

LONGWOOD  
CENTER *for the*  
VISUAL ARTS

# JILL KRUTTIK

## NATURE REIMAGINED

28 MAY — 8 AUGUST 2021

# LONGWOOD CENTER *for the* VISUAL ARTS

129 North Main Street  
Farmville, Virginia 23901

The Longwood Center for the Visual Arts  
is located at the corner of Main and Third streets  
in historic downtown Farmville.

Gallery Hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
Sunday, 1–5 p.m.

lcva.longwood.edu



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EXHIBITION GUIDE

Jill Krutick, *Before You*, 2019, oil on canvas,  
60 x 48 inches. *Swirl Series*. Courtesy of the Artist



Jill Krutick (b. 1962) is a contemporary abstract expressionist who painted privately for over 30 years and studied at The Art Students League of New York. In 2010, she began publicly exhibiting her work. She has been praised by world-famous art critics and has had multiple solo museum exhibitions and scores of group exhibitions.

## Acknowledgements

*Nature Reimagined* is exactly the sort of exhibition we need right now, although we didn't know that when it was first proposed. At that time, we were drawn in by Jill Krutick's visual expression of both the macro and microcosm of the natural world around us, and her connecting that expression to the place we call home — Virginia. In the year and a half since we first placed the show on our roster, many of us have responded to pandemic related social distancing requirements by rediscovering the joys of immersing ourselves within our natural environment. *Nature Reimagined* allows us to bring the joy of experiencing nature inside the gallery. It reflects Krutick's emotional and artistic response to the sublime in nature — both its grandeur and its minutiae — and invites us to seek our own unique communion with the greater world around (and within) ourselves.

We are deeply grateful to Jill Krutick for the opportunity to present her work at the LCVA. Her enthusiasm and professionalism have made *Nature Reimagined* a pleasure to organize. Bryan Knicely, executive director of the Yellowstone Art Museum, set us off on this journey after connecting us with the artist in 2019. Alex Grabiec, curator of exhibitions, worked closely with Krutick to bring her vision to fruition, and the exhibition benefits greatly from his thoughtful and collaborative curatorial practice. Bruce Helander and Donald Kuspit provided insightful essays that lead us to delve deeper into Krutick's gorgeous painted surfaces. Bill Huffman, assistant director of marketing and public relations at Luray Caverns, kindly coordinated our image reproduction request for this publication and the exhibition.

Director of education and outreach Emily Grabiec and Stephen Marion, assistant director of education and outreach, ensured that everyone in our community has the opportunity to engage with *Nature Reimagined*, and to carry its inspiration with them well after the exhibition concludes. David Whaley, director of design, developed the exhibition and marketing brand, while Mackenzie Lenhart, collections manager, and Matt Keener, preparator, led the professional and effective installation of the stunning paintings that comprise the exhibition. Lisa Tharpe, director of community engagement, brought her boundless enthusiasm for the LCVA and *Nature Reimagined* to the sponsorship and marketing campaign for the exhibition and its related programs within the community. The exceptional professionalism of director of operations Beverley Roberts and Lucy Carson, program manager, is reflected in the often unseen yet vitally important coordination of project logistics.

Candice Jamison Dowdy '69, advisory board president, is an unwavering advocate for the arts in our community. Without her leadership, coupled with the support of the full advisory board and Longwood University administration — particularly Taylor Reveley, Dr. Lara Smith, and Justin Pope — our reach could not extend as far as it does.

All have our most sincere gratitude.

Rachel Talent Ivers  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Cover: Jill Krutick, Detail of *Shenandoah River 1-4*, 2020, acrylic on canvas, 96 x 96 inches. *Dreamscape Series*. Courtesy of the Artist

Poster: Jill Krutick, Detail of *Velvet Horizon*, 2012, oil on canvas, 24 x 24 inches. *Abstract Landscape Series*. Courtesy of the Artist

# JILL KRUTICK NATURE REIMAGINED



Jill Krutick, *Mystical Night*, 2012, oil on canvas, 40 x 40 inches. *Abstract Landscape Series*. Courtesy of the Artist

## A River and a Fish

It would be remiss not to acknowledge that this exhibition was organized during the COVID-19 pandemic. The impact that the pandemic has had on countless aspects of life is far beyond the scope of this short introduction. But, my sincere hope is that through Jill Krutick's *Nature Reimagined*, and the guide that is in your hands now, that you may find comfort in color and discover a haven in an artistic practice. In these paintings that radiate hope and tranquility, Krutick deftly re-images the natural world into personal and inviting compositions filled with texture and emotional gestures. As a group, these works of art speak to themes of time, memory, and self-discovery — all while offering a place of respite found within that knowledge.

In many ways, the pieces selected for the exhibition were inspired by a day's walk outside. This stroll can be anywhere really, in your neighborhood, backyard, the closest state park, or even an urban area. (Is nature where humans aren't? Or is it somewhere else?) While moving through and enjoying the landscape, we typically move from one destination to the next. We happily invite being distracted by a neat-looking rock or a small clearing in the trees to see a sliver of a waterfall. Nevertheless, we are always surrounded by images and objects in our peripheral vision worthy of a closer look.



Jill Krutick, *Gemstones*, 2021, oil and acrylic on canvas, 30 x 30 inches. *Swirl Series*. Courtesy of the Artist

*Nature Reimagined* seeks to mirror this experience. As one views the earth tones and textures present in *Gemstones*, out of the corner of their left eye, *Freebird* hangs with its flowing lines while it hints at wildlife flying above. Furthermore, to the right, a school of fish (a triptych including *Brook Trout*, *Brown Trout*, and *Rainbow Trout*) suggests a close-by body of water and acts as the foil to the birds that are in the sky. For these fish to be in the same river at the same time is not impossible, but not to be expected.



Jill Krutick, Detail of *Brook Trout Large 2*, 2021, oil on canvas, 20 x 60 inches. *Trout Series*. Courtesy of the Artist

However, in the context of an art exhibition, one can start to play with those expectations and create new possibilities that bend or subvert preconceptions. This elemental group of paintings is complemented by neighboring celestial compositions.

*Sunspots 1-4*, which is one of the smaller pieces on view, depicts perhaps the largest subject matter in the exhibition, the sun. Through its solar warmth, one is invited to momentarily situate themselves to a shift in scale. A *New Sunrise* is directly behind and suggests the perpetual orbit and rotation of our planet. Through *Mystical Night's* cool, complementary, twilight palette, the painting completes this illustration of both personal and geological timeframes. This intersection of the individual and the planetary is further expanded on in *Before You* and *Against All Odds*.

The thrilling narrative depicted in *Against All Odds* is of a sailboat racing a storm to a finish line of a race. *Before You* is an embryonic composition reflecting on life before a child is born. While certainly coming from personal experience, through a lens of nature, these pieces can also begin to illustrate the pressing matter of climate change. The duality of a personal story coupled with a larger, global concern suggests that opposites aren't so, but rather deeply linked.

An extension of Krutick's *Dreamscape Series*, *Shenandoah River*, further explores the artist's affection for bodies of water and the inherent metaphors they can possess. While most of the series may reflect oceans and seas, it is not a stretch to see how literally and figuratively this piece flows into this particular body of work. The composition in *Shenandoah River* blurs the line between a macro and micro vantage point with its depiction of the river's edge. The river's boundary is always moving yet always in the same place. This back and forth opens the door for countless interpretations, but concerning the painting: when is something abstract? When is something representational? Do the two have to be at odds?

If to write is to remember, then certainly 'to paint is to remember' is true. The paintings on view are an extension and a remembrance of experience from the artist. As a viewer, looking at these works of art is the experience. Through time, memory, and personal challenges, it is clear to see how Krutick skillfully intersects the earth, sea, sky, flora, and fauna with paint, canvas, and brush.

Alex Grabiec  
CURATOR OF EXHIBITIONS