



NINU NINA

by Leila Antakly



Interview with Artist Katarina Riesing

Katarina Reising, is a textile based artist who creates dyed silk paintings of the female figure dressed in pattern lace or sheer fabric. She hand-embroiders the pattern that makes up the clothing, inspired by fashion, particularly details such as lace, zippers, textures, and how different fabrics hug actual bodies. View her upcoming exhibition, *She Shed*, at Asya Geisberg Gallery in NYC from April 20-May 27, 2023. Today we meet artist and educator Katarina Riesing, who is originally from from Knoxville TN and currently living/working in Alfred, NY. She is represented by Asya Geisberg Gallery in NY .

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About

Solo and two person exhibitions include Ithaca College, NY, Downtown Gallery, Madison, WI, Seligmann Center for the Arts, Chester, NY, SoHo20 Gallery, NY, and an exhibition with Amy Pleasant at University of Tennessee Knoxville, and group exhibitions include Eve Leib Gallery, London, Dinner Gallery, NY, Essex Flowers, NY, Kristin Lorello Gallery, NY, New Discretions, NY, Field Projects, NY, Spring/Break NY, Laney Contemporary, Savannah, GA, and Bertrand Productions, Philadelphia, PA. She has been awarded residencies at Haystack Mountain School of Craft, Maine, Saltonstall Artist Residency, Ithaca, NY, Cite International des Arts Residency, Paris, Icelandic Textile Center, Vermont Studio Center, and New York Artist Residency and Studio Foundation (NARS).

Your greatest inspirations or influences.

I grew up in a family of artists, so my parents remain my biggest influences. From watching them I understood how to be an artist; how to balance studio work with friends and jobs and how to work through ideas and difficulties. Living with artists also taught me early on to not buy into stereotypes of artists. Artists are normal people too.

In regards to specific art influences; I love Christina Ramberg's cropped and bound paintings of women, Sarah Lucas's filthy and funny sculptures, Billie Zangewa's use, and re-use, of material, Dominico Gnoli's flat figurative abstractions, the list goes on. I also am lucky to have so many amazing art friends to talk with, do studio visits, share ideas and frustrations.

Outside of art I love scrolling through fashion runways shows- I find endless pleasure and inspiration looking at textiles, patterns, colors, the way fabric falls or hugs the figure. In another life I was a fashion designer.

Tell us about your creative process, from the moment of ideation...

Not entire sure of the exact moment where ideas are conceived – maybe from reading a story or watching a movie or shopping or on a walk. When I have an idea I will make a note of it in my phone and then let it swirl in my brain a bit.

Then I might take some reference photos. Recently I have been using Procreate on my iPad to draw into photos I've taken – as a way to figure out composition, textures, colors, patterns. As these are refined, I will choose final images I want to paint. Then I paint – when I say “paint” I mean I dye – using brushes to paint dyes into the silk. Sometimes, depending on the image, I will use a batik process, which is using hot wax as a dye resist. Once the paintings are done they are steam-set. After they come out of the steamer I start the embroidery process. Depending on the painting and scale, this process can take anywhere from a week to 4 months. All the embroidery is hand-done, and I usually use about 3 different types of stitches. When the embroidery is complete, I stretch them and the piece is officially finished.

What would be a dream project for you?

Sometimes I'd love to see my paintings as clothes? I would be interested in making some wearables, though I am very uninterested in the actual clothes-making process. So maybe a collab with a designer?

Main differences in how working in the city vs. away has affected your creativity?

In the city there so much to see and take in (art-wise). I always feel constantly overloaded with ideas and materials and information. It's exciting. The city has no shortage of artist friends who are willing to do studio visits, go see work, talk about work. There is always someone around to vet ideas through.

That being said, living in a rural area for the last 9 years has been incredible for my art practice in that I have just made so damn much. With not a lot to do and plenty of quiet time and space, its given me a lot of time to think, experiment, work uninterrupted and make use of facilities at the school where I teach. I currently have a good set up of a prolific rural studio practice while being driving distance to the city to binge art and friends.

What's next for you?

My second solo show She Shed, opens at Asya Geisberg on April 20th. I will have some work in two group shows this summer, one at Nicodim Gallery in LA and the other at Hales Gallery in NYC. This summer, my husband and I are moving to Tucson, AZ, where he will be in starting a Psychiatry residency program. Excited to become a desert person and wear cowboy boots unironically.

What does well-being mean to you?

Balance: being productive while making time for friends and sleep. Getting exercise while enjoying good food. having plenty of alone time while being in a wonderful, easy relationship with my partner. Also: dog walks, lifting weights, British murder mysteries, horror movies, and pizza.