

Philip Martin Gallery

Los Angeles Times

ENTERTAINMENT & ARTS

Body parts, color and landscape fuse in Kristy Luck's art

By CHRISTOPHER KNIGHT
ART CRITIC

FEB. 19, 2020
11:43 AM



Kristy Luck's "Fountain," 2020, oil on linen. (Jeff McLane / Philip Martin Gallery)

Recent paintings by Kristy Luck are luxurious amalgamations of landscape and figure filtered through a keen sense of organic abstraction.

In her first L.A. solo show at Philip Martin Gallery, color is key. Color is the most potentially irrational device in any artist's toolkit, difficult to name and available for random application, and Luck makes the most of the capacity.

A patch of turquoise might slide seamlessly — and almost impossibly — into a field of purple, a

Philip Martin Gallery

nearby bit of rosy peach framed in strips of violet, ocher and emerald green. Luck paints in thin layers of oil on linen, with underpainting glowing through contrasting surfaces.



Kristy Luck's "Soft Touch," 2020, oil on linen. (Jeff McLane)



Kristy Luck's "Black Sun," 2019, oil on linen. (Jeff McLane)

She fuses shapes suggestive of internal and external body parts — lungs, teeth, hands, ovaries and fallopian tubes, uvulas and more — with fluid intimations of landscape. Space zooms in and out, intimate yet vast.

Rivers flow, flowers bloom, trees are lined up in rows as windbreaks. Skies are streaked with sunset light and furious tornadoes dance.

These landscape elements, felt as much as seen, are almost never directly described. We apprehend them partly through their subtle intimation of other, older artists' familiar paintings and drawings — Georgia O'Keeffe, Arthur Dove, Agnes Pelton, Vincent van Gogh, Lee Bontecou.

The vaporous, slippery glow animates the organic shapes. Even cooler colors — gem-like blues or vivid greens — can appear impossibly warm. Luck works large (60 by 40 inches) and small (8 by 10 inches); but, regardless of size and scale, an inescapable intimacy is pervasive. These are paintings of internal states of consciousness embedded in the physical stuff of nature, including a viewer's own.