

Lap of the Gods

October 26 - December 7, 2024

Opening Saturday, Oct 26th 6-8p

CARO

SARAH BROOK GALLERY

Gallery open hours:
Wed–Sat 12–5p

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for all inquiries

If it's true that attention is the highest form of prayer, in the words of Simone Weil, then the luminous textiles comprising CARO's debut solo exhibition, "Lap of the Gods," are devotional objects. One doesn't need to know that the show represents more than a thousand hours of labor or that the creation of one of the tapestries spans five years to see the cumulative effect of such durational attention: a sometimes contemplative, other times ecstatic, interiority. Using silk filament, sequins, and beads, bullion knots, picot stitches, and surface couching bind color to light, the workings of hands to the vision behind closed eyes.

CARO's consonant interests in jewelry and embroidery—they received their BA in Metalsmithing from Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana, and continued onto Embroidery School at École Lesage in Paris, France—produce the dynamic tension between the tangible and intangible at the heart of their practice. Diaphanous organza trimmed with iridescent beads is stretched taut across obdurate metal frames. Here, with each pass and pull of needle and thread, that which is mysterious and ethereal threatens to escape the staid ore to which it's bound. In *Is it the same for you?*, the frothy night sky is fixed within a hand-fabricated brass and silver frame covered in radiating tines that emphasizes the dissonance but also the interdependence of the materials: the fabric would fall slack without the structural tension; the frame would lose its context, its meaning.

Imagining the tapestries in rectangular frames rather than embroidery hoops, CARO collapses the tired distinction between fine and applied arts. Their use of luxuriant untwisted silks, rarefied jewels like sapphires and rubies, and precious metals elevate the decorative premium of the textiles and give the works their illusory and ambiguously reflective surfaces. By relegating the metalwork, historically considered a man's trade, to bracing and displaying the textiles, the long-underestimated women's pastime further subverts convention.

"To know the history of embroidery is to know the history of women," observed feminist art historian Rozsika Parker. Indeed, thread is amongst the earliest tools of meaning-making coeval with the charcoal mark, the ochre line. Even now, it's difficult to name a material more inextricably linked than fabric to the human experience.

The grace and gravitas of *Red Rocks* allays any sustained consideration of categorization. The mesmerizing admixture of colors (incarnadine, amber, crimson, glaucous), textures (sandy, pearlescent, nubby, crystalline), and materials (copper, peridot, quartz, coral) transfixes the gaze and ambushes the senses with a rush of impressions: wonder, bewilderment, awe. The ultra-variegated surface resembles a rocky mountain face in the midst of becoming—or unbecoming: you can almost see the earth's crust buckling, folding, and rising beneath the pleats, along the seams.

Throughout the show, loose patterns, sculptural layers, and complex needlepoint coalesce in similarly sublime landscapes such as at *16h00*, or else give way to abstract impressions of natural phenomena like undulating orchardgrass, scattered light streaming through trees, or the vertiginous blaze of stars emerging one, two, then a hundred at a time.

The artist's extraordinary sensitivity to the subtleties of light and touch solicits a heightened quality of attention, a slow-looking, on behalf of the audience too. In this way, the tapestries teach you how to see them, refining your perceptual ability to notice ever-finer variations in the interplay between depth, tone, texture, and emotional resonance.

To return then to *Salt*, a lucent window frame within a corona of innumerable milk-white beads, after completing a diurnal lap from morning to night around the room, is to come to the pane anew: to see a portal, a reflecting pool, perhaps even an answer to that since abandoned prayer.

—Tara Anne Dalbow



viðsýni, 2019-20
325 hours of labor, organza, sterling silver, thread, silk,
beads, sequins, pearls, opals, crystals
7 x 10.5 x 1.5 in



le foin, 2021
71 hours of labor, brass, organza, thread, beads, gold
9 x 4.5 x 0.25 in



Duin, 2019
240 hours of labor, brass, organza, thread, sequins, beads
6 x 8.5 x 2 in



a sign, 2023

232 hours of labor, copper, organza, beads, silk, sequins,
thread, crystals, peridot, labradorite, iolite, quartz, garnets,
pearls, carnelian, ruby, sterling silver

5.125 x 3.25 x 0.25 in



If, on a clear day, 2014
50 hours of labor, resin, fishing line
dimensions variable



Red Rocks, 2019-2024

790 hours of labor, organza, beads, crystals, sequins, silk, suede,
cotton, wool, labradorite, opals, copper, pearls, garnet, coral, iolite,
peridot, smoky quartz, carnelian, ruby, sapphire

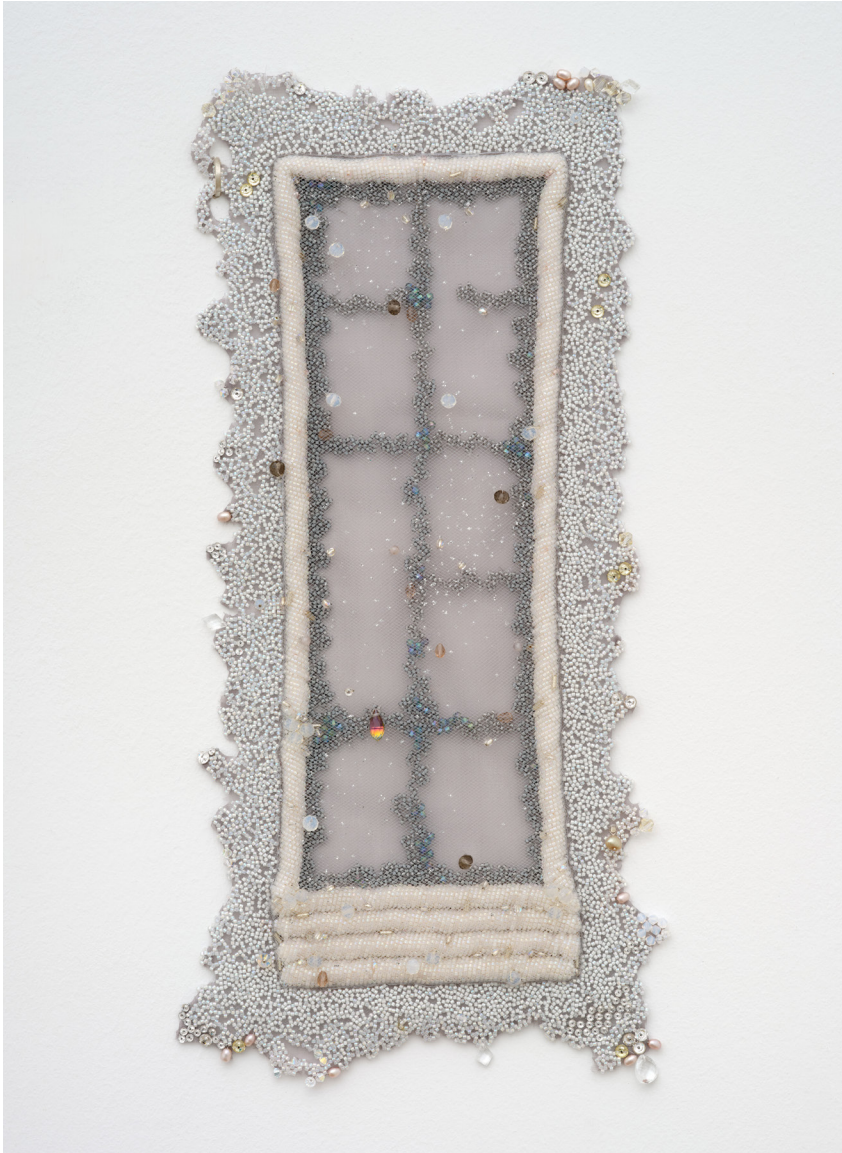
Dimensions variable

10.25 x 13 x 0.5 in



at 16h00, 2021
90 hours of labor, copper, organza, sequins, beads,
tubes, crystals, silk, bronze, pearls
9 x 4.5 x 0.25 in





Salt, 2024
109 hours of labor, tulle, organza, beads, crystals,
pearls, sterling silver
15.5 x 8 x 0.25 in





fico, 2019
180 hours of labor, copper, silk-satin, silk, beads, garnets, pearls, crystals, thread
4 x 3.75 x 1.5 in





hung the moon, 2024
120 hours of labor, sterling silver
7.5 x 7 x 1.5 in



Is it the same for you? 2023-24
140 hours of labor, sterling silver, brass, organza, beads,
crystals, pearls, opals, quartz, tourmaline
12.25 x 8.5" x 1.25 in



twinkle i., 2024
6 hours of labor, sterling silver
2.75 x 2.25 x 0.25 in



twinkle ii., 2024
6 hours of labor, brass, sterling silver, pearl
4.25 x 4.25 x .25 in





The OG Computer, 2024
90 hours of labor, copper, silk, cotton
4.25 x 4.25 x 0.125 in



Till, 2024

45 hours of labor, brass, copper, organza, beads, tubes, gold, crystals

4.25 x 4.25 x 0.125 in



Filler, 2024

78 hours of labor, sterling silver, copper, organza, silk, pearls

4.25 x 4.25 x 0.125 in

Artist Bio

CARO (b. 1992) is a multidisciplinary craft artist based in London, UK. They received their BA in Metalsmithing from Earlham College and continued onto Embroidery School at École Lesage in Paris, France. CARO then learned bobbin lacemaking at the Textile Arts Center in Brooklyn, NY. Currently they are pursuing their Masters in Jewelry and Metalsmithing at the Royal College of Art. They blend hand embroidered tapestries with hand fabricated metal framework to recall a sense of the sacred and to preserve the cultural identity of craft. CARO has exhibited their work internationally.

Recent group shows include Aurora Borealis at Abigail Olgilvy, LA; Whisper In The Roots, My Pet Ram, NYC, NY; Eternal Flame, Fredericks & Mae, NYC, NY, Red Thread, Latitude Gallery, NYC, NY; Summer Crush, Arden Asbaek, Copenhagen, DK; Act II, Yellow Cube Gallery, Paris, FR; & Craft in Contemporary Art, Site: Brooklyn, NY.