

SEPTEMBER

I Was Here

March 15 - May 11, 2025

Kesewa Aboah

kg

Emma Safir

Jen Simms

Odessa Straub

Amas Verdâtre

SEPTEMBER is excited to present, *I was here*, an exhibition of six artists working with textile and figuration. Through printing, stitching, knitting, weaving and casting, forms of portraiture emerge. Revisited often and becoming a series of works within each artist's practice, these are rhythmic reflections of indexical worlds. Everything is subjective and relative. Figures and forms are floating in groundless space, context free, as if meaning is moving from the inside out. Playful, erotic, and solitudinal, the works bear autobiographic traces. Ultimately, the portrait is the maker.

Kesewa Aboah (she/her) lathers bodies in pigment and oil, a preparation for the skin to be pressed onto large sheets of fabric-like paper. The intimate performance between body and ground happens in an empty room, where vulnerability is absorbed by the permission of giving into the process. Ink pushes onto and bleeds into the flat surface, capturing monochromatic traces of movement and stillness. The sheets of densely embroidered paper meet and overlap into one composition indexing the curves, rolls and pockets of the body's impressions. Throughout this intuitive process, ripples and tears occur, like scars that carry lived moments.

Kg's (they/them) diaristic assemblages are made with collected detritus, offerings from their past affectionately composed in alterlike arrangements that resemble faces. kg's materials hold sentimental value; used up, gifted, accumulated, left over or treasured, these objects reflect and consider people, places and moments that have passed. These items are held, balanced, embedded and framed in tenderly woven spaces. Kg's poetic material lists describe mediums and life lived. Their works exist as time pieces, narratives that reflect the mundanity and profundity of being. Where do I exist now? How did I arrive? What have I held onto?

Emma Safir's (she/her) practice is fueled by the exploration of material to create images and surfaces that challenge perception. Her deep interest in the transitional nature of image and form is embedded in jewel-like metal reliefs which include her girandoles. Pewter casts of thrifted doilies and smocked fabric are welded together to create abstracted baroque forms that frame and hold reflective thread woven through their center. These portals are mirrorlike in both their oval form and reflective nature. The interior webbing catches glints of light, suggesting an image, but offering only the anticipation of one.

Jen Simms's (she/her) portraits, *Feelings of Being*, were privately made over the course of two years, 2021-2023. Holding spontaneous reactions to an overload of emotions, often in conflict with one another, each face is highly expressive and singular. Simm's subjects have no motives save to exist as exterior versions of interior states of being. While the architecture of the traditional portrait provided a framework, her weavings were conceived with limited predetermination. Projected back to the viewer are strange and sometimes uncomfortable moments where words cannot express the feelings of being emotionally fragile in a beautiful and chaotic world. The yarns were thrifted and gathered, a common material approach throughout the show.

Odessa Straub's (they/them) new body of work has been created over a period of four years, beginning during their travels by train or bus and completed for the occasion of this show. The materials and techniques are transportable and take shape over extended hours of highly concentrated effort. The development of each intricate work requires stillness from their body, and a built tolerance for slowness. The rhythmic process of beading lulls Odessa into a dreamlike space, providing an escape from the body and mind. This is the intention of the work, and the results are a wonderful amalgamation of familiar subjects in their practice with new curious forms. For Odessa, the figures are afterimages burned into their head, formed bead by bead: devils, creatures, animals, and objects all in states of animation- floating, walking, flying, escaping, resting.

Amas Verdâtre's (she/her) balacavas are invitations. These works are intended for masking and transforming the wearer into fierce autonomous avatars, often of an animalistic nature. The intricate webbing of wool is jeweled with hand-cut linked chainmail, beads, and spikes that frame the face, leaving only the eyes uncovered. The act of wearing these headdresses is performative but also summons hidden parts of oneself. Amas takes the solo act of crocheting, knitting, and jewelery to make public-facing skins that activate playfulness, protection and empowerment.

For general inquiries please contact, kristen@septembergallery.com, for press inquiries please contact dominique@septembergallery.com. Our shared entrance is located at the Northside of The Knitting Mill via the parking lot. The gallery is located on the third floor of the building and is accessible via stairs and elevator.