

Shore Leave: Trish Tillman @ Asya Geisberg Gallery

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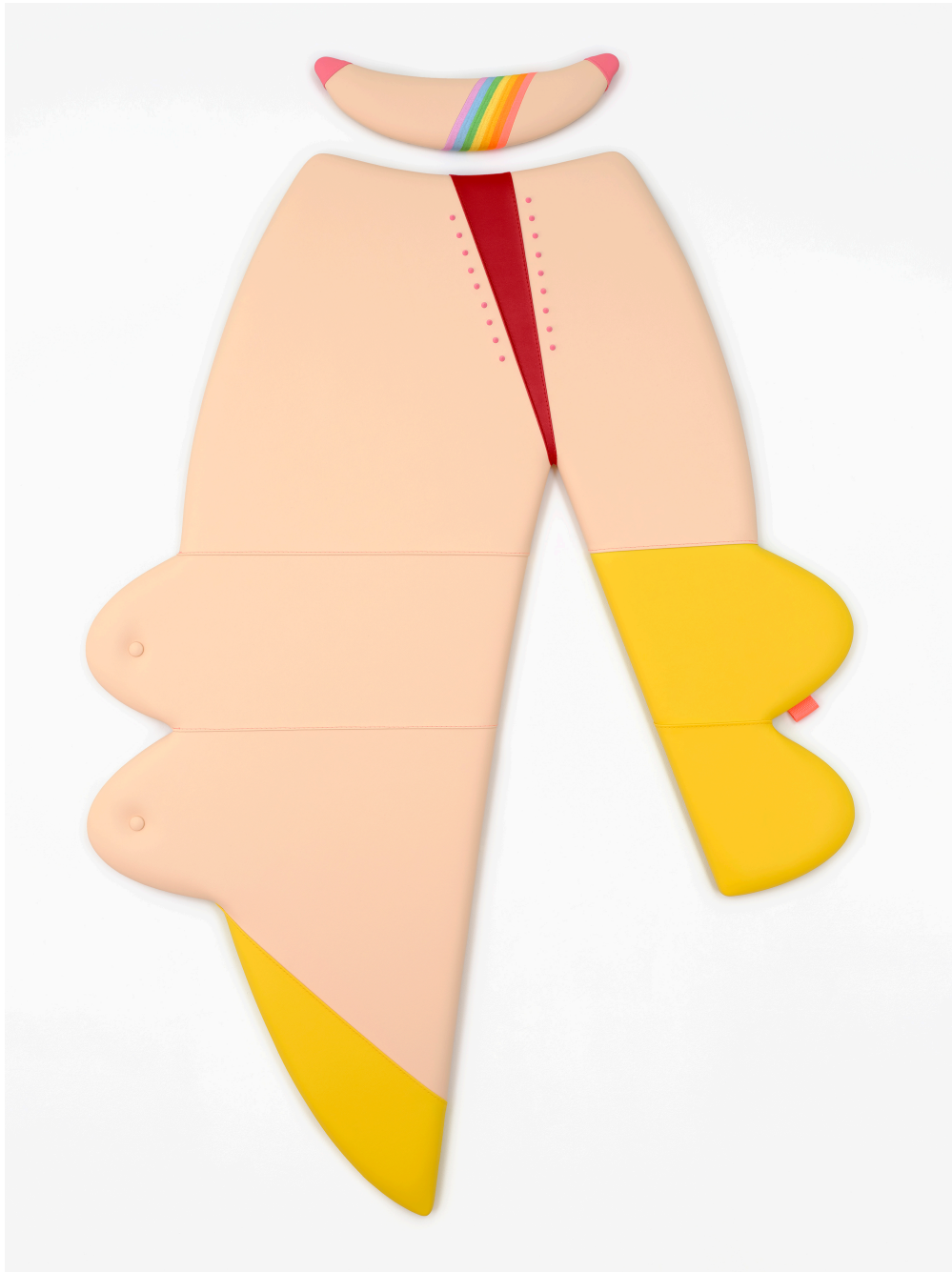
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We often pay little attention to how various materials we encounter – the upholstery, ceramic tchotchkes, and vinyl on bar stools – embed our collective memories. Trish Tillman channels early memories of the materials and gestalt of spaces as the basis for her work. Narrative of childhood experiences whisper through the combination of aesthetics drawn from the home decor of her war veteran grandfather and the safe spaces of her childhood room with its mint green walls and punk rock posters, as well as third spaces – the bars and concert venues where she would find refuge. Her third solo exhibition with Asya Geisberg Gallery, *Shore Leave* pushes Trish's oeuvre into more visceral territories, with her newer work relating even more to bodily experience.

Stepping through the gallery's street-level entrance, my mirror neurons immediately flashed on when I found that my vintage sport coat was made of a textile nearly identical to Trish's floor pieces. Such coincidental dress is not required, however, to be drawn into empathic contemplation of these forms as being representative of emotional body language. It is easy to reflect one's own physicality into the stuffed, slumped, and folded forms that resemble and relate to our own baggage of limbs and torso. Around the corner a sister piece made me think of having a stomach ache, or crawling under a tiny desk in preparation for earthquakes or an air raid. Both of these floor works consist of anthropomorphized couch cushions or luggage interacting with the confined hard structures of wooden furniture, fabricated by Trish and painted with the same mint green color of that childhood room.

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On Liberty, 2019.

In addition to her venture into floor installations, the exhibition showcases a set of new modular wall hangings, strong emblems of color and symmetry shaped by wooden panels, overlaid with foam, and upholstered with leather and vinyl, embellished with chains, embroidery, screen printing, studs, and tassels. While the materials relate to handbags and bed frames, visually they feel like mashups of designs found in punk rock posters, childhood toys, and heroic symbols found on medals or armor.

The title of the exhibition alludes sailors, naughty time-off when turned loose on a port town, and the drinking and debauchery that follows. Some of the wall hangings adorned with zippers and chains contain sexual innuendos, such as *Southern Exposure*. *On Liberty* feels reminiscent of Punky Brewster rainbows, morphed with hot dogs and candy-colored bar stool vinyls, and from such a mixture of aesthetics and associations, there emerges the difficult narrative of presumed safe spaces of home and the relationship to the indiscretions of our role models. – *David Molesky*