

## Meet Lisa Lebofsky | Painter



We had the good fortune of connecting with Lisa Lebofsky and we've shared our conversation below.

### **Hi Lisa, we'd love to hear about how you approach risk and risk-taking**

Risk is part of my practice. My motto: "Be like an iceberg: ride the current, wind up in a beautiful cove, be glorious and inspiring, and slowly melt to your ultimate demise." I had lived a structured existence. One night, with little warning, my personal world was turned upside down. The confusion set me off on a course of perpetual searching and failed attempts to hold together something that was perhaps never real. This was my calving moment. In that unending psychological free fall, I found control by getting rid of all control. I let go of most possessions, stored everything else, and loaded up the essentials (my cat, art supplies, and some pantry items). We took off into a cold wintry exodus of several days

through snowstorms, unexpected stays at unknown destinations while my car was retrieved from a snowbank, finally to emerge in one of the most isolated places filled with the warmest people: Newfoundland, Canada (just as the icebergs do!). I thought I would stay for 6 months with no real plan, but in putting faith in the current, being vulnerable, putting my needs out there, asking for help, giving back, and applying myself: my cat and I lived joyously on the road for three years. I residency hopped, house sat, visited friends across the country, made new friends along the way, and painted the stories of varied environments learned from the people that inhabited them.

My paintings paralleled this journey. I began to destroy the imagery in the process of making: melting the paintings with water, rubbing dirt, beating with plants- anything to explore the individual mark of a landscape while developing a richly layered approach reliant on the faith that the process will take the painting to its destination.





**Let's talk shop? Tell us more about your career, what can you share with our community?**

I am a nomadic plein air painter. I grew up in the woods of the Hudson River Valley of New York, to a family that revered nature and loved travel. At six years old my parents thankfully sent me to private art school where I learned the techniques and philosophies of Chinese watercolor painting and I had my first foray into painting en plein air; a waterfall no less. This nascency culminated into the core interests I pursue in my paintings: To capture varied landscapes as metaphors for our desires of freedom and exploration, then to bear witness to the changing landscapes falling victim to human meddling in the delicate balance of nature.

I've traveled to Antarctica, Greenland, The Maldives, all over North America, learning how climate change is impacting individuals as well as the landscape. When I had my calving moment and broke free from my stable existence to the unexpected pull of personal and physical exploration, I began to similarly view climate change as a tale of loss, struggle, awareness, and hopeful eventual triumph in the face of adversity. In my personal story of loss and struggle, I found how to push my work further, to move beyond simply documenting these fragile landscapes to humanizing the story of climate change by revealing nature's vulnerabilities as our own.





**Let's say your best friend was visiting the area and you wanted to show them the best time ever. Where would you take them? Give us a little itinerary— ~~say~~ it was a week long trip, where would you eat, drink, visit, hang out, etc.**

I'm back in New York City full time (for now). So, if I were to take a friend for the best time ever, I'd say let's hit up a few key restaurants, museums, and then let's get out of town! We'd start in Manhattan for sure. Since my studio is at The Clemente in the Lower East Side, I'm pretty centric there. We'd go to The Donut Plant, Kossar's Bagels, ChikaLicious (an all dessert restaurant), Attaboy (speakeasy style bar), Essex Street Market. A ride on any of the ferries is a fine way to catch some beautiful views of NYC (Staten Island Ferry is free!). Then work our way uptown, stop perhaps at any of the galleries that show my work (currently: Gallery Henoeh in Chelsea, Franklin Bowles in SoHo), visit the Highline, get uptown to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, then get rush tickets for an opera at Lincoln Center. A day would be dedicated to The Bronx (where I lived for 10 years and is NYC's best kept secret): brunch on City Island, a walk on the boardwalk at Orchard Beach, a stop at the New York Botanical Gardens, dinner at Zero Otto Nove (the best pizza in NYC in my opinion, they also have a location in Manhattan). Out of town, but not too far we have the beaches of Long Island, but since I am a Hudson Valley Girl, we would make our way north for sure for some Catskill hiking, a stop at the Smokehouse of the Catskills, Lunch at the Phoenicia Diner, hang out in Tannersville, stop by Winham Fine Arts which also has a couple paintings of mine, visit any of the farmstands, distilleries, wineries, and orchards (too many to list, but will give a shout out to Tuthilltown Distillery since I've seen that place grow up), waterfall hop from the Shawangunks up to the Cats, take a walk on the walkway on the Hudson, and cross the Bear Mountain Bridge for exceptional views.





**The Shoutout series is all about recognizing that our success and where we are in life is at least somewhat thanks to the efforts, support, mentorship, love and encouragement of others. So is there someone that you want to dedicate your shoutout to?**

I exist within a fantastic community of artists whom all studied at the New York Academy of Art (where I received my MFA), so there are so many to list, but of special recognition is my dear friend Alyssa Monks who has been there with me at my lowest and highest; and Zane York who has been championing my work and connected us! Outside of this community I have my family, and my psychological family. Of particular note is my college friend Dan



Horrigan who is my personal life guru, and a social worker in Detroit, spreading love and care all over the place! Special shout out to Zaria Forman who I've traveled with to Greenland and the Maldives, and is a sensational artist presenting the plight of these vulnerable landscapes through her highly realized large pastel drawings. And finally, a big "hey" to my mates in Newfoundland: Dr. Sonia Sampson (an anesthesiologist), and Dr. Erin Oldford (a professor), and despite their fancy pedigrees are my partners in much fun and joy. As Mom



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