



**Maria A. Guzmán Capron**  
*Celaje*



Maria A. Guzmán Capron, *Siempre* (detail), 2021. Fabric, thread, batting, and latex, spray, and acrylic paints, 40 x 62 inches

## **Maria A. Guzmán Capron**

### ***Celaje***

November 13 - January 8

Opening Saturday, November 13, 4pm - 8pm

Walk-ins welcome, appointments encouraged.

Shulamit Nazarian is pleased to present *Celaje*, a solo exhibition of new textile sculptures by Oakland-based artist Maria A. Guzmán Capron. This will be the artist's first solo exhibition in Los Angeles.

Through a combination of hand-sewn textiles and paints, Capron joins together an array of patterns and striking colors to fashion bodily forms. Merging figuration with abstraction, these works explore cultural hybridity, pride, and the competing desires to assimilate and to be seen.

# Shulamit Nazarian

## Los Angeles

shares, “As a non-English-speaking immigrant, I was always aware of *visual* language and the role it plays in describing and signaling identities. Now, as an American, I am still searching for a material aesthetic that fits me.”

*Celaje*, a Spanish word for a wispy, polychromatic cloudscape, speaks to how Capron thinks of identity as something that constantly shifts and evolves. The artist primarily uses discarded fabric to evoke the body, constructing figures that are simultaneously extensions of herself and collective portraits of those who often influence identity formation, such as lovers, caretakers, and friends.

Exaggerated body parts—signature moves in Capron’s work—render muscular arms that embrace, puffy fingers that clasp together, and slinky legs that intertwine to become one. The most petite figure in the exhibition serves as a self-portrait. “She presents herself to you as the narrator of the story; she welcomes you into the space,” says the artist. Capron’s practice emphasizes that we consist of several identities, some that we repress and some that we exalt. Her works highlight the diversity within many of us, where several individual personas assembled together can be understood as reflections of a single person.

Capron’s use of recycled fabric is central to the genesis of her work. Privileging off-cut fabrics—literally centering materials that have been cut and rejected as excess—becomes a metaphor for centralizing that which society undervalues. The artist shares, “It’s my way of valuing and focusing on the Other and, in it, finding my personal way of describing powerful brown bodies.” By contrasting common fibers like cotton with more luxurious fabrics like silk, the artist addresses material hierarchies in art and fashion to parallel the power dynamics that exist within class and gender. She is invested in the friction of mistranslations—of failing to “dress the part” or having one’s pride in self-expression overcast by exoticization.

The works in *Celaje* borrow from the poetic moment when the light in our day shifts to create a momentary cloudscape, where billowing clouds take on temporarily identifiable shapes or forms. Through eclectic fabric and subtly painted brushstrokes, Capron constructs various permutations of fluid identities. The interlaced figures confront the viewer, reflect the most intimate relationships in our lives, and become an invitation for vulnerability, openness, and individual expression.

---

Maria A. Guzmán Capron (b. 1981) was born in Italy to Colombian and Peruvian parents. She received her MFA from California College of the Arts, San Francisco, CA in 2015 and her BFA from the University of Houston, TX in 2004. Solo exhibitions include Texas State Galleries, San Marcos, TX; Premier Junior, San Francisco, CA; Roll Up Project, Oakland, CA; and Guerrero Gallery San Francisco, CA. Select group exhibitions include Buffalo Institute for Contemporary Art, Buffalo, NY; NIAD Art Center, Richmond, CA; Shulamit Nazarian, Los Angeles, CA; pt.2 Gallery, Oakland, CA; CULT Aimee Friberg Exhibitions, San Francisco, CA; Deli Gallery in Brooklyn, NY; and Mana Contemporary in Chicago, IL. Her works have been written about in *Hyperallergic*, *Variable West*, *Bomb Magazine*, and *Art in America*.

# Shulamit Nazarian Los Angeles

## **Maria A. Guzmán Capron**

b. 1981, Milan, Italy

Lives and works in Oakland, CA

Maria A. Guzmán Capron sews eclectic textiles together to construct embellished wall hangings that reveal peculiar subjects in expressive poses. Her cast of characters exhibits contrasting and exaggerated features, such as one hyper-muscular leg paired with a dainty arm. Often the features surreptitiously blend with their surroundings; other times, they aggressively leap forward. At first glance, the cacophony of color and pattern signal joy and vibrance, however upon closer inspection, the psychological qualities of the characters become more nuanced. Through her work, she creates a glimmer of a new reality: one where she embraces cultural hybridity, manifesting characters who constantly shape-shift, occupying a brief moment in which we can imagine a past and a future, articulated through material and form.



**Maria A. Guzmán Capron**

*Obsequio (studio image), 2021*

Fabric, thread, batting, spray paint and latex paint

59 x 46.5 in



Maria A. Guzmán Capron, *Obsequio (detail)*, 2021



**Maria A. Guzmán Capron**, *Obsequio (detail)*, 2021



**Maria A. Guzmán Capron**

*Siempre (studio image)*, 2021

Fabric, thread, batting, latex paint, spray paint and acrylic paint  
40 x 62 in





**Maria A. Guzmán Capron**, *Siempre (detail)*, 2021



**Maria A. Guzmán Capron**

*Equis*, 2021

Fabric, thread, batting, acrylic and spray paint

55 x 51 in

**ShulamitNazarian**  
**LosAngeles**



**Maria A. Guzmán Capron**, *Equis (detail)*, 2021



**Maria A. Guzmán Capron**

*Duo (studio image), 2021*

Fabric, thread, batting, latex paint, spray paint and acrylic paint  
59 x 34 in



**Maria A. Guzmán Capron**, *Duo (detail)*, 2021



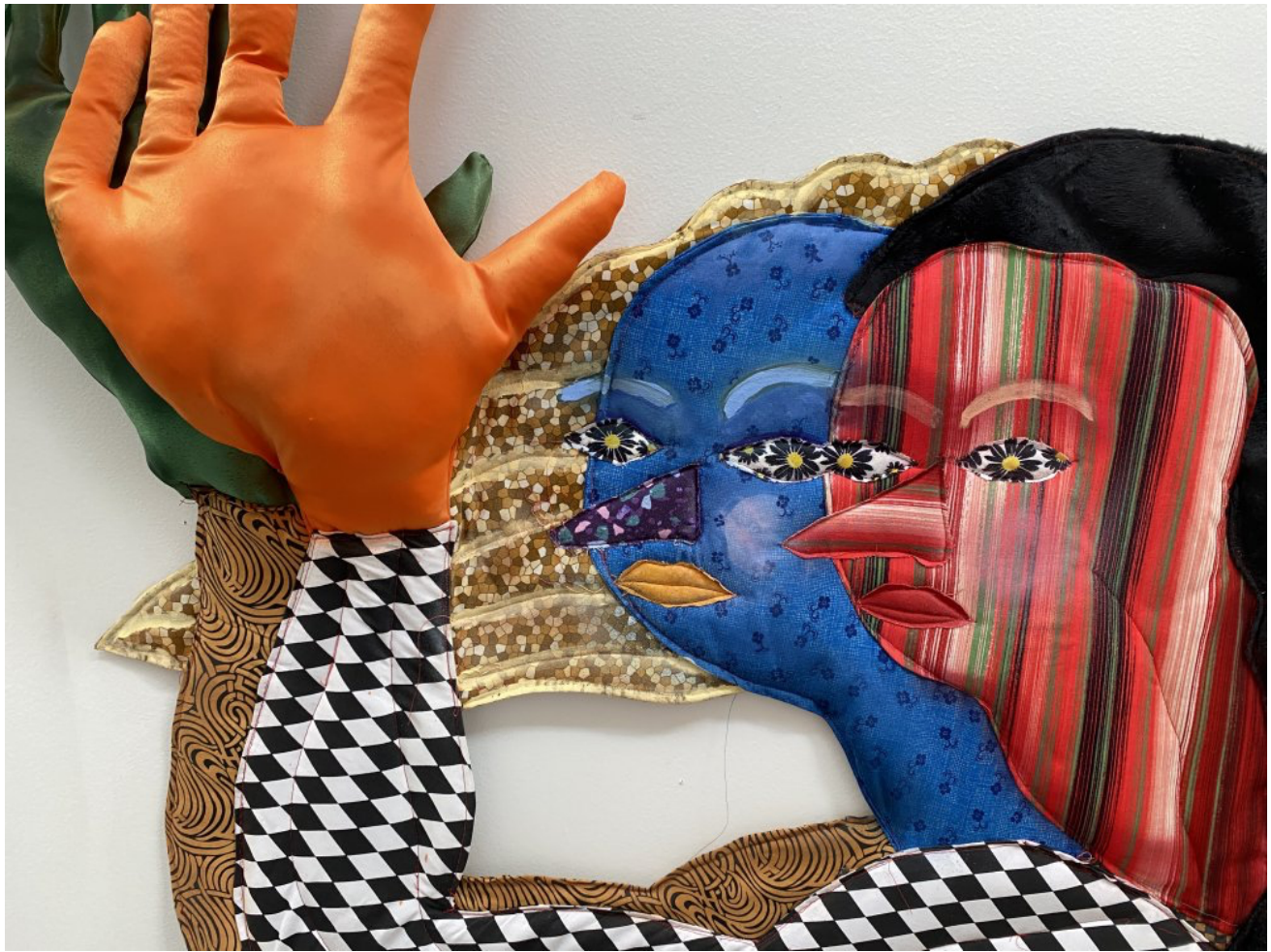
**Maria A. Guzmán Capron**, *Duo (detail)*, 2021



**Maria A. Guzmán Capron**

*Sígueme (studio image), 2021*

Fabric, thread, batting, latex paint, spray paint and acrylic paint  
46 x 36 in



**Maria A. Guzmán Capron**, *Sígueme (detail)*, 2021





**Maria A. Guzmán Capron**, *Sígueme (detail)*, 2021



**Maria A. Guzmán Capron**

*Te Llevo Dentro (studio image), 2021*

Fabric, thread, batting, latex paint, spray paint and acrylic paint  
59 x 29 in



**Maria A. Guzmán Capron**, *Te Llevo Dentro (detail)*, 2021



**Maria A. Guzmán Capron**

*Te Quiero (studio image), 2021*

Fabric, thread, batting, latex paint, spray paint and acrylic paint  
43 x 24 in



**Maria A. Guzmán Capron**, *Te Quiero (detail)*, 2021



**Maria A. Guzmán Capron**

*Alba En Tanga (studio image), 2021*

Fabric, thread, batting, latex paint, spray paint and acrylic paint  
29 x 13 in

# Shulamit Nazarian Los Angeles

## **Maria A. Guzmán Capron**

Born in Milan, Italy  
Lives in Oakland, CA

### **Education**

- 2015** MFA Interdisciplinary Studio, California College of the Arts, Oakland, CA
- 2004** BFA Painting, University of Houston, TX

### **Solo Exhibitions**

- 2021** *Olas Malcriadas* at Texas State Gallery, San Marcos, TX
- 2020** *Make It All Better at Premier Junior*, Billboard in San Francisco, CA  
*Mirador at Roll Up Project*, Oakland, CA
- 2019** *Sinuous Looks* at John McNeil Studios, Berkeley, CA
- 2018** *Forgotten Intruders* at Guerrero Gallery, San Francisco, CA  
*Desdoblé* at R/SF Projects in San Francisco, CA.
- 2015** *She Bop* at City Limits. Oakland, CA

### **Group Exhibitions**

- 2021** *Intersecting Selves* at Shulamit Nazarian, Los Angeles, CA  
*The Violets in the Mountains have Broken the Rocks pt. 2*, Gallery 16, San Francisco, CA
- 2020** *Snail Shell* at Part 2 Gallery, Oakland, CA  
*Being Human is Hard* at Part 2 Gallery, Los Angeles, CA  
*Through My Eyes* NIAD Art Center, Richmond, CA
- 2019** *RAD Craft + Design* Dream Farm Commons, Oakland, CA  
*Vanishing Point* at LOG at Camayuhs, Atlanta, GA  
*At the Pith* at Nook Gallery, Oakland CA  
*Female Trouble 2* at CULT Aimee Friberg Exhibitions, San Francisco, CA  
*Twisted Sister* at Massman Gallery, Oakland, CA, with Em Kettner  
*Body Spray* at Buffalo Institute for Contemporary Art, Buffalo, NY
- 2018** *Through her Eye* at Mana Contemporary, Chicago, IL  
*Don't Eat Me* at Deli Gallery, New York, NY, with Asuka Anastacia Ogawa  
*Division of Labor* at Minnesota Street Projects, curated by Chris Grunder San Francisco, CA

# Shulamit Nazarian Los Angeles

*Radiant* at Blue Roof Studios in Los Angeles, CA  
*On the tip of my tongue* BBQLA, traveling exhibition  
*Spirited Probabilities* at Southern Exposure in San Francisco, CA

- 2017** *The Black Infinity* at No Place Gallery in Columbus, OH  
*The Embedded Message* at the Visual Arts Center of Richmond, VA  
*Fulfill the Dream* at Space Heater Gallery in Brooklyn, NY  
*Right Side Out* at Able Baker. Portland, ME  
*Tetas al Aire* at Interface Gallery. Oakland, CA  
*AnthroMorphoCene* at Bread & Salt. San Diego, CA  
*Relay* at CTRL+SHFT, Oakland, CA  
*Young Collectors Club Spring Edition* at R/SF. San Francisco, CA  
*Teeter Totter* at BBQLA, curated Timo Fahler. Los Angeles, CA  
*Bestiario/Menagerie* at Adobe Books, curated by Á.R. Vázquez-Concepción. San Francisco, CA

- 2016** *Maria Guzmán Capron / Sahar Khoury / Francesco Deiana* at Alter Space. San Francisco, CA  
*Landfill/Bedrock* at Guerrero Gallery. San Francisco, CA  
*After Pop Life* at Minnesota Street Projects, curated by Glen Helfand. San Francisco, CA  
*Mall Rats 100% Gallery* at Et al, etc. San Francisco, CA  
*Art Book Show* at Bass & Reiner. San Francisco, CA  
*Constructed, Instead?* at Residence/SF, curated by Marcela Pardo. San Francisco, CA  
*Welcome to The Left Coast* at The Luggage Store Gallery. San Francisco, CA

- 2015** *Bitch, Please* at N.B.D. Projects, curated by Jenny Sharaf. San Francisco, CA

## Commissionas & Residencies

- 2021** VR Art Camp Residency  
*Escondite Para Nosotros*, commission for the 2021 Ark Exhibition by the Svane Family Foundation
- 2016** *Espuma y Mucho Mas*, SFMOMA Open Space - Issue 3

## Lectures

- 2022** California College of the Arts, MFA Instructor, forthcoming spring semester
- 2021** Creative Growth  
Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts  
Mills College  
California College of the Arts
- 2020** Berkeley City College

## Bibliography

- 2021** Moya Ford, Lauren. *Maria Guzmán Capron's Deliciously Tactile Fabric Figures, or "Hot Aliens,"* [Hyperallergic](#). October 13



# ShulamitNazarian LosAngeles

- Pollard, Madeleine. *Now You See Me: The Artists Questioning the Construction of the Self*, [Elephant](#). August 23  
Hollis, Phyllis. *Ep. 70: A Conversation with Maria Guzmán Capron*, [Cerebral Women Podcast](#). June 16
- 2020** *Private Cave*, [Hamam Magazine](#). Issue 2  
*Snail Shell: Maria Guzmán Capron & Rachel Hayden*, [Variable West](#). December 4  
Bello, Aranza. *La Sexualidad En Los Márgenes*, [Revista de la Universidad de Mexico](#). July
- 2019** *De ratio voorbii: kleurexplosies bij Maria A. Guzmán Capron (Beyond reason: color explosions by Maria A. Guzmán Capron)*, [Textiel Plus](#). Fall
- 2018** *One Piece: Intrepida by Maria Guzmán Capron*, [Bomb Magazine](#). October 19  
*Guerrero Gallery's October Exhibitions With Maria Guzmán Capron and Hilary Pecis*, [Juxtapoz](#). October 17  
*Maria Guzmán Capron Builds Out A World Of Her Own In R/SF Projects*, [Juxtapoz](#). February 4  
*Interview with artist María Guzmán-Capron*, [Cranium Corporation](#).  
*Asuka Anastacia Ogawa and Maria Guzmán Capron at Deli Gallery*, [Art Viewer](#). October 18  
Hotchkiss, Sarah. *How to Start a Year of Bay Area Art Off Right*, [KOED](#). January 4
- 2015** Sussman, Matt. *Maria Guzmán Capron*, [Art in America](#). December 9  
Burke, Sarah. *Maria Guzman Capron Makes Clashing Cool*, [East Bay Express](#). October 14  
Hotchkiss, Sarah. *Instead of Changing Leaves, Peep Eight Bay Area Art Shows this Fall*, [KOED](#). August 25

# HYPERALLERGIC

## Maria Guzmán Capron's Deliciously Tactile Fabric Figures, or "Hot Aliens"

Maria Guzmán Capron's Deliciously Tactile Fabric Figures, or "Hot Aliens"

Lauren Moya Ford | October 12, 2021



Maria Guzmán Capron, *Olas Malcriadas*, installation view, Texas State Galleries, August 23 – November 12, 2021.  
All images courtesy of the artist and Texas State Galleries.

Maria Guzmán Capron's fantastical, colorful textiles are a lot of fun to look at. The artist's solo exhibition [Olas Malcriadas](#) at Texas State Galleries is filled with deliciously tactile, collaged fabric figures that smirk, crouch, and embrace across the gallery's walls and floor. The title of the show — loosely translated from Spanish as "Naughty Waves" in English — is apt: Guzmán Capron might know the rules, but she chooses, happily, to break them. Her picaresque personas are fascinating and funny, but they also offer us work that feels distinctly fresh and new.

The artist began working with fabric as an undergraduate. She didn't have any formal training in sewing, but, "It was so exciting to not know how to use a material and to invent my own way," Guzmán Capron told Hyperallergic by email. Nowadays, her sewn and loose threads mingle with acrylic, latex, and spray paint over a dynamic patchwork of found fabrics. Up close, dynamic abstractions and color combinations emerge, and in some passages — like in the flowery arm of Guzmán Capron's wacky, "Mona Lisa"-like "Ventana" (2021) — the artist replicates a fabric motif in paint, adding another curious layer for viewers to decipher. But despite the busy, clashing visuals, the artist manages to keep a delicate balance of harmony and rhythm across her works.



Maria Guzmán Capron, *Olas Malcriadas*, installation view, Texas State Galleries, August 23 – November 12, 2021.

“When I choose fabric,” Guzmán Capron wrote by email, “I follow my intuition and also sift through layers of meaning, signs, and cult signals alongside color, pattern, and texture.” In fabric — especially those she finds in the sale bin — the artist reads clues about what’s deemed tacky or tasteful, acceptable or odd. Guzmán Capron was born in Italy to Peruvian and Colombian parents, and moved to the United States at age 17. “People recognized me as foreign without even speaking to me,” she said, saying that her clothes marked her difference. Today, the vivid palette and patterns in her artworks mirror the ways that she and her family dress. “The exuberance is familiar and comforting to me,” she noted, “but I know it can feel brash to others.”

The artist, who playfully refers to her figures as “hot aliens” and “beyond-human characters,” insists that her creations are brown bodies “performing an otherworldly femininity” that reflects herself and her immigrant, Latinx community. Beyond their bright hues and mischievous protagonists, Guzmán Capron’s works “embody emotions, desires, and my relationship to the world,” the artist explained. While she says she’s tried in the past to blend in, she now hopes that her work will create space for difference. “My family would say I am ‘*ni chicha ni limonada*’ (neither the sweet purple corn drink nor lemonade),” Guzmán Capron told Hyperallergic. “I am a new thing and I want to signal with my textiles to other in-between people that they belong.”

# JUXTAPOZ

Art & Culture

## Guerrero Gallery's October Exhibitions With Maria Guzmán Capron and Hilary Pecis

October 17, 2018



Installation view, Maria A. Guzmán Capron, *Forgotten Intruders*, September–October 2018.  
Courtesy of the artist and Guerrero Gallery.

[Guerrero Gallery](#) has two amazing shows up right now, one by [Maria Guzmán Capron](#) titled *Forgotten Intruders*, and another by [Hillary Pecis](#) titled *Familiar Views*. Read on below to see some of the exhibited work and to read Guerrero Gallery's description of each artist's new work.

### **Maria Guzmán Capron's *Forgotten Intruders***

"The staircase leads up to an attic. The walls are painted an old sea mist color. The space is open, sparse, with a few pieces of furniture scattered around, including some mismatched chairs. Some of them spent most of their lives outside on a patio. There is no bed or couch. A worn out kitchen cabinet rests awkwardly in the space. This is an attic where things get stored and lost, an improvised guest room." - Maria Guzmán Capron

The attic—that strange and often forgotten space, where dust accumulates with years of neglect and boxes of items that have ceased to serve their daily functions lie dormant. Perhaps due to that strange remove from daily life or the general role served as the keepsake of forgotten objects and distant memories, the attic has become a ripe space for the imagination, embroiled in everything from lighthearted fantasy to abject terror. It's within the attic that we lose control as the logic and intentions of the space make themselves known to those seeking, or those who simply stumble upon the space, and it's within this context that Maria Guzmán Capron's latest exhibition takes shape.



Maria A. Guzmán Capron, *Atrapada y Peluda* (front and back), 2018.  
Fabric, thread, wire, wood, stuffing, batting and spray paint, 20.75 x 16 x 16 in.

In the refuge of the attic, Capron's figures can stretch their limbs, fully at peace to luxuriate in their own obscurity becoming static once again as an intrepid viewer climbs the stairs to the gallery's upstairs space. Much like the clumsy array of furniture strewn about the attic, the artist's highly idiosyncratic figures, realized in textile, wood, painted embellishment and various other materials lovingly embrace the language of contrast and difference. They're difficult, defiant and deeply individualistic, exuding personality yet briskly reminding the casual viewer that they are the ones who reign over the attic space and not the other way around. Some grace the walls while others sit atop and within the various pieces of discarded furniture that have found their way up to this forgotten place, a place that has long since lost control to the whims of its new inhabitants.



Installation view, Hilary Pecis, *Familiar Views*, September–October 2018.  
Courtesy of the artist and Guerrero Gallery.

### Hilary Pecis' *Familiar Views*

A stack of artist monographs lie heavy on the left side of one of Los Angeles based painter Hilary Pecis' compositions, the titles running the gamut of painters from Fairfield Porter and Florine Stettheimer to Kerry James Marshall and Henri Rousseau—lovingly depicted in the artist's confident hand. Beside them sits a ceramic vase with lilies overflowing, the discerning eye realizing that the vase is an original piece by the funk-art legend Maija Peeples-Bright, with a painting in the background alluding to yet another artist that has played a role in Pecis' life and development as a painter. These are self portraits made in remove, works that both intimately invite you into the home and spaces around LA and California that the artist visits, as well as puzzle pieces through which we construct a fuller understanding of the artist as we stroll from work to work.

Pecis' paintings within *Familiar Views* feel both rooted within the history of painting, of the still-life and landscape traditions in particular, and emblematic of the contemporary space which painting holds. The classical techniques of intense rendering and lush blends of oil paint are traded for Pecis' textural and flattened compositions and a penchant for odd perspectives, translated through the artist's handling of her favorite local acrylic paint manufacturer: Novavcolor. Much like their art historical connotations, there's an ever-present layering in Hilary's works, of experiences, of references, of objects and space—a casual density found throughout the works in her solo exhibition, regardless of content or location. The paintings bounce fluidly from domestic spaces and the artist's garden to desserts and the jagged mountains that surround LA, and back to the scenes that feel archetypally of Southern California—low slung markets, aging signage, and of course the ever-present hovering palm tree.

Regardless of the space inhabited by the painter's gaze, there lies an overarching feeling of comfort—of being invited into the artist's home or following along on the family's travels. And at a time in which social media beckons its users to actively package their lifestyles and “live” exciting experiences for the vicarious consumption of others, there lies an alluring and sincere confidence conveyed in Pecis' invitation to inhabit some of the quieter moments in the artist's life.

# BOMB

## One Piece: *Intrepida* by Maria Guzmán Capron

*A feral, hyper-human female figure.*

October 19, 2018



Maria A. Guzmán Capron, *Intrepida*, 2018. 11 x 13.5 x 8.5 inches. Courtesy the artist and Deli Gallery, New York.

*Intrepida* (2018) is poised and daring. She is a movement at the edge of our vision; captured mid-action, she immediately freezes. Patterns of fabric envelop her, forming a skin that makes her visible yet ready to be camouflaged and disappear. She is part of a progression of miniature, three-dimensional figurative works I have been making over the past year: exaggerated bodies, rich in color and texture, able to extend and contort in ways that a human body couldn't. They are imperfect handmade objects, miniature sculptures that reference and poke fun at the monumental. They are small jewels full of comedy and drama.

I begin these works in a place lead by touch and feeling, where inert materials—fabric, stuffing, and wire—can emerge as anything. I see a form materializing loosely, ethereal, and then pinned together. She is born out of intuition, a foggy impression until I tighten and sculpt the body through countless little stitches and knots. Her skin flickers in black and white. The fabric is inverted at the end of some limbs, revealing a darker pattern. This slight switch creates a tiny vibration that highlights certain gestures. Hands and hair grow out of yarn. Her eyes are open fields of color.



Installation view, *Don't Eat Me*: Asuka Anastacia Ogawa and Maria Guzman Capron, Deli Gallery, September–October 2018. Courtesy the artist and Deli Gallery, New York.

*Intrepida* is a powerful creature, muscular, extremely flexible, hyper-human, more than what we could be. Exposed, all she needs is a small knit top and bottom, a grid structure outlining her figure and accentuating her fluidity. *Intrepida* is something feral that lurks, a potential being that is female, animal, otherworldly. In crafting her I offer a glimpse of another reality, and an opening to an unapologetic space for others like us.



Maria A. Guzmán Capron, *Intrepida*, 2018. 11 x 13.5 x 8.5 inches.



# ELEPHANT

## Now You See Me: The Artists Questioning the Construction of the Self

The act of looking is disrupted by eight artists who explore the twin desires for privacy and exposure in the age of the internet.

Madeleine Pollard | August 23, 2021



Maria Guzmán Capron, *Cuídame*, 2021. Fabric, thread, batting, spray paint, and latex paint, 40.5 x 45 inches.

The peculiar creature in *Cuídame*, Maria Guzmán Capron's textile tapestry, at once hides and reveals itself amidst the patchwork of fabrics that make up its surroundings. Capron's character mimics the constant dance of social interaction, the dual art of disclosure and dissimulation. How much of yourself do you give away, at what point, where, and to whom? When do you blend in, and when do you stand out?

These questions weave through [Intersecting Selves](#), a group exhibition showing at Shulamit Nazarian gallery in Los Angeles. Spanning photography, painting, collage, fabric, and sound, the artworks explore the constant push-pull between desires for privacy and desires for exposure, and the personal and political conditions that influence it.



Wendell Gladstone, *Cocoon*, 2021, Acrylic on canvas, 82 x 66 inches (left) and *Intersecting Selves*, 2021, Acrylic on canvas, 80 x 66 inches (right).

The trio of bodies in Wendell Gladstone's figurative paintings hint at the plurality of individual identity. His svelte, otherworldly characters peer through interior windows, climb trees or are embedded within walls, depicting a layering of public and private selves.

In the wall-based sculptures of Julie Henson, identity formation is selective. Having been exposed to the performativity of church rituals and religious idolatry from a young age, Henson explores how these methods are transposed into the digital realm. She plays with the parallels between screen and stage, presenting social media as a theatre in which celebrities are constructed, watched and worshipped. But as her use of negative space suggests, online identity is as much about what we don't reveal as what we do.



Elliott Jerome Brown Jr., *A well commanded army tucked at the corners of his lips* (left), *The tire grinds its teeth along the gravel and brakes to silence - a pause for effect. / Have you ever siphoned rupture through a narrow opening? / (Do you know the control it takes to slingshot a sound?)* (middle), and *Sweeping the bricks to the center. The door is too heavy to stay open on its own* (right). All works 2019, Archival inkjet print, 51 x 34 inches, Edition of 5 + 2 AP.

Amir H. Fallah, who describes himself as occupying a “limbo, hybrid world of not being fully Iranian, and not completely American”, also uses concealment to interrogate systems of self-presentation. He veils his painted figures in order to ask how you can create a portrait that does not show someone’s likeness; in telling the story of his subjects through the objects and symbols that make up their personhood instead, he moves away from traditional modes of representation in Western art.

*“How much of yourself do you give away, at what point, where, and to whom?”*

Fallah affords his subjects a privacy that is reflected in the photographs of Elliott Jerome Brown Jr. While intimate body parts are brought to the fore, the faces of Brown’s subjects are obscured in shadow or cropped out, denying his viewers the power and privilege of gazing unchecked.

Evasion as a means of resistance is a tactic employed by Ellen Lesperance, too, whose paintings pay homage to women activists of the anti-nuclear movement. In order to elude the patriarchal legacy of figurative painting, Lesperance renders their protest knitwear rather than their bodies, recreating the patterns of their armour-like sweaters in gouache on paper.



Ebony G. Patterson, *...for souls...for soles...between the cuts, beneath the leaves, below the soil...*, 2021, Acrylic on canvas, 82 x 66 inches (detail views).

For many of the exhibited artists, the obfuscation of identity is a choice, a protective mechanism of sorts. In Tori Wrånes’ performance art, monstrous avatars stand in for the id, the hidden depths of the self. However, Ebony G. Patterson draws attention to the bodies that have been overlooked against their will. She collages paper cuttings into a sculptural wall garden, as dense as it is intricate. Marginalised bodies are buried underneath the deceptive tangle of superficial flowers, birds and butterflies as she constructs a metaphor for colonial space.

Whether inviting closer inspection, pushing the viewer away, or doing both simultaneously, these artists disrupt conventional modes of looking. In questioning the construction of individual identity, they shift the gaze onto our own forms of self-presentation in the process.

All images courtesy of the artists and Shulamit Nazarian, Los Angeles.