

CANDIDA
STEVENS
GALLERY

Collect 2024

For Collect 2024 Candida Stevens Gallery is proud to present the work of four artists who have each responded to questions of 'the self'. From representations of consciousness in Anthony Steven's embroideries, connections made with others in Alice Kettle's icon-portraits, portals to the subconscious in Cecilia Charlton's weavings, to the ever-evolving nature of Oriel Zinaburg's ceramic self-portraits, each artist has explored how their medium can be used to express the individuality, knowledge and values that make us who we are. Displaying the unique styles of each of these artists, the results are a colourful and powerful display of the ways in which art can embody the self and the self can be embodied in art.

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Anthony Stevens



Anthony Stevens is a self-taught textile artist, whose practice is intertwined with the meditative and Buddhist rituals that inform his daily life. For Stevens, creating textiles provides a means through which he can visualise and explore questions of ourselves and our shared existence. His new work, *Every Morning There Is The Journey To My Heart*, is based on the writing exercise known as 'Morning Pages'. The idea behind this practice is to sit and write a stream of consciousness of whatever comes to mind before the start of the day. Retaining the visual immediacy of handwritten notes, complete with crossed-out words, scribbles and cartoon-like imagery, Stevens has used hand embroidery and appliqué on recycled textiles to recreate thirteen 'pages' of what was on his mind one morning. Eight white pages, his first thoughts of the day, are arranged in a circle whilst five yellow pages comprising thoughts from after chanting, form a cross through the piece. Through this arrangement we feel the way in which Stevens' thoughts seem to swirl and bubble up to the surface of his consciousness, existential concerns colliding with playful phrases and slogans to create a series of works that are at once humorous and thought-provoking. Concerns for the impact of technology and power dynamics on our individuality and connection with each other are balanced by reminders that hope, beauty and love remain. Whilst each page is individual, it is when viewed together that these thoughts are communicated most powerfully, mirroring the artist's belief that our understanding of ourselves is strengthened by our understanding of the relationships we have with the world.

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Alice Kettle



Alice Kettle
Blue, 2023
Thread on linen
44 x 37 cm



Alice Kettle
Silver Pink, 2024
Thread on linen
52 x 29 cm

Alice Kettle's latest series, *In the Midst of the Crowd*, explores the icon as a form of portraiture. Originally created and used as objects of devotion in Eastern Orthodoxy, icons were created as portals to a sacred space and as a means for people to connect with God. Like religious icons, Kettle's works are not intended as representational images, but as a means for the artist to connect with and pay tribute to her chosen subjects. Each chosen in recognition of the adversity they have faced and resilience they have shown during the ongoing wars across the world, they range from individuals the artist is close with to those who she has never met: "Using stitch to empower and create communities across cultures, I honour those I see through the lens of the media." To the artist, the creation of these portraits is an intense process through which the use of stitch, tussling and distorting the human image, can be seen as a metaphor for the complexity of emotions people experience during times of crisis. As each face emerges from the threads, the portraits have a transformative quality, encapsulating the inspiration drawn from each subject in a manner that echoes the power of the icon. For Kettle, "These works stand as a visual testament to the strength, and transformative power found in those I have encountered. As a collection they form a congregation, a crowd in conversation with each other."

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Oriel Zinaburg



Oriel Zinaburg
A L I #380, 2023
Porcelain, Glaze and oxide
50 x 43 x 43 cm



Oriel Zinaburg
A L I #366, 2023
Stoneware, Glaze and oxide
57 x 40 x 38 cm

Oriel Zinaburg is a ceramicist whose practice is centred on the Japanese aesthetic of 'wabi sabi', an appreciation for beauty in nature as transient and imperfect. Combining the techniques of press-moulding and hand-building, he explores the relationship between mathematical construction and the intuitive process of art-making in the creation of his vessels. *Continuous Self Portrait* is a series inspired by Renato Bertelli's 'Continuous Profile' (1933), a ceramic sculpture showing the distinctive profile of Benito Mussolini in 360 degree form. Approved as an official portrait, this futuristic sculpture presents the Italian dictator looking in all directions and appears more as a machine-made object than a man. Zinaburg's starting point for his work was to use three images of his own profile from when he was ten years old, thirty years old and imagined as an elderly man, to create plaster moulds of his own past, present and future. Using only these moulds, the artist then began making and re-making various configurations of these profiles in three-dimensional form. Tearing, folding and distorting the clay, the artist has built each vessel bit by bit, the folds of the clay dictating their final shapes. Colourful glazes and oxides envelop the vessels, representative of the fluidity of emotions we experience throughout life, adding to the complexity of the surfaces and at times obscuring the forms below. Creating tension between control and chance, Zinaburg's vessels are mysterious and tactile objects that draw the viewer in through their size, irregularities and unpredictable forms.

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Cecilia Charlton



Cecilia Charlton

indigo sky circled by a thread that sometimes changes color along the way, 2023

Hand-embroidered wool yarn and acrylic paint on canvas over painted and gilded panel
90 x 67 cm

Cecilia Charlton's latest series of weavings are a collection of works that she describes as 'psychic portraits'. The compositions take the form of portals, a potential mode of transition from one place to another, in this instance as representations of the subconscious. The series draws on abstract tantric paintings from Rajasthan, produced by Indian artists as visualisation aides in Hindu meditation practices. The idea is to focus on an image for a sustained period, allowing the pattern to fill one's mind and empty it of other thoughts. For Charlton, this is heightened by the fact that weaving such complex, geometric patterns becomes a kind of meditative process too and, in this sense, her work can be seen to embody something of the artist's sense of self. Writing about the Indian tantric images, French poet Franck Andre Jamme noted they 'have a vibratory beauty that inspires acute attention' and that in the paintings 'the spiritual and the aesthetic, the ancient and the modern converge'. It is this feeling of transcendence that Charlton also hopes the audience will feel when looking at her work. At the centre of each weaving, portals outlined by undulating patterns seem to pulsate and draw the viewer beyond the surface of the canvas. In doing so, they invite us to access our subconscious and from there perhaps to a deeper understanding of ourselves.