

FabriCollage

Organized with The Artists Loop, Curated by PNINA PRESSBURGER

Richard Bradley, Mollie Marie Conlee, Carol Easton, Miron Kiselev,
Fernando Mondragón, Laura Petrovich-Cheney, Pnina Pressburger

The Gallery at City Hall
25 Dorrance Street, Providence, Rhode Island
May 15-August 18, 2025
Reception May 15, 2024 from 4:30–6 PM

Curatorial Statement from Pnina Pressburger:

FabriCollage was inspired by my “Threading for Survival” series of artistic interpretations of the historical transition from making nets -- a survival skill/tool -- to creating lace, a skill that provides economic survival.

Artists submitted works that included fabric as an element in their collage. Additional artists were invited to complement ideas of survival, hope, repair, comfort and healing.

Richard Bradley included a piece of old “Martha Washington” bedspread in his collage. The original weave pattern for this bedspread was lost, but survived and resurrected in 1940 at Bates Manufacturing to re-create the bedspread.

Also, with Richard’s tribute to women artists we continue to question why depicting and including fabric or traditional feminine craft in art is considered craft. By referencing Judy Chicago, Richard brings our attention to her attempt to elevate traditional craft such as embroidery to a status of fine art.

“Expressive Repair” by Miron Kiselev, which includes embroidery, brings attention to the idea of repair that is a never-ending process. Repairing our garment extends to repairing our bodies, our relationships and our world - Tikkun Olam as it translates to repair the world in the Hebrew language. Mollie Conlee’s work, inspired by quilts that bring comfort and rest, come to mind. With comfort, we hope for a way out of despair and healing. The work by Fernando Mondragón suggests that there is hope. Then the works of Carol Easton and Laura Petrovich-Cheney give us a glimpse into the restorative power of creating art. Carol’s red dress was created with a Saori weaving method, a Japanese freestyle weaving approach where imperfections are accepted. Laura repurposed materials in her work, offering us the opportunity to imaging survival of materials, especially fabric, in artwork.

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* For more information on the Artists Loop visit www.facebook.com/TheArtistsLoop/

Artist Bios

Richard Bradley

Richard Bradley has a fascination with all things sparkly. As a teenager he started collecting vintage costume jewelry, as his natural inclination was to explore how and where such beautiful objects were made. After graduating from RISD, he began his career as a jewelry designer for manufacturers that opened in the 1930's and 40's, and learned many of the lost techniques from some of the industry's greatest innovators. Bradley continues to apply old industrial techniques to create fine art, automata pieces and sculptural expressions. He has been exploring 2D works on paper as well as fiber art, with a focus on color theory, detail and sparkle, as embellishment is a dominant part of his nature.

Mollie Marie Conlee

Mollie Conlee is a multidisciplinary artist based in Western Massachusetts. Working across mosaic, collage, textile, sculpture, and performance, her work explores the intersections of the physical and spiritual in everyday life. She studied Industrial Design at the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD).

Carol Easton

Carol Easton began her exploration of the fiber arts in the early 1970s. As a graduate student in Painting, she did not consider the brush an extension of her hand. She wanted to "hold the color in my hands". Since then, she has experimented with several looms and techniques including spinning and dying. She found her expression in a method referred to as free style weaving: "No mistakes, just happy accidents and opportunities."

Miron Kiselev

Miron Kiselev is a New York City-Based artist. Born in USA, Kiselev lived in Russia in a family of Sculptors and Psychologists until 2011. At age 16, he moved to Providence to live with his grandparents and became inspired by the local graffiti scene. Kiselev received his BFA from RISD in 2019, and has exhibited his work in Moscow, Providence and New York. Kiselev created the "Expressive Repair" workshop in 2018 for the RISD Museum, and has been consistently offering it since, as part of New York Textile Month, Atlantic Antic, and Earth Day. Kiselev's artistic practice is deeply rooted in his personal obsession with graffiti and a search for a comprehensible language to promote a more sustainable approach to individualistic expression through fashion. He firmly believes that it is a personal responsibility for prolonging the life of garments, in order to minimize the waste.

Fernando Mondragón

Fernando Mondragón, born in Monterrey, Mexico, is a Providence, RI based artist and entrepreneur. He has worked as a researcher in various domains, investigating how information artifacts are designed and their shortcomings for serving human experiences. He began practicing as a painter and writer after he moved to Rhode Island in 2023, and he works primarily with pastel oil, ink and charcoal. These mediums have allowed him to begin exploring figurative art. Through elements such as pinecones, leaves, flowers, mythological creatures, and human eyes, he has been able to play and learn about colors, textures, shapes, and proportions. Often transposing these figures over different surfaces, he has also been able to examine them for their symbolism and ability to represent experiences away from the constraints of language. He earned a PhD in Civil Engineering from The University of Texas at Austin.

Laura Petrovich-Cheney

Laura Petrovich-Cheney is a visual artist working at the intersection of textiles, woodworking, and the personal impacts of climate change. Drawing from traditional women's crafts like quilting, needlework, and weaving, she repurposes salvaged materials to explore memory, identity, and environmental narratives through sculpture. Her work has been shown nationally in solo exhibitions including *Against the Grain* (Berea College, KY), *Memory and Material* (International Quilt Museum, NE), and *What Remains* (Fuller Craft Museum, MA), as well as group exhibitions such as *Radical Tradition: American Quilts and Social Change* (Toledo Museum of Art, OH) and *Pattern Pieces* with Kaffe Fassett (James A. Michener Art Museum, PA). Her latest show, *Weathered Shapes, Wooden Quilts*, was recently on view at the Boston Children's Museum. Featured in publications like *The Boston Globe*, *American Craft*, *Uppercase*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, and on NPR, Petrovich-Cheney's work also appeared on the Summer 2023 cover of *James Renwick Alliance Quarterly Craft*. Her honors include grants from the NEA, National Park Service, Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, Boston Society of Arts and Crafts, and the Barbara Deming Memorial Fund, along with fellowships from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts (2017) and the Massachusetts Cultural Council (2021). Petrovich-Cheney teaches and leads workshops nationwide. She holds degrees from Dickinson College (BA), Drexel University (MS), and Moore College of Art and Design (MFA), and lives in Marblehead, MA, with her husband, a cat, a dog, and honeybees.

Pnina Pressburger

Pnina Pressburger is an artist and independent Curator who grew up in Jerusalem, Israel, where she attended Hebrew University. Ever since she moved to Providence, she has been developing her skills in artistic expression by enrolling in various art classes offered in the city, including classes in the Continuing Education program at the Rhode Island School of Design. Following her solo exhibition titled "Threading for Survival" at the Rochambeau Library, Pnina was the curator for a community-wide textile exhibit titled "Netting to Knitting" in the Community Room of the Rochambeau Library. This curatorial experience led Pnina to found and develop the Artists Loop program.

LIST OF WORKS

Richard Bradley

Martha, Judy and Georgia, 23"h x16"w; Antique bed spread, assorted new and used fabric, Ceramic animal skull, Copper wire, Glass beads, Rhinestone passementerie trim. \$500



I let the materials guide the outcome of a piece. I started with an old "Martha Washington" bedspread. I love how decorative household items are named after famous women. As I sewed and manipulated different fabrics, I unconsciously created forms which reminded me of "The Dinner Party" by Judy Chicago. Gender identity has been a hot topic lately and it's so curious to me that objects, colors and even fragrances are assigned genders. As a child, I was discouraged from learning to sew due to my gender. But now I'm a grown-up and can do whatever I want. Still, I can't help but reference the craft to its feminine history. This got me thinking about women in the arts, in particular Georgia O'Keefe. A few years ago, I went to a retrospective and, although it had a wonderful selection of her work her clothing was on display as well because the theme was about her fashion sense, not something I'd expect for a painter's retrospective.

This is a fiber art tribute to three female icons, one domestic, one feminist and one modernist. Done by a man who questions traditional gender roles, crosses over and adapts to a new iconography.

Mollie Marie Conlee

7 (Reverse), 10 in x 10 in; Paper, fabric, lenticular plastic, and illusion plastic on wood panel



Basket, 10 in x 14 in; Paper, fabric, lenticular plastic, and illusion plastic on wood panel.



My lenticular mosaic artworks combine tactile materials such as fabric + paper with light-dependent materials, such as lenticular film. These works are inspired by mosaic tilework, inlay woodwork, quilting, and the interplay of light and material that result in meaning and memory. By highlighting the contrast and similarities of these materials, I am stimulating new ideas in the mind of the viewer who sees a single image portrayed with alternating media.

Carol Easton

Red Dress



This fabric is composed of cotton, linen and wool. It is woven in a free style which is influenced by the SAORI philosophy of weaving.

“SA” of SAORI has the same meaning as the first syllable of the Zen word “SAI”. It means everything has its own individual dignity. “ORI” means weaving in Japanese.

*SAORI weaving is not merely the act of weaving a piece of cloth; it is an attempt to identify our true selves.”**

Weaving the fabric for this dress allowed me to experience this philosophy for the first time.

** Quote from Saori Studio Fun*

Miron Kiselev

Expressive Repair 1-4



“Expressive repair” was created as a part of a show at the RISD Museum called “Repair and Design Futures” (2018–19). A yearlong exhibition that investigated mending as material intervention, metaphor and call to action.

Stemming from my background as a graffiti writer, I want to bring the same expressive freedom found in graffiti to fashion. I urge people to repair and modify their clothes, because it makes their clothes unique and creates a special relationship between the garment and the wearer, challenging our modern desire to throw clothes away. One of my main efforts in my career as a fashion student, and as a maker today, is to confront and challenge the fast fashion industry.

Sewing is a meditative process that has ability to slow down time.

Graffiti Carpet



I used the projection of a sketch on the wall to vertically draft the pattern, with over 150 pattern pieces through background, filling and outline.

All of the fabrics were sourced from RI recycling Center and fabric remnants section at Lorraine’s. 100% recycled plastic bottles (tan felt) for more weight, and a neoprene diving dry suit repurposed for outline, gave the piece some structure to hold the letter shapes. Piece may look refined from far, but up close unveils the roughness in construction. In the middle there is a welt opening, as a metaphor for a window, also making a piece wearable.

Fernando Mondragón

Asterión, la bestia humana (Asterion, the Human Beast), 30 x 24", Pastel oil, charcoal, soluble wax, ink, plaster, fabric, glue.



Inspired by Antonio Fillol Granell's The Human Beast, this piece looks at the Minotaur (Asterion) outside of activities described in mythology. Sitting in a room within the labyrinth, the demi-bull displays less bestiality and more human reaction to enclosure + isolation.

The heterotopic eyes over the sea in the window, and the references to 80s music in The Cure, Depeche Mode, and Caifanes are personal to my life.

Inspired by Maggi Hambling's Minotaur paintings, this Asterion became blue as I progressed. Originally conceived as a grisaille composition, the background became colorful; the materials realistic-- the burnt fabric in the fire pit and the broken brick wall made of plaster--accompanying the Minotaur in his introspection and pain.

Laura Petrovich-Cheney

Prairie Sky



30" x 30" x 1", Salvaged barn wood, Salvaged wood, Metal chain, recycled wool hand-woven fabric, Leather. \$4500

Prairie Sky is made from a combination of materials: those evoking disappearing farmland -- salvaged barn wood telling stories of vanishing rural communities -- and from places still holding on -- horse reins and branded wood; my handwoven wool sourced from a woman-owned alpaca and sheep farm, softening the wood's hardness, echoing the hands that once labored, mended, and made. Each material holds a story of resilience and change, reframed into a gesture of care and connection between land, animals, and people.

Bella's Delight



15" x 15" x 1", Salvaged wood, antique doily, acrylic painted stencils. \$1,000

As I prepare for my interview with Drexel University's alumni magazine, I find myself remembering one of my favorite professors, Bella. She immigrated from Russia in her early twenties. When she taught me, she was nearly sixty, her accent still strong and thick. Dressed in black wool and carrying the faint scent of early April lilacs, Bella emphasized the joy found in beautiful patterns and designs. She believed in taking time to do things well—with thoughtfulness and deep appreciation for the craftsperson's skill.

PNINA PRESSBURGER

Threading for Survival – Golden Diamond and Lace,
24"w X 36"h, Acrylic and fabric
on canvas. \$700



Threading for Survival – From Net to Lace,
24"w X 18"h, Oil on canvas and fabric. \$700



Threading for Survival is a series of artistic interpretations of the historical transition from making nets, a survival skill/tool, to creating lace, a skill that provides economic survival and adornment.

Netting has survived since the dawn of civilization in many forms -- from a butterfly net to tambour lace. Contemporary lace making can be traced back to net making, which evolved from primitive survival to modern adornment. In its evolution from nets to lace, the art and craft have survived through centuries as a means to economic survival.