catherine Hardwicke, 2008)
- The Fugitive Kind (Sidney Lumet, 1960)
- King Creole (Michael Curtiz, 1958)
- Witchfinder General (Michael Reeves, 1968)
- American Gigolo (Paul Schrader, 1980)
- Superstar: The Karen Carpenter Story (Todd Haynes, 1988)
- A Royal Affair (Nikolaj Arcel, 2012)
- Fishtank (Andrea Arnold, 2009)
- Gone to Earth (Powell & Pressburger, 1950)
- L'Atalante (Jean Vigo, 1934)
- Margaret (Kenneth Lonergan, 2011)
- Stromboli (Roberto Rossellini, 1950)

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March 14, 2012  
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- Annabel Dover and Cathy Lomax in 'Tainted Love' curated by Corinna Spencer**  
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In "This 'Me' of Mine Exhibition"

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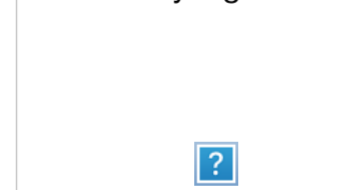
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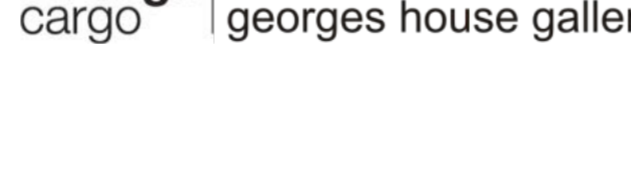
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### LINKS

- ACE – Arts Council England
- Aly Healy
- Andrew Litten
- Annabel Dover
- Anthony Boswell
- APT Gallery
- Art Pie
- Cathy Lomax
- Colchester Ipswich Museum
- Darren Nixon
- David Milton
- David Riley
- Edd Pearman
- Edward Chell
- Gary Mansfield
- Hayley Harrison
- Helen Scallan
- HomeinOne.com
- Jacqueline Utley
- Jane Boyer
- Kai-Qi Jay Yung
- Kate Elliott
- Kate Murdoch
- Lisa Snook
- Luis Marcuss
- Melanie Timmuss
- Molly Behagg
- Sandra Crisp
- Sevenoaks Kaleidoscope Gallery
- Shireen Qureshi
- Strange Cargo
- Suzanne de Emmony
- Visualplanet

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- @thismeofmine is now closed. Read the final post: [qw.ly/tet4x0](#) 8 years ago
- South London Gallery and a Final Word [wp.me/s2amti-GK](#) 8 years ago
- Catch #CAPSHOW14 PV - 6/2/14, 6-9pm @CuriousDuke [qw.ly/td4jn](#) @art\_pie [artpie.co.uk/#home](#) It Rocks! 8 years ago
- BBC News - What is the news? Alain de Botton gives his take [bbc.in/1bAks68](#) 8 years ago
- Good news! @SGL\_artupdates has agreed to stock This 'Me' of Mine: Self Time & Context in the Digital Age. Watch for it in coming weeks. 8 years ago

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