JARVIS & WERNER

PRESS RELEASE

Primitive Romanticist
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Eilshemius cannot be called a "primitive" although his works show a "self taught" quality – Like the primitives, he cares for an elaborate technique which fortunately, he never achieves. In his paintings, built on a defiant drawing, never a doubt, never fear even bare complete innocence. Out of time, landscapes as well as figures are foreign to any surrounding influence for do they describe the period he lived in – naturalistic in appearance and treatment his conception interprets a purely poetic brushstroke far remote from any formula or ism. – Marcel Duchamp

Jarvis Art is pleased to announce Primitive Romanticist, a two-person exhibition featuring new paintings by Ana Cristina alongside works by Louis Eilshemius.

Distanced by more than a century, both artists utilize the landscape as a stage for "psychic weather." In their hands, nature becomes theatrical, erotic, and ominous—transforming trees, clouds, animals, and nymphs into agents of dreams and interior life.

Ana Cristina is a self-taught painter whose symbolic oil paintings explore the boundary between landscape and dreamscape. For this exhibition, she engages with the American landscape tradition, specifically responding to the work of Hudson River School painters George Inness and John Frederick Kensett. Her work utilizes the serene architecture of American Romanticism to explore repressed desires, memory, and symbolic dramas

Louis Eilshemius similarly worked within nineteenth-century traditions, shaped by the tutelage of Corot and the Barbizon school. Eilshemius developed one of American art's most unique bodies of work, where landscapes glow with feverish light and figures appear as both innocent and haunted apparitions. Despite being praised by Marcel Duchamp and collected by major institutions, Eilshemius was often constrained to reductive categories such as "primitive," "symbolist" or "eccentric."

Primitive Romanticist addresses this instability, approaching "primitive" as a historical misreading of artists whose intensity or private mythology escaped accepted taste. Through the works of Eilshemius and Cristina, naiveté becomes a form of freedom, allowing painting to be direct, morbid, and deeply felt without apology.

Ana Cristina (b.1994, Boston) is a painter living and working in New York City. Recent solo exhibitions include Corner Gallery in Andes, New York in 2025 and F2T, Milan in 2026.

Louis Eilshemius (American, 1864–1941) studied art in Germany and at the Art Students League in New York. He came to prominence as an artist in 1917 at the Society of Independent Artists exhibition in New York. Although hailed as a modern, visionary painter, Eilshemius's success appeared to fuel his peculiarities, and he abandoned painting in 1921.