

REPORT

2005

Lori Larusso

Lori Larusso
Fade to Pink, 2004
Acrylic on paper
12.5" x 10.5"

30 Lori Larusso prefers to think of her large-format acrylics as “two-dimensional representations” rather than traditional paintings. To emphasize the point, she leaves her canvases unstretched, stitching the tops and bottoms like an advertising banner, or paints on wood panels. According to Larusso, to submit to the convention of stretched-canvas supports would be to implicate her work in “the patriarchal, colonialist history within Western painting” that she studiously seeks to avoid. Indeed, Larusso’s approach to art-making is deeply steeped in late 1970s-style Postmodern theory. This accounts, perhaps, for the diagrammatic look of her interiors and landscapes, a motif that effectively embodies Larusso’s idea that culture’s “systems” hold “daily life in place.” It reigns in the Wayne Thiebaud-like vertiginously tilted compositions of the landscapes, and, in the interiors, takes the bright, bold flatness of Pop toward abstraction. But it does not account for the spills that occur in many of her works—as water overflowing from swimming pools or hot tubs, or coffee out of an overturned cup—which must have something to do with the artist’s concept of “times of disruption,” when “individuals entertain themselves with common indulgences of consumer culture.” Like the stone pathways and walls that asystematically meander through the landscapes of some of her works, Larusso wanders in and out of traditional continental theory, a tendency that brings to her two-dimensional representations a welcome humanizing touch.

Lori Larusso grew up north of Cincinnati, Ohio and presently resides in Baltimore, Maryland. She earned the B.F.A. degree at The University of Cincinnati, and the M.F.A. degree at Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, Maryland. Her work has been exhibited at School 33 Art Center and Gallery Imperato in Baltimore, Goucher College in Towson, Maryland, and ArtLA in Los Angeles, California.

