

NASHVILLE SCENE

Three *Shag* Artists on Eroticism, Textiles and Contemporary Art

Shag: Provocative Textiles is on view through Nov. 29

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"Hug," Katarina Riesing

With *Shag*, the second exhibition in the Scene's Adult Contemporary series, we're focusing exclusively on themes of sexuality via textile-based artworks. While that might seem like a fairly specific vision, there's more room for variety than you'd expect. The show includes 24 artworks by 13 artists whose ages range from early 20s to mid-80s. They're from cities including Nashville, New York and Berlin. Below we offer excerpts from interviews with three of the exhibiting artists. Erin M. Riley uses traditional weaving techniques to re-create sexy selfies. Adama Delphine Fawundu photographs her own body and superimposes her grandmother's batik textiles over it. And Katarina Riesing takes the embroidery skills she learned from her mother and subverts the craft completely.

Katarina Riesing

Shag is a show that represents different textile-based artworks that are connected to the body, sexuality, erotic ideas. And I feel like I know what I think about those connections, but I would love to have your words, to be able to tell people what you think those connections are.

I've always been interested in the figure. I took a silk-painting class at [Fashion Institute of Technology], and everyone else in the class was making work for more of a commercial setting — there were a lot of florals and geometric patterns. And I love being the asshole in the class. So I was like, "I'm going to do something totally different that you would never see on a silk scarf." I started doing severed body parts and severed fingers and fingernail clipping. Gross things that you wouldn't necessarily see on surface design. And then I was like, "Oh, I love it — this silk looks like skin."

There's something that is so delicate and precious about the work and the way that it's layered, that you layer the embroidery on top of the silk drawings or silk paintings. Is it all by hand?

It's all by hand.

How did you learn how to do that?

My mother [Marcia Goldenstein] is like a master embroiderer.

Oh, that comes in handy.

Yeah, she's amazing. And she's been embroidering for as long as I can remember. I learned not too long ago, actually — it was when I first got my job out here [in Alfred, New York]. I was very isolated, and I didn't know anyone. And in the winter, you just don't leave the house. I was home for Christmas, I think, and I was like, "Marcia, teach me! Teach me your skills." So I just watched her, and over the winter, I just practiced. Then I also embroider clothing for fun, and so a lot of my practice was on denim shirts and jackets. And then I started bringing it into the paintings.

So you grew up with this mother who was a master embroiderer, and you didn't do it until you were out of the house.

Yeah, I resisted. For a long time.

I mean, I get it. You don't want to do your mom's thing, right?

Yeah, exactly. Exactly.

But it's cool that you're doing it in this erotic, provocative way. It's almost like you're still rebelling a little bit. I feel that resistance to the traditional technique, even as you embrace it.

Totally. I love that subversion. Being subversive with the materials and letting them do something that we're not used to, or playing in territories that they're not maybe meant for, or traditionally meant for — it's exciting.

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Through Nov. 29 at 509 Third Ave. S.

shagartshow.com

https://www.nashvillescene.com/arts_culture/three-i-shag-i-artists-on-eroticism-textiles-and-contemporary-art/article_c19aab51-35c8-5611-a639-ca8ae7304fe7.html