Lois Dodd

Lois Dodd
Framing the Ephemeral

HANNIBAL KUNSTMUSEUM DEN HAAG

Table of Contents

Foreword

For more than eight decades, Lois Dodd has pursued a singular artistic vision—observant, unsentimental, and deeply attuned to the rhythms of the everyday. Painting en plein air and always from direct observation, she captures modest subjects with radical focus.

Dodd's paintings invite us to look again: at cracked-open windows, at laundry fluttering in the wind, at light patterns on the snowy ground, or the trees' fleeting shadows. Her work resists spectacle. Instead, it asks for attention and rewards it—with clarity, wit, and grace.

Throughout her career, Dodd has moved through the heart of postwar American art—amid the rise of Abstract Expressionism, Pop, Conceptual Art, and Minimalism—yet never followed their calls. Instead, she carved a path entirely her own. In her unwavering focus on the fleeting and the local, she becomes not only a witness to her time but a quiet pioneer within it.

In her sustained exploration of the ordinary, Dodd reminds us of the power of painting to hold time still—not to monumentalize it, but to honor its transience. Now ninety-eight, she still continues her lifelong habit of painting nearly every day. This is because painting is her way of being in the world. Her gaze, unwavering and compassionate, finds resonance in our museum's longstanding dedication to modern and contemporary painting, and our efforts to redress the historical imbalance in the recognition of women artists. It follows in the museum's tradition of solo exhibitions dedicated to women painters, including Alice Neel (2016/17), Paula Rego (2021/22), Nicole Eisenman (2022/23), and Lee Bontecou (2017), a longtime friend of Dodd's and her colleague at Brooklyn College.

Dodd often cites Piet Mondrian as a key influence—from his early trees to his geometric abstractions—and has described her iconic window paintings as "Mondrian constructions." Her sensitivity to structure, surface, and rhythm echoes our collection—and we find that there is no home more fitting for Dodd's inaugural European retrospective.

Framing the Ephemeral, curated by Louise Bjeldbak Henriksen, is the result of a deeply collaborative process, and we are profoundly grateful to Lois Dodd for her generosity and trust. Our thanks also go to her longtime representative Alexandre Gallery, and in particular to founder Phil Alexandre, whose dedication to Dodd's legacy has made this moment possible. We are grateful to the many lenders who made this exhibition possible. Several private collectors generously agreed to part with works that have rarely, if ever, been publicly exhibited, while major institutions—including Colby College Museum of Art, Farnsworth Art Museum, The Museum of Modern Art, Portland Museum of Art, and Smithsonian American Art Museum—extended their support by lending key pieces from their collections, helping to bring this important body of work to new audiences. Major thanks to Hannibal Books for bringing this publication to life, and the Wyeth Foundation for American Art for their generous support in enabling its realization.

Framing the Ephemeral is an invitation to slow down and look again—to find beauty in what is fleeting, and meaning in what might otherwise be missed. To experience, as Dodd does, the ephemeral nature of the world around us, framed not only by the artist's brush, but also by our own attentive presence.

Margriet Schavemaker
General Director—Kunstmuseum Den Haag

Introduction

There is a kind of painting that does not raise its voice. It insists on neither narrative nor spectacle. Instead, it waits—quietly, attentively—until we notice what was there all along: a flicker of sunlight on a brick wall, the weight of a shadow crossing a windowpane, the moment before a season turns.

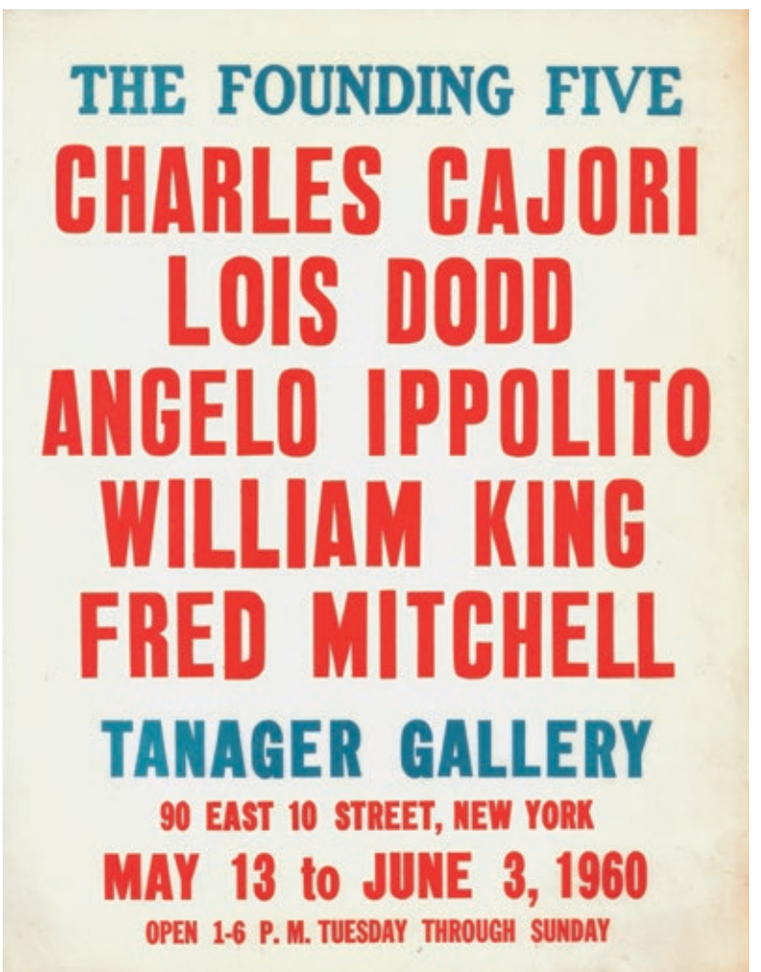
Lois Dodd (b. 1927, Montclair, New Jersey) has been painting such transient moments for more than eight decades, her work recording time passing in New York's Lower East Side, Mid-Coast Maine, and the Delaware Water Gap. She has made homes in these places, and they have, in turn, shaped the fabric of her vision. Working from direct observation, often en plein air, Dodd has cultivated a practice that captures the ephemerality of the seasons—not to monumentalize the moments but to honor their passing.

Dodd studied at Cooper Union just after the Second World War and went on to be the only female founder of the Tanager Gallery, one of New York's first artist-run cooperatives. There, she helped establish space for artistic experiments that existed to the side of the commercial mainstream. It was not a question of figuration versus abstraction, but of making room for the serious, sustained practice of painting. In this spirit, Dodd quietly forged a path of her own.

Throughout the 1950s, Dodd created graphically distilled compositions that, intriguingly timeless and betraying little mark of a specific era, eschew easy categorization. Understanding her work is more a question of resonance with other individual artists than attachment to any dominant lineage.[1] Shifting away from ideas of categorization toward those of kinship opens up a more expansive critical framework with which to understand the artistic influences that fueled Dodd's development.

Lois Dodd in William King's studio at Bowery and First Street, c. 1957

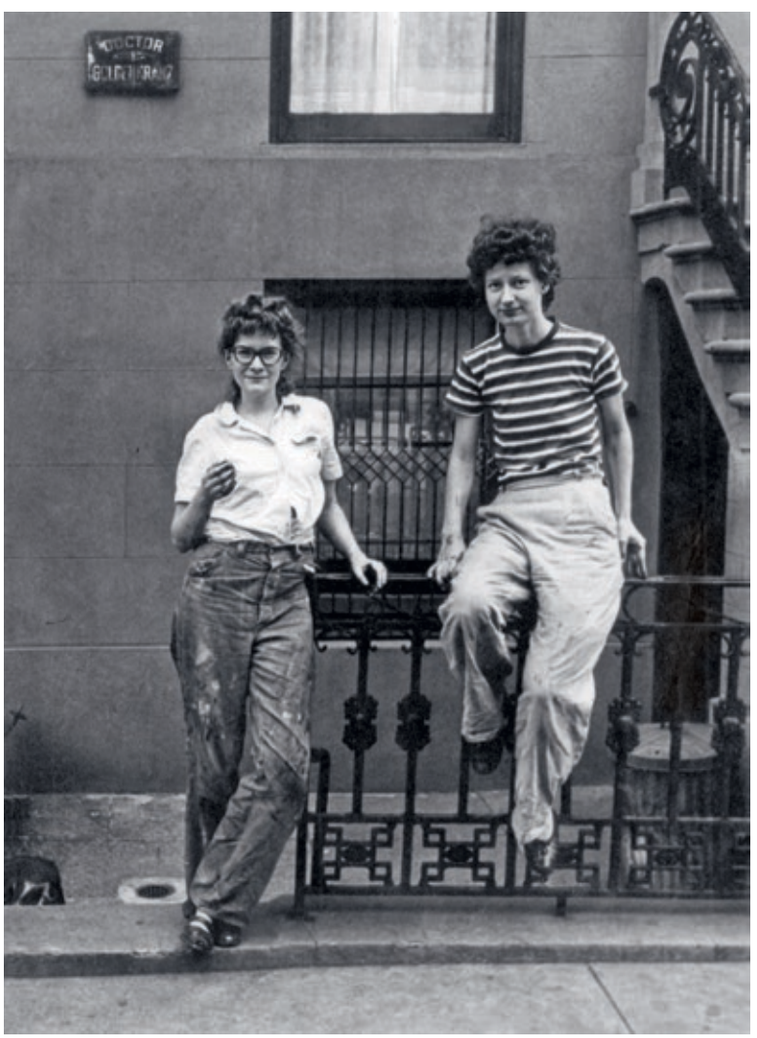
Tanager Gallery poster, 1960



Guided by the rhythms of the day, the seasons, of life itself, and grounded in direct observation, Dodd returned to the same motifs again; not to master them but to encounter them anew. The artist arrived at many of these early on. In 1967, returning to New York from Maine with nothing to paint, she realized she could simply look out of her apartment window. Her first window painting was completed in 1968, inaugurating a sort of image she would revisit ceaselessly, sometimes looking out, sometimes looking in, often playing with reflections.

Other enduring subjects soon followed—laundry lines that have been described by Laura McLean-Ferris in her essay [p. 37] as "a sign of dailiness, of some basic functionality"; and the woods across the road that she painted while running between the trees and her kitchen radio during the Nixon election in 1972—an experience the artist describes as "almost like having office hours." Dodd also painted her friend Leslie Land's garden, and in winter, the Water Gap. Later work includes many moonlit scenes painted outdoors at night. In 1997, she created a striking series of houses being burnt down as part of local fire drills. More recent work has turned inward, with still lifes of branches, leaves, and clippings rendered with the same restrained quietude as earlier landscapes.

Lois Dodd (right) and Shirley Simmons, St Marks Place, c. 1947



In an age of image saturation and speedy turnover, there is a quiet radicalism in these repetitions. An insistence that meaning lies nearby and a painterly restraint that feels not only urgent, but revelatory. Dodd celebrates life by looking, and her subjects are unassuming: a barn skylight, the slant of moonlight on snow, towels drying in the sun. Her work reveals a determination to experience the commonplace anew, and few artists possess this dual ability to keenly observe and vividly convey their observations as she does. As Lucy R. Lippard notes [p. 18], Dodd "reveals the complexity of apparent simplicity," by using color, shape, and angles in unexpected ways to "transform the ordinary into the extraordinary." These paintings remind us that the ordinary is not insignificant, because it is where we live, and her visual distillations of fleeting light are framed with a rigor and sensitivity that reward prolonged looking.

Dodd's work is not overtly political, but feminist themes permeate her imagery. They can be seen in the artist's insistence on the worth of what has often been seen as minor: the domestic, the repetitive, the overlooked. This has generated a practice that honors the labor of seeing and the dignity and value of attention, a feminist ethos brought into being through example rather than rhetoric. She does not look away.

Karen Wilkin [p. 105] even notes that Dodd's true subject might be "the act of looking itself," and in one of our conversations, Dodd told me that "the more I look, the more I see." She paints directly from observation, but her views are not always immediately recognizable—even if we look through the very window or stand in the exact spot where she painted. As the exhibition's curator, I had seen all of the paintings she made looking out from her New York apartment, but it was not until I visited the apartment that I realized she had omitted an entire wall of windows on the men's shelter beyond the cemetery. This signaled to me the degree of artistic license Dodd permits herself, as the act of painting gradually overtakes the act of observation. She simplifies her compositions with minimalizing clarity, editing out anecdotal and extraneous details as she deftly manipulates the tension between the image's abstract and representational qualities.

Lois Dodd with her son, Eli King, Tanager Gallery, c. 1956–57

Lois Dodd, Cushing, c. 1980

Lee Bontecou, Anne Arnold and Lois Dodd, Second Street, late 1970s

Some of these paintings seem to drop us into a moment, in medias res, but these are of quietude rather than action and the longer we stay there, the more is disclosed. We experience a different way of seeing—and being—in the world. Dodd's gift of noticing defines her art, and her pared-down capture of the fleeting memorializes impermanence. Faye Hirsch observes [p. 62] that "All is steadiness, but within that Dodd opened a space to notice surprising things, and to acknowledge within stability all that fluctuates: a different species of permanence, perhaps, which is the inevitability of change and the passage of time itself." Rather than fixing time, Dodd's work holds it gently and invites us to dwell on its passing. We are rewarded for looking with the same consideration and presence she brings to painting them.

Standing in front of her paintings, we might not be struck by grand statements but by a remarkable sense of intimacy—as if Dodd has whispered an observation just to us. We do not just look at them. We share their space, and that, too, is an act of generosity.

The Exhibition

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in artists who have long remained absent from the Western canon. *Framing the Ephemeral,* the first European retrospective dedicated to Lois Dodd, is part of this reassessment. Rather than tracing a chronological arc, the exhibition is organized thematically, highlighting the constancy of the artist's vision across decades. It invites viewers to encounter her work not as a linear progression but as a sustained, lifelong practice of attentiveness.

Nearly a hundred paintings, spanning 1958 to 2024, reveal the artist's deep engagement with place. Environments that are not merely depicted but known, returned to and reimagined. Locality as a site of formal as well as perceptual inquiry, from early cityscapes to her most recent Maine landscapes. A lifetime of work that reveals remarkable consistency and integrity of vision, but within the seriality we can also sense the artist's deepening focus and honing of means. It is not that nothing has changed, but that everything has—and she has kept looking.

Dodd's oeuvre is calibrated through her use of repetition, a subtle balance between variation and return, between rhythms that are observational and formal. We have sought to echo this in an exhibition layout that foregrounds both consistency and the range of the artist's output. Key motifs such as windows—perhaps her most widely known subject—recur throughout the show. These literal and metaphorical framing devices become thresholds between inside and out, self and world, stillness and change. They are present in each room.

Dodd draws a spare yet intuitive geometry from the visible world and has often cited Piet Mondrian as a formative influence, particularly his early tree paintings and his commitment to structure. The artist has declared that her window compositions are a kind of homage; "Mondrian constructions" filtered through the lens of perceptual engagement. To explore this foundation, the exhibition includes a small group of Mondrian's works, taken from the museum's collection. These reveal that while both artists share a sensitivity to rhythm and surface, they diverge in intent. Mondrian pursued abstraction through construction; Dodd teases it from an observed world, her compositional structure glimpsed and coaxed gently into form.

Lois Dodd, Second Street, 1973

Framing the Ephemeral marks an overdue recognition of an artist who, despite her significance and aptitude, has only recently begun to receive broader institutional recognition. Presenting her work in a European museum historically aligned with the avant-garde and Western canonical narratives presents a challenge to historical assumptions about where innovation in painting resides. The exhibition sheds light on a lineage of American representational painting that has often been obscured by the dominance of Abstract Expressionism, Minimalism, and Pop.[2]

Dodd's visual language shares important resonances with strands of European Modernism, and we hope this exhibition presents a modest space for renewed transatlantic dialogue in a period when the bedrock of understanding between the United States and Europe has increasingly begun to crack—politically, economically, and culturally. We see it as an act of introduction, but also of recalibration. It challenges assumptions about what constitutes radicality and invites us to rediscover the power of painting as a sustained act of paying attention to a world that stretches across generations and geographies, and which we all still share.

Louise Bjeldbak Henriksen
Exhibition Curator—Kunstmuseum Den Haag

Notes

1 **Dodd's work never formally aligned with dominant movements such as Abstract Expressionism, Minimalism, or Conceptual Art, yet its underlying currents reveal that she was deeply immersed in their atmosphere. Conversation between Adam Weinberg, director emeritus of the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the author, in New York City on May 1, 2025.**

2 **In 1958–59, the exhibition *The New American Painting*, focused on Abstract Expressionism and organized by the Museum of Modern Art's International Program, toured eight European countries. A decade later, in 1968, the Kunstmuseum Den Haag (then known as Gemeentemuseum Den Haag) hosted the first European exhibition dedicated to Minimal Art.**

Lois Dodd, Maine, early 1970s

Closing in on Nature

By Lucy R. Lippard

I have been looking at Lois Dodd's paintings for some sixty years, since around 1959, when I lived near the Tanager and other Tenth Street galleries in Lower Manhattan. But it took many years of concentration on other kinds of art to get it. What continues to amaze me about Dodd's work is the incredible freshness. Most painters take joy in the painting process, or in their subjects, but that joy is not so often available to viewers in the finished product. Dodd, however, seems to come at every day anew. Her subjects are determinedly ordinary. Houses (often derelict), buildings, trees and woods, water, windows, interiors, shadows, mirrors, and eventually wildflowers. The variety she achieves within these apparently narrow parameters is what makes her work continuously intriguing. She relies on neither style nor panache. But the relaxed skill with which she depicts and transforms where she is, what she sees, makes her paintings easily recognizable. Dodd has often been called a painter's painter, which is the greatest compliment and easy to understand. But she is also a viewer's painter, offering familiar sights from unexpected angles or lights, opening our eyes. One day, after working on this essay, I sat outside for a while and began to see my own coyote fence, scraggly trees, and desert views as though Dodd had painted them.

She is not an impressionist or an expressionist, and she is a unique kind of realist, combining spontaneity with attention to essential detail. Dodd is her own woman, something of a loner, with deep friendships, and her personality seems to be reflected in her paintings. Early on, she remarked that she was glad she didn't study with Hans Hoffman like so many of her peers. She could have gone that way, given such paintings as the gorgeous *Pond* (1962) and the much later *Moon Shadows* (1992–93) or *Long Cove Quarry* (1993). Nevertheless, she enters the realities of nature thinking like an abstract artist, attracted to clear shapes—"strange, distinct shapes… Sometimes I see things like that, then go back, but because the light has changed, it's literally gone. It depends on the light and a lot of wandering around."[1] Early hard-edge paintings soon gave way to something more spontaneous, grounded in nature itself, though meticulously composed.

Those of us lucky enough to be enamored of and embedded in place know how close-ups inform the distance, illuminate the context. I often insist that walking is the best way to know a place, but I have to concede that painting for years on end might be even better. Light and dark identify a place, create a place, the shifting images offering infinite variety to repeated subjects. In the 1970s, Dodd stumbled into the woods to paint at night, memorizing the placement of colors on her palette, completing the nocturnal visions in the light of day. Coincidentally, I have shared two of Dodd's three homeplaces, spending decades in Lower Manhattan, and a lifetime of summers in rural Maine. I was raised with parents who were Sunday painters—admirers, though not imitators, of John Marin—and I am constantly amazed by Dodd's ability to turn her back

[p. 20] *Moon Shadows*, 1992–93

[p. 21] *Long Cove Quarry*, 1993

[p. 22] *Pond*, 1962

Cow Parsnip, 1996

A Freshening

By Laura McLean-Ferris

Dodd has most often tended to paint the world as it is, coming across her subjects in her own surrounds, such as the view from her window or a scene from her garden, without intervening in their arrangements. Her laundry paintings are an exception to this rule: She often hung out laundry explicitly in order to paint it, a process that was initially connected to her desire to paint something red, while, at the time, wanting to avoid flowers as a subject. In 1979, she drove to the yellow house of Ada and Alex Katz in Maine at a moment when she knew that they would be out of town, bringing with her two red curtains that she wanted to hang on a laundry line in front of the house.[3] The resulting painting, *The Yellow House, Lincolnville* (1979), is a spectacular example of Dodd's ability to carve up her subjects into flat and fluid planes—the yellow house and the grass in front of it are rendered geometrically, as though they might be made of folded cardboard, while the red curtains sag with shadows, and the clouds in the sky are full of brisk movement. Though obviously a bright, punchy painting with the high-contrast colors of traffic signs or flags, its power is located its subdued qualities and quietude, which are kept in tension with a loud palette of primary hues.

When Dodd paints fabrics that are touched by the wind, however, they seem less like abstract paintings and more like portraits or human subjects. In paintings such as *Blowing Laundry* (1977) or *White Catastrophe* (1980), where fabrics are whipped up by the wind, they look like fragmentary bodies that have been subjected to random forces, shirt sleeves flailing in the wind. In some paintings, sheets seem to take the breeze's shape almost completely, depicting a kind of intimacy with the buffeting air that gives the wind itself a dramatic, figurative form. In some paintings, the wind moves aggressively (a *catastrophe*); in others, the laundry and breeze move together like a dance; and in others we see only evidence of a soft current of air, as it slightly lifts the corner of a sheet.

[p. 42] ***The Yellow House, Lincolnville*, 1979**

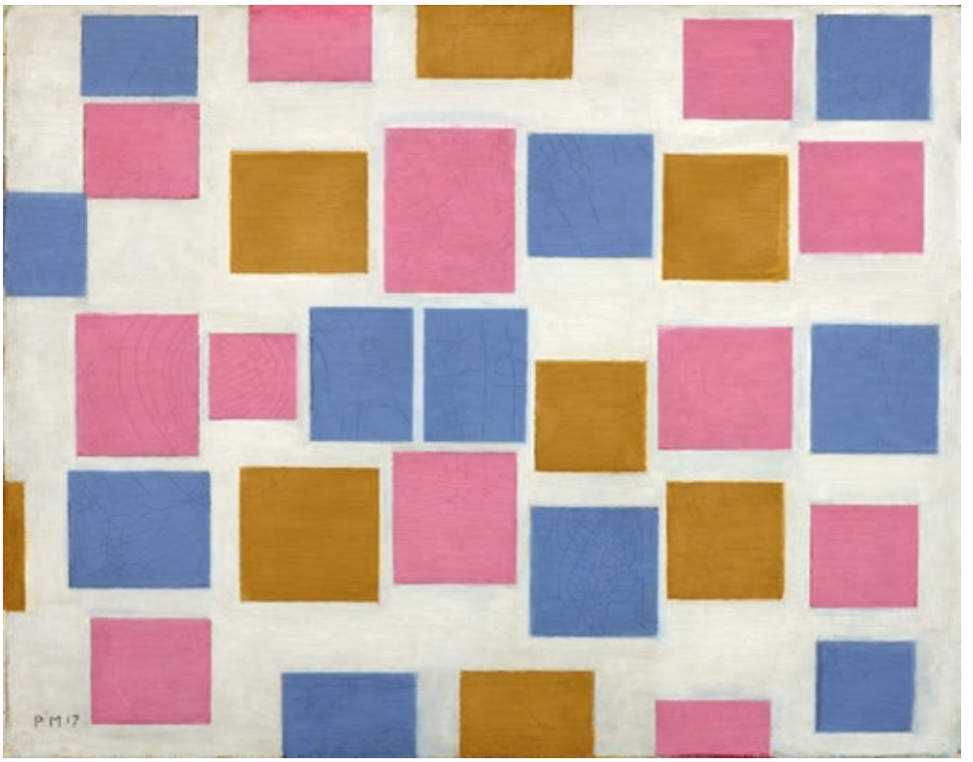
***Blowing Laundry*, 1977**

***White Catastrophe*, 1980**

The Yellow House, Lincolnville, 1979

Light of Awareness

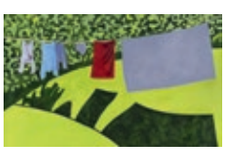
By Daniel Koep



Piet Mondrian, *Composition No. 3 with Color Planes*, 1917

It is easy to imagine that Dodd herself hung the sheet above the dull green lawn to create the motif she was going to paint. By carefully choosing her position in the garden, she creates a composition, deciding exactly where the clothesline divides the composition horizontally and how the shadow should relate to the house to the left. At the center, the blank sheet hangs like an empty canvas waiting to be worked on. In this way, the painting becomes more than just a simple view of a garden, the white sheet subtly referring to the medium of painting as an art form. This self-referential wink of the eye reveals that even while painting freely, Dodd is at the same time reflecting on her practice. Around 1900, Mondrian also painted laundry, following a long tradition in Dutch art that contributed to the country's reputation for strict cleanliness. Twenty years later, when he was beginning to abandon figuration, Mondrian's levitating, pastel-colored rectangles in *Composition No. 3 with Color Planes* (1917) still carry an echo of laundry, now arranged on invisible lines.

In 1968, Dodd started painting windows, looking at them directly or looking through them, painting windows at day and windows at night, windows lit from the inside and windows reflecting trees.



[p. 90] *Clothesline*, 2005

Springtime Studio Interior, 1972

Falling Window Sash, 1992

The Window as Witness (and Mythmaker)

By Katy Hessel

It was during a brief period in 2023 when I was living in New York City that the world of Lois Dodd became a reality for me. The city—described by the poet John Ashbery as "an aggregate of people and buildings that just go on and on until they stop"—is a shifting play of rectangles. Within them are glass panels, each indicating whether someone is there (evident by the blazes of golds), or absent (by darkness). While these panels let us look in, as well as out, they never reveal enough for us to glimpse details about what is going on inside. Somehow, everything is always out of reach.

It was this that drew me to Dodd's 2016 painting *Back of Men's Hotel (From My Window)*: a semi-abstracted study of geometric shapes, framed within a frame of artificially lit window panels, depicting a petrol-blue twilight sky and illuminated, perfectly lined boxes—a view the artist has been painting from her loft apartment since the 1960s. But while Dodd's neighbors feel close by, with their building obscuring much of her view, they are also far away. Their inner lives are blocked out by Dodd's washy strokes of whites and yellows and punctuated by a thin bar of black—perhaps a nod to the New York painter Barnett Newman—that divides the rectangle in two. This is also true of Dodd's depiction of her interior. Pressed up against the tightness of the frame, her painting leaves us—her viewer—blocked out from her inner life, wondering what lies behind, rather than beyond.

This yearning, curiosity, and wonder about what's happening "over there" speak so prevalently to the mythical nature of the city. Whether it's because of the stories that have been told or because of the people known to walk its streets, the young today still pine to escape suburban life for the glittering lights of Manhattan, to form legendary communities and do anything for their art.

When I spoke to the writer, critic, and New Yorker Hilton Als about artists Alice Neel and Diane Arbus, he alerted me to this idea. "What I'm interested in," he said, "is how they have each exposed me to a place that I recognize… but they make New York a place of myths. And it's the myths that live there that are self-invented. And the sitters are self-invented; the artists are self-invented. And so, what we are left with, in terms of this kind of shredded reality, is visual storytelling that is really concentrated on myth making."

While Neel and Arbus focused on the people who inhabited the city, providing portraits of those performing day by day on this hyper-concentrated island, Dodd shows us the reality of how people live in it, and look out on it.

While we might see people's lights on and hear them on the street, calling their friends or getting in and out of taxis, the city can also exude a solitary or even lonely existence. In *The Lonely City* (2016)—a book that explores loneliness through the lens of artists—Olivia Laing opens by getting us to imagine standing by a window at night, "on the sixth or seventeenth or forty-third floor of a building. The city reveals itself as a set of cells… Inside, strangers swim to and fro, attending to the business of their private hours."

[p. 157] ***Back of Men's Hotel (From My Window)*, 2016**

Ruin, 1986

In Conversation
Lois Dodd and Hans Ulrich Obrist

HUO **You started to paint flowers?**

LD I didn't want to paint in the garden because I didn't want to become a lady garden painter. But then painter Nancy Wissemann-Widrig, who was further down the road, began hanging out in Leslie's garden, doing great, big, wonderful paintings. So, then I began painting Nancy, painting in the garden. And pretty soon as I was painting, I got sucked into it too.

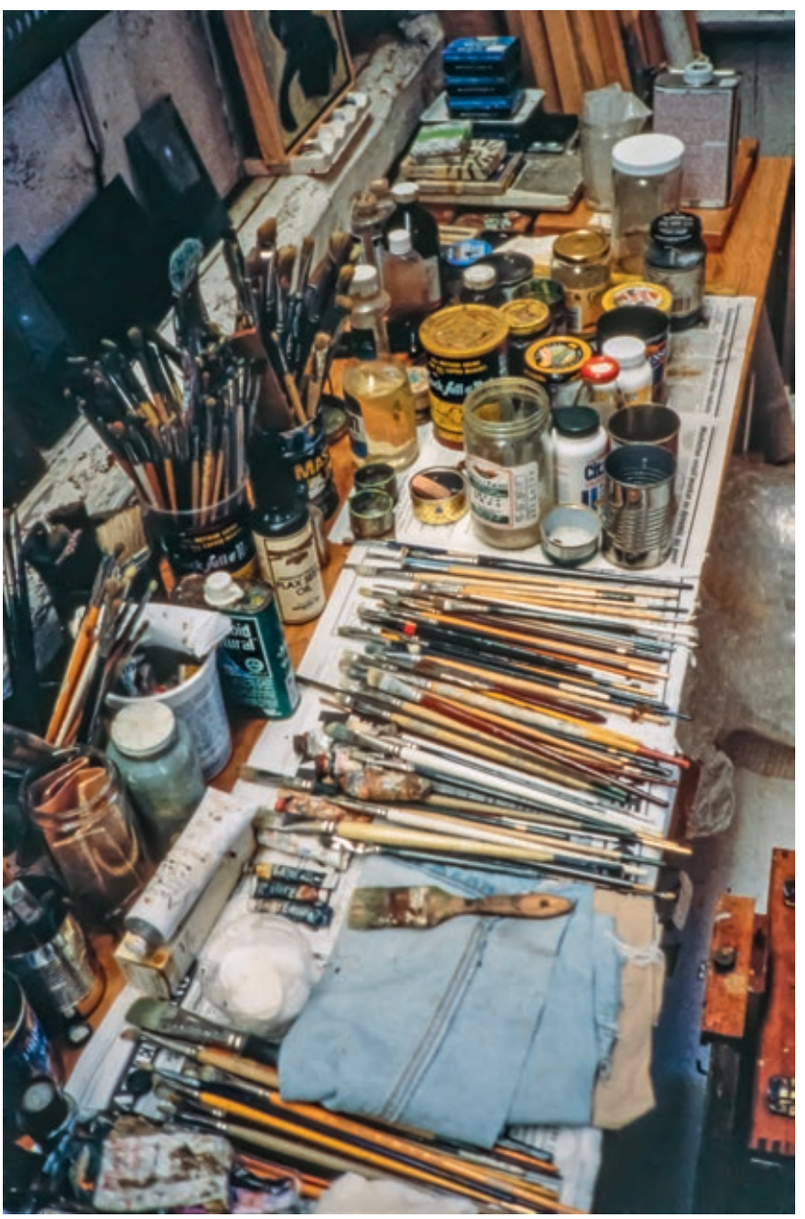
HUO **There's something interesting about plants. When I was a child, I was amazed by the balcony of my parents' house in Switzerland. All of a sudden, in spring, it was like a drama.**

LD It's like magic.

HUO **Can one say that you paint the drama of plants?**

LD That's nice. Because it's very sudden, it's like an explosion. Especially when they flower, in the spring. It's just bushes that flower, they're kind of amazing.

Studio view, Cushing



HUO **What about the symmetry?**

LD I don't think of them as being symmetrical. They balance in some way. But you're thinking of symmetry not as perfect?

HUO **No. Because you say when it's perfect, then it's lost in a way. You don't want it to be perfect?**

LD Yes.

HUO **But I want to go back to painting in general. Do you start the painting by drawing?**

LD No, I don't draw.

HUO **Is there a frame or how do you frame to begin? Do you use your hands as you don't make thumbnail sketches? You start directly.**

LD Like in that square painting there [*View Across River*, 1976]. It's down the road and across the street there's a pond. One day I walked down and set myself up at the edge. That diagonal tree in the painting was very important to setting it up. The triangular shape, the geometry. If I were copying a sketch, I would find that limiting. A drawing is a drawing; a painting is a painting. They're two different things.

Lois Dodd, Tenants Harbor, Maine, 1990s

Lois Dodd, 2017

Bringing Nature In

By Louise Bjeldbak Henriksen

Dodd has often described trompe l'oeil as central to her practice—a way of making painted space feel continuous with our own, drawing us gently into her world. That sense of immersion is heightened by the lifelike scale of her work. At first, when she began painting in the woods, Dodd worked on a smaller scale—it was simply more practical to carry small supports with her. But she quickly found it impossible to fit the trees onto such limited surfaces; the scale, she realized, had to match the subject. Her window paintings often mirror the actual dimensions of the windows they depict—*The Painted Room* is no exception—making it all the more fitting that the forest is rendered as an immersive mural, its painted trees made, at least to some extent, to match the scale of those just beyond the wall. As a result, we see only the lower portions of the treetops, as if standing before them ourselves.

Dodd has worked in the same media for more than seventy years, returning again and again to similar themes—belonging, care, domestic space, and the natural world—thereby creating a repertoire of the familiar. And yet, each painting feels newly alive, infused with a heightened sense of commonplace reality. Her paintings arise from life, are shaped by it, yet also shaping how she lives in return. How we each see the world is how we make the world. Dodd continuously makes us want to be part of hers, and to see the world through her eyes.

On the back wall of her bedroom, Dodd painted the blue sky. It is the only painting in which she began with the sky. A mirror on the sky-wall catches and reflects the mural, positioned directly across from the actual painted window, beyond which the real woods stretch out. Since then, Dodd has added another small painting to the room: a view of the sky-wall itself, resting atop the escritoire, showing the mirror as it reflects the mural's trees.[2] Layers upon layers of image and perception. They are paintings not only of a place, but with a place—an intimate gesture that quietly reveals Dodd's wry, understated wit.

Lois Dodd in her bedroom in Cushing, Maine

Lois Dodd's bedroom in Cushing, Maine

This essay is based on conversations with the artist in Cushing, Maine (July 2024), and Blairstown, New Jersey (May 2025), as well as with Robert Gober in North Haven, Maine (July 2024), and on the exhibition texts from *Lois Dodd "No one else can really help you . . ." Paintings + Ephemera*, organized by Robert Gober, at Hopkins Wharf Gallery, North Haven , Maine, July 23–August 5, 2023, which centered on Dodd's bedroom mural.

Notes

1 This and the window mural Dodd painted in her home's hall are the only murals she has ever created. Both are emblematic of two of Dodd's favoured motifs over the years: nature and windows.

2 This small painting was made by another artist—a close admirer of her work—who gifted it to her. Dodd's decision to place it in the room completes the recursive visual conversation.

The Painted Room, 1982

List of Works

p. 18
Vermont Barn, 1990
12 × 14 in (30.5 × 35.5 cm)
oil on Masonite
Private collection

p. 20
Moon Shadows, 1992–93
36 × 50 in (91.4 × 127 cm)
oil on linen
Courtesy of the artist and
Alexandre Gallery, New York

p. 21
Long Cove Quarry, 1993
19 × 22 in (48.2 × 55.8 cm)
oil on Masonite
Courtesy of the artist and
Alexandre Gallery, New York

p. 22
Pond, 1962
58 × 65 in (147.3 × 165.1 cm)
oil on linen
Private collection

p. 24
Globe Thistle, 1996
16 × 17 in (40.6 × 43.2 cm)
oil on Masonite
Ellie McGrath

p. 25
Globe Thistle and 3 Bees, 2008
11 × 11 in (27.9 × 27.9 cm)
oil on Masonite
Private collection

p. 26
Dried Echinacea, 2011
20 × 10 in (50.8 × 25.4 cm)
oil on Masonite
Private collection, courtesy of
Alexandre Gallery, New York

p. 28
Cow Parsnip, 1996
38 × 80 in (96.5 × 203.2 cm)
oil on linen
Colby Museum of Art, Waterville, ME.
Gift of the Alex Katz Foundation, 2005.008

p. 31
Bee Approaching Touch Me Not, 2006
36 × 44 in (91.4 × 111.8 cm)
oil on linen
Courtesy of the artist and
Alexandre Gallery, New York

p. 32
Dahlia (Orange), 2006
8 × 8 ⅝ in (20.3 × 21.9 cm)
oil on Masonite
Private collection

p. 33
Echinacea and Orange Dahlia, 2006
60 × 72 in (152.4 × 182.9 cm)
oil on linen
Hiter and Jil Harris

p. 35
Quarry at Sunset, 1995
50 × 64 in (127 × 162.6 cm)
oil on linen
Courtesy of the artist and
Alexandre Gallery, New York

p. 37
Sheet with Tree Shadows, 1980
48 × 26 in (121.9 × 66 cm)
oil on linen
Courtesy of the artist and
Alexandre Gallery, New York

p. 38
*Laundry Line, Red White
Black Pitchfork*, 1979
36 × 54 in (91.4 × 137.2 cm)
oil on linen
Courtesy of the artist and
Alexandre Gallery, New York.

p. 39
Blowing Laundry, 1977
13 × 23 in (33 × 58.4 cm)
oil on Masonite
Private collection

p. 39
White Catastrophe, 1980
18 × 19 in (47.7 × 48.3 cm)
oil on Masonite
Private collection

p. 41
Black Blanket + Two Spruces, 1980
20 × 16 in (50.8 × 40.6 cm)
oil on Masonite
Courtesy of David Hopkins,
Hopkins Wharf Gallery, North Haven

p. 42
The Yellow House, Lincolnville, 1979
36 × 54 in (91.4 × 137.2 cm)
oil on linen
Smithsonian American Art Museum. Gift of
Crown Equipment Corporation, 2023.48.2

p. 44
Morning Corner, 1983
20 × 20 in (50.8 × 50.8 cm)
oil on Masonite
Private collection, courtesy of
Alexandre Gallery, New York

p. 45
Front Door, Cushing, 1982
60 × 36 in (152.4 × 91.4 cm)
oil on linen
Private collection

p. 46
Steamed Window, 1980
36 × 28 in (91.4 × 71.1 cm)
oil on linen
Courtesy of the artist and
Alexandre Gallery, New York

p. 49
Sun in Hallway, 1978
50 × 30 in (127 × 76.2 cm)
oil on linen
Courtesy of the artist and
Alexandre Gallery, New York

p. 50
Sunlight on Floor + Door, 2013
19 × 13 in (48.3 × 33 cm)
oil on Masonite
Forman Family Collection

p. 51
3 Yellow Curtains Blowing, 1980
16 ¼ × 18 ¾ in (41.3 × 47.6 cm)
oil on Masonite
Collection of Isaac Mizrahi, New York

Contributors' Biographies

Phil Alexandre
is the founder and owner of Alexandre Gallery in New York. Representing contemporary artists and specializing in first-generation American modernists, with a focus on the Stieglitz Group and twentieth-century African American artists, the gallery has maintained a public exhibition program since 2001. In earlier years, Alexandre worked for Terry Dintenfass, Inc. and in partnership with Tibor de Nagy. Alexandre has represented Lois Dodd since 2002.

Louise Bjeldbak Henriksen
is an independent curator with a dual background in art history and political science. She curated *Framing the Ephemeral*, Lois Dodd's first European retrospective, and has organized solo exhibitions internationally at Kunstmuseum Den Haag, Kunsten Museum of Modern Art Aalborg, and ARoS Aarhus Kunstmuseum, among others, often focusing on socially engaged practices and underrepresented perspectives.

Katy Hessel
is an art historian and author of *The Story of Art without Men* (2022) and *How to Live an Artful Life* (2025). She writes a column in The Guardian, runs @thegreatwomenartists on Instagram, and hosts *The Great Women Artists Podcast* and *Museums Without Men*, an audio guide highlighting artworks by women at museums worldwide.

Faye Hirsch
is a writer, editor, and teacher who has published widely on contemporary art. Her book, *Lois Dodd*, was published in 2017, and a book co-authored with Ingrid Schaffner, *In the Company of Artists: A History of Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture*, in 2025.

Vincent Katz
is a poet, translator, and critic. His books include the poetry collections *Daffodil (2025)* and *Broadway for Paul* (2022), and translations of Propertius and Hesiod. He edited *Black Mountain College: Experiment in Art,* and his writing on contemporary art and poetry has appeared in *Apollo, Art in America, The Brooklyn Rail*, and *The Poetry Project Newsletter*. He lives in New York City.

Daniel Koep
is head of exhibitions at the Kunstmuseum Den Haag, where he has curated exhibitions on Shirin Neshat, Wiebke Siem, and Maria Pinińska-Bereś, among many others. He previously held curatorial roles at Hamburger Kunsthalle and writes regularly on modern and contemporary art, with recent texts on Max Beckmann and Nicole Eisenman.

Lucy R. Lippard
is a writer, activist, sometime curator, and author of thirty books on subjects ranging from politics to place. She lives in Galisteo, New Mexico, and spends part of every summer in Georgetown, Maine.

Laura McLean-Ferris
is a New York writer and curator. Her work has appeared in *4Columns, Artforum, Art-Review, Bookforum, frieze, Flash Art International*, *Mousse*, and other publications. She was chief curator at Swiss Institute, New York, where she worked from 2015 to 2021.

Janice McNab
is a Scottish artist and writer, who combines her painting with art-historical research. The author of *Galaxy Ballroom: A Dance with Hilma af Klint* (2024), she has also written for Tate Modern and The Korean Arts Council, among others. She was a 2022 fellow of The Women's International Study Centre, Santa Fe and is head of the MA Artistic Research department at the Royal Academy of Art, The Hague.

Hans Ulrich Obrist
is artistic director of Serpentine in London, and senior advisor at LUMA Arles. Prior to this, he was the curator of the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris. Since his first exhibition *World Soup (The Kitchen Show)* in 1991, he has curated more than 350 shows.

Karen Wilkin
is a New York-based curator and critic, educated at Barnard College and Columbia University. The author of monographs on David Smith, Anthony Caro, Helen Frankenthaler, Giorgio Morandi, and Hans Hofmann, among others, and curator of international exhibitions of their work, she contributes regularly to *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New Criterion*, *The Hudson Review*, and *The Hopkins Review*.

Colophon

The publication is published on the occasion of *Framing the Ephemeral*, the first European retrospective of Lois Dodd, on view at Kunstmuseum Den Haag, August 30, 2025–January 4, 2026.

KUNSTMUSEUM
DEN HAAG

Texts
Phil Alexandre, Louise Bjeldbak Henriksen, Katy Hessel, Faye Hirsch, Vincent Katz, Daniel Koep, Lucy R. Lippard, Laura McLean-Ferris, Janice McNab, Hans Ulrich Obrist, Karen Wilkin

Curator and editor
Louise Bjeldbak Henriksen,
Kunstmuseum Den Haag

Copy editing and proofreading
Cath Phillips

Project management
Sara Colson

Graphic design
Joris Kritis
& doublebill.design

Art director
Natacha Hofman

Image editing
Fotorama
& Gerrit Schreurs

Printing
Printer Trento, Italy

Publisher
Gautier Platteau

ISBN 978 94 6494 189 0
D/2025/11922/14
NUR 642

HANNIBAL
BOOKS

Cover
Red Laundry + Chicken House, 1978 (detail)

Photo credits
© Benjamin Magro: p. 182
© Bob Brooks: p. 217 (top)
© Christina Wnek: p. 217 (bottom)
© Lois Dodd. Dodd Studio Archival Photo, courtesy Alexandre Gallery, New York: pp. 9–13, 15, 167–68, 170–71, 173–76, 178–79, 181, 185, 225, 238–40
© Hirschhorn Art Museum, Washington DC, photo: Lee Stalsworth: p. 121
© Kunstmuseum Den Haag: pp. 81, 83
© Maura McEvoy: p. 216
© National Gallery of Art, Washington DC: p. 153
© National Galleries of Scotland, photo: Antonia Reeve: p. 84

All other images: © Lois Dodd, courtesy Alexandre Gallery, New York

Acknowledgements
We are deeply grateful to Lois Dodd and the team at Alexandre Gallery—especially founder and owner Phil Alexandre—without whom this exhibition would not have been possible.

We are equally indebted to the many lenders who made their works available for the exhibition: Alexandre Gallery, Jonathan Bloom, Melissa Brown, Colby College Museum of Art, Collection Robert Gober, Titia Hulst, Jack Coyne, The Dicke Collection, Farnsworth Art Museum, Forman Family Collection, Hiter and Jil Harris, Mary White, The Center for Figurative Painting, Collection Frencken/Libert, Ellie McGrath, Collection Isaac Mizrahi, The Museum of Modern Art, Portland Museum of Art, and the Smithsonian American Art Museum—as well as all those who preferred to remain anonymous.

Our heartfelt thanks go to all those who have generously shared their time, insights, and expertise in support of this project: David Breslin, Claudia Carson, Christopher Crosman, Janet Crosman, Jim Dicke, Robert Gober, Doede Hardeman, Sander Hintzen, Faye Hirsch, David Hopkins, Alex Katz, Eli King, Emma King, Daniel Koep, Naomi Kok, Vera Merks, Ramey Mize, Janice McNab, Melissa Rachleff Burtt, Amy Smith, Gerrit Schreurs, Roberta Smith, Ann Temkin, Benno Tempel, Jeroen van der Hulst, Caro Verbeek, Adam Weinberg, David Wilson, and Sylvia Yount.

The exhibition and publication have been made possible through the generous support of the Wyeth Foundation for American Art.

Lois Dodd, Green Mountain Gallery, New York City, c. 1969

p. 238 Lois Dodd, Pisa, 1950
p. 239 Top: Lois Dodd, Sienna, 1950
Bottom: Lois Dodd, Second Street, New York City, 1970s