

Frances Goodman

OCT 26 - DEC 23, 2017

Beneath Her

OPENING OCTOBER 26, 6-8PM



Wide Eyed, 2017. Hand-stitched sequins on canvas. 51.5 x 73.6 inches

Richard Taittinger Gallery is thrilled to present *Beneath Her*, the second solo exhibition by South African artist, **Frances Goodman**.

What is a body? Skin, bones, nails, [hair, fat, flesh, muscle], nerves... Is that really all a body is? Nothing, not even something as unique, diverse and personal and ever changing as our bodies lives in a vacuum. The way we shape and decorate and nurture our bodies, the way that we dismantle our bodies into disparate parts, choosing favorites and unfavorites. Our bodies are products and reflections of our world. No body is uniform: each one carries its own histories; it holds our traumas and our triumphs... We do things to make our bodies feel good and we do things to make other people feel good about our bodies. The world is always seemingly demanding more from our bodies than we can ever give. Culture: insatiable for perfection. It's not really about us, is it? Taken from The Heart Podcast: <http://www.theheartradio.org/bodies/its-not-me-its-you>

In *Beneath Her*, Frances Goodman continues her ongoing conversation around female identity and autonomy, this time considering the notion of 'the surface', and what lies beneath. For the purposes of the exhibition the surface not only refers to the skin, it also alludes to the way a woman presents herself to the world, the image she wishes to portray and the lengths she will go to maintain and perfect the exterior; whilst the 'beneath' is both the flesh and bones under the skin as well as the complexity of character and the time, effort and exertion that goes into the 'making' of a woman.

Goodman has chosen to work with an array of historical crafting techniques such as quilting, crochet and embroidery to explore these motifs. However, she has taken these traditionally homely and domestic pastimes and has, in keeping with historical and present feminist craft art practices, subverted them. Goodman's quilts and crumpled sheets are made from richly colored acrylic nails, in primarily deep reds and purples, which mimic body tissue and look more like the flesh revealed when the skin is pulled back during plastic surgery, than the quaint quilts we cover ourselves in on a cold night.

Her massive installation, *Comforter*, which is the culmination of months of intensive crocheting wool of red and maroon hues, is more likely to swallow or smother the viewer than it is to console, warm and caress.

And finally, Goodman's homage to the intricate and painstaking pastime of hand embroidery is taken to the level of the sublime with her extravagant portraits of women, all made in glittering sequins. Here, she reveals the woman; or rather she re-stitches the surface/skin to conceal the unraveling reds that lie beneath. However, due to the nature of the process and materials used, the surface becomes a mirage, the image refuses to hold.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Frances Goodman (b. 1975) obtained her Master of Fine Arts Degree from Goldsmiths College at the University of London in 2000, and holds a Laureateship from the Hoger Instituut voor Schone Kunsten in Belgium. Her work is featured in collections of the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa (MOCAA), South Africa; the National Museum of African Art at the Smithsonian Institute, USA; the Sindika Dokolo African Collection of Contemporary Art; and the Chase Manhattan Collection, USA. Goodman was a recipient of the Cecily Brown Fellowship for Outstanding Woman Artists in 2014 and took part in The Fountainhead Residency Programme in the USA, in 2015. Notable exhibitions include: *Le jour qui vient* (The Day That Comes), at Galeries Lafayette in Paris, France in 2017 and *The Seven Deadly Sins from Durer to Nauman*, Zentrum Paul Klee and Kunstmuseum Bern, Switzerland in 2010. *The Divine Comedy: Heaven, Purgatory and Hell Revisited By Contemporary African Artists*, a travelling exhibition curated by Simon Njami, initially at Museum für Mordern Kunst, Germany in 2014, concluded at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington D.C.

FOR PRESS INQUIRIES

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#francesgoodman #beneathher

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