

# COREY HELFORD GALLERY

**For Immediate Release:**

May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Los Angeles, CA

## **LORI NELSON**

### **“CRYPTOTWEENS ARE LIKE”**



OPENING RECEPTION SATURDAY, MAY 28, FROM 7-11PM  
ON VIEW MAY 28 – JULY 2, 2016

On **Saturday, May 28th**, 2016, **Corey Helford Gallery** in Los Angeles presents new works by Lori Nelson in her debut West Coast exhibition, **“Cryptotweens Are Like”** in Gallery 2.

Lori Nelson paints a delightfully bizarre world of yetis, werewolves, and scaly tweens- but her subjects are not the freaks and monsters we’ve come to know on the silver screen. Underneath their hairy complexions, horns and scales, Nelson’s “Cryptotweens”, as she calls them, are surprisingly like us.

Though certainly monstrous, one might even call them “ugly” or “frightening”, Nelson’s wide-eyed characters with flush cheeks lit by their glowing smart phones, also embody a classical beauty. The Brooklyn based artist originally grew up in Utah in a religious Mormon family, and found herself drawn to reproductions of devotional art and photography in her family’s Bible. Often portrayed with their hands clasped in prayer, her characters carry with them the same wishes and devotions as any “normal” human child. For her debut west coast solo exhibition, titled “Cryptotweens Are Like”, Lori Nelson expands on her cast of freakishly charming tweens in a series of 16 new oil-on-panel paintings. Like one of the horror genre’s most famous characters, the monster of *Frankenstein*, Nelson’s are also perpetually misunderstood. Born into innocence, we watch as they experience coming-of-age feelings of insecurity, fear and isolation, and first love.

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Nelson shares: "I am focusing on a parallel world with mythological and magical almost-human creatures experiencing very human feelings and in recognizable earthly situations. I am drawn to adolescents as subjects because, for a brief time, they necessarily inhabit a land that is neither childhood nor adulthood, but rather a thorny connective forest that all must stumble through. Forests, we all know, though dangerous and spooky, can also be quite magical. In my recent work, I strive to show my human and semi-human subjects, my "Cryptotweens", in a precise instance where they are occupying this middle place, at once vulnerable and yet also experiencing power for the first time.

Many of the "Cryptotweens" in this exhibit wear ecstatic expressions on their faces reminiscent of the innocents and saints of traditional religious art when a veil has been lifted and knowledge and divine power revealed. It is this dual aspect of innocence and knowledge that for me defines tween and teen-hood. It's a look that is not easily described and hence the title for this collection, "Cryptotweens Are Like". In my mind, the ending for that unfinished sentence would not be a word but rather something unspoken like a facial expression or gesture, an "emoji", if you will, describing just what it is to be neither here nor there. I wish to capture the fleeting moment before the child emerges from the forest and reality and self-awareness sets upon her."

The opening reception for Lori Nelson will be hosted Saturday, May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016, from 7-11pm at Corey Helford Gallery. The reception is open to the public, and the exhibition is on view through July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016.

## Lori Nelson

Lori Nelson is a Brooklyn-based painter whose narrative work incorporates aspects of traditional portraiture, Magic Realism, and vintage storybook illustration. Nods to urban mythology and current tech crazes will often appear in her work so that both yeti and iPhone apps can exist in a strange almost sweet landscape. Teens and tweens are of particular interest to Nelson and, with the fur and scales of cryptids, have been the inspiration of her ongoing "Cryptotween" series where, for several years, she has explored the vulnerability and essence of what it means to be young and monstrous. Growing up in a religious household in the West, Nelson's primary access to art was through the devotional paintings reproduced in the family scriptures. The believer depicted on the page was of interest to the artist, beyond the gospel message, and a fascination in believers of all types took root, leading to an appreciation for conspiracy theorists, magicians, cryptozoologists, and all who declare, "I want to believe". Through her oil paintings, Lori Nelson presents an alien world inhabited by strange and powerful children and beasts whose situations and experiences seem spookily familiar as we recognize ourselves in the monsters and the monsters in ourselves. For more information about the artist, please visit [www.lorinelson.com](http://www.lorinelson.com).

## COREY HELFORD GALLERY

Corey Helford Gallery (CHG) was first established in 2006 by Jan Corey Helford and her husband, television producer and creator, Bruce Helford (Anger Management, The Drew Carey Show, George Lopez, The Oblongs) and has since evolved into one of the premier galleries of New Contemporary art. Its goals as an institution are the support and growth of young and emerging, to well-known and internationally established artists, the production and promotion of their artwork, and the general production of their exhibits, events and projects.

CHG represents a diverse collection of international artists, primarily influenced by today's pop culture and collectively encompassing style genres such as New Figurative Art, Pop Surrealism, Neo Pop, Graffiti and Street Art, and Post-Graffiti. The gallery has exhibited at important art fairs including Art Basel Miami, SCOPE Miami Beach, LA Art Fair, and more. In 2010, CHG also partnered with Bristol's City Museum &

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Art Gallery for the transatlantic collaboration “Art From The New World,” a world-class United Kingdom museum exhibition, showcasing work by a celebrated group of today’s most notable American artists. After nine years in Culver City, CHG re-located in December 2015 to a robust 12,000 sq. ft. building in Downtown Los Angeles, seven times larger than its original space, where it continues to host exhibitions within the heart of the city’s art community. The current space boasts three separate galleries, each of which house individual artist and group exhibitions, whereas the main gallery offers 4,500 sq. ft., providing total immersion for its attendees. New exhibitions are presented approximately every four weeks. For more information and our upcoming exhibition schedule, visit [coreyhelfordgallery.com](http://coreyhelfordgallery.com) and connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

## Corey Helford Gallery Los Angeles

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Open Tuesday-Saturday, Noon to 6pm

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