

Zeke's Projects

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For she has loved much, 2025

Lauren Fleniken: *It Wasn't God Who Made Honky Tonk Angels* Opens at Zeke's Projects with A Reception September 6 2025

[Dallas, Texas – June 23, 2025] Zeke's Projects is pleased to announce *It Wasn't God Who Made Honky Tonk Angels* – an exhibition of new oil paintings and installation by Dallas-based artist Lauren Fleniken. The exhibition will be on view September 6 through October 18, 2025. An opening reception will be held Saturday, September 6th from 6 – 8 PM. The gallery is open most Saturdays, from 12– 5 PM and by appointment.

Artist Bio:

Lauren Fleniken is a painter from Montague, TX, focusing on themes of feminine sexual identity and voyeurism. She graduated from TCU in 2023 with her BFA in Painting, is an alumni from Cohort 4 at Cedars Union, and is now residing as a studio artist in the Tin District. She is a 2025 recipient of the Clare DeGolyer grant from the Dallas Museum of Art. She has shown in various gallery spaces such as Zona 7, 500x, The Carillon, and the Adolphus.

Artist statement:

Sexual identity for the femme is a complex relationship I have found a struggle to navigate. We often romanticize the idea of a perfect victim- someone blameless, innocent, easy to love. In reality, there is no perfect victim. My relationship with sex is that of a performance; on display, rehearsed, and picture perfect. Where is the line between trusting too easily in the pursuit of adoration, and the comfort of abuse? There is a twisted uneasiness in the familiar. I was raised secluded and safe in a wooded sanctuary, but when you stood at night outside on a dimly lit porch staring out into the abyss of trees, there was a sense of something watching you back. What woodlands feel like home to me, in the dark feel all the more sinister. I have sought out love so relentlessly, it has often led me to be taken advantage of, the utmost goal being that to please. The work explores my complex sexual identity, a taboo and uncomfortable subject in which I am an imperfect woman. I highlight the tension of the fine line between desire and violence. Through self portraiture, elements of my rural Southern upbringing, and an overly romantic exterior, I explore how personal experiences of sexuality and trauma have affected my image of my own body.

Each undergarment strung was sewn by myself, each one carefully measured to hypothetically fit me perfectly. Their delicate vulnerability mixed with the saturated hypersexual self portraiture of myself shows the contrast of sexual identity, and the fine line between our fetishes and feelings. The Texas countryside is often displayed in romantic westerns with heroic cowboys, or the grimmest horror movies, and I find a nostalgic comfort in it. An unwavering gaze follows you through the night, as if to tell you, 'look at me, but don't touch'.

Zeke's Projects is a contemporary art gallery in Dallas. The goal is to bring new, exciting work to Dallas at a relatively low stakes but deadly serious commercial gallery. I welcome you to join us.

Zeke's Projects is open most Saturdays, from 12– 5 PM and by appointment. Please consult @zekesprojects on instagram, and/or contact me at zekesprojects@gmail.com or (214) 307-2129 to confirm opening hours or request an appointment.