

Teen Museum Studies presents

# Lizzy Martinez

## Seeing Red



Lizzy Martinez, *Little Red Quadriptych* (details), 2017. Oil on canvas. Courtesy the artist.

Lizzy Martinez's forest holds mysterious turns of fate. *Seeing Red* is a feminist spin on the classic damsel-in-distress folk tale "Little Red Riding Hood." In *Seeing Red*, Little Red is featured as a femme fatale and unprovoked murderer, and the Wolf as a harmless victim. Through this plot twist Martinez invites us into a fantasy world that reflects real world political issues. Martinez says she "explores the human form through feminist, mixed-race eyes to interpret symbolism and narratives both original and adapted from literature or film."

In *Seeing Red*, a large quadriptych depicts a detailed



illustration of Little Red stalking her prey, Disco Wolf, through the forest. Disco Wolf appears as a man dressed as an animal, although whether he is man or animal is left intentionally ambiguous. The accompanying soundtrack played throughout the gallery space combines music from the classic horror film *Killer Klowns from Outer Space* and Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*. The weird sound mix reveals the dark, hypnotic aspects of Martinez's art.

Martinez's work yields discomfoting notions about such contemporary issues as gun violence and gender identity. She addresses serious themes, but in a playful

manner—her use of classic costumes and bright colors makes her exhibition look like a children’s storybook. For Martinez, the depiction of gun violence is especially salient, as is her idea that “gun violence is often confused with protection.” Little Red looks to be protecting herself, but the wolf sits, seemingly innocent.

**Lizzy Martinez**, a figurative, Latina artist based in St. Louis, uses the cultural output of the past to talk about her concerns of the present. Martinez advocates for women’s and animal rights in works that reflect on both women’s hardships and accomplishments. She channels traditional techniques while considering the human form with a pointed, feminist perspective through symbolism, humor, and dramatic tension. An alumnus of Boston University and the Minneapolis College of Art and Design, Martinez received an Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation Grant and a Brand Boeshaar Scholarship. She was a fellow at the Virginia Center for Creative Arts and Vermont Studio Center, and has twice been the recipient of a Regional Arts Commission grant. Martinez has been reviewed in the *Boston Globe* and exhibited at galleries and museums in Ireland and the United States, including Suffolk University, University of Missouri-St. Louis, Boston University, Figge Art Museum, and the Danforth Art Museum.

### Teen Museum Studies

Each Teen Museum Studies class organizes an exhibition from start to finish while learning the inner workings of the Museum in this innovative career-based program. Students select and work with a local artist toward an exhibition that becomes part of the CAM Fall Exhibition season, as the 2018 TMS group has done with *Lizzy Martinez: Seeing Red*. Participants also work with staff members in every aspect of the museum—curatorial, development, registration, marketing, and public relations. TMS meets each summer over a six-week period, eligible for students grades 9–12. TMS students earn a stipend for their work in the program.

*Lizzy Martinez: Seeing Red* is organized for the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis by JaLiyah Battle, Helena Bishop, Lilliana Bremerkamp, Felice Frye, Shelby Morgan, Randice Reed, Katherine Shaw, Skylar Thone, and José Garza, Museum Educator.

Teen Museum Studies is generously supported by The Strive Fund.

### Related Programs

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**Artist Talk: Lizzy Martinez**

Friday, September 7, 7:15 pm

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