

HYPERALLERGIC

Lady Shalamar Montague: 3 World Tours

Kerry Schuss Gallery, 73 Leonard Street, Tribeca, Manhattan

Through November 2



Lady Shalamar Montague, "77 'Opera Roles!'" (1988) (photo Natalie Haddad/Hyperallergic)

What can you say about an artist who called herself Lady Shalamar Montague? Glamour permeates the name. Her art must be glamorous too, maybe dusted with glitter and saturated in jewel colors. That's what I assumed when I found this show online, and it was even better in person. Born in 1905 as Frances Montague, the daughter of an opera singer, Lady Shalamar lived a fantastical life, or at least that's the yarn she spun. The drawings on view date from 1984 to 1990, and reveal an artist still enticed by the colorful side of life. Pieces like "77 'Opera Roles!'" (1988) evoke costume illustrations, especially those for the Ballet Russes, and Andy Warhol's early commercial drawings, but with a sense of flair that's right out of a Jack Smith film. Of course, this grand Lady was not merely a reflection of those artists, but a talent all her own, and her drawings, with their exuberant text, streamline the carnivalesque into elegant portraits of a long-lost era. This show pulled me into its world of flamboyant femmes from the moment I walked into the gallery. —NH

written by Natalie Haddad and published in HYPERALLERGIC 10-16-24