

# Katarina Riesing

## "She Shed"

April 20 - May 27, 2023



**Asya Geisberg Gallery** is pleased to present "She Shed", our second solo exhibition with **Katarina Riesing**. Referring to both the female counterpart to the Man Cave where a woman can be herself, and the shedding of skin, clothes, masks, or burdens, "She Shed" is a group of quieter works nonetheless fraught with intensity. Where earlier pieces cropped body parts and pushed them to the frame edge in order to play with the intersection of the sexy and the grotesque, Riesing's new works on silk focus on the body submerged in its surroundings. Rather than sit atop the stretched surface as paint would, her figures are hand painted with dye and painstakingly sewn into the silk itself, seeping through to the other side and becoming an indelible part of the fabric. Similarly, another merging takes place as Riesing plays optical tricks, and the body is intertwined or confused with the spaces it inhabits.

Partly inspired by two works of feminist literature, "The Yellow Wallpaper" by Charlotte Perkins Gilman and Carmen Maria Machado's "Real Women Have Bodies", the figures in Riesing's newest works either fight to emerge or purposefully camouflage themselves. Patterns and veils, some painted in dye and others carefully stitched, form a mysterious plane. Are the patterns tattooed onto skin, or have the women somehow slipped behind reality? In "The Yellow Wallpaper", a woman confined to bed rest becomes both entranced and repulsed by the wallpaper of her room, and sees a figure at night behind the pattern, emerging only to disappear again. "She is all the time trying to climb through. But nobody could climb through that pattern – it strangles so." In "Grainy" and "The Sitter", women are embedded in embroidered whorls of wood grain, cropped, concealed, and unknown.

In Machado's tale, an epidemic causes women to slowly fade into transparency. The protagonist finds women taking shelter in the gowns of a dress shop; living inside the bodices, slips and skirts of the dresses: "I can see the faded women all bound up in (the dresses), fingers laced tightly through the grommets. I cannot tell if they are holding on for dear life or if they are trapped. The rustling and trembling of the fabric could be weeping or laughter". Similarly the figure in "Shed" holds aloft a diaphanous sheet in a black expanse, a seductive dancer or a prisoner struggling to free herself. The women in "Walkers" wear Riesing's stitching like a skin, while the open shirt in "Part" is suggested only in rich dark dye.

"She Shed" also draws on the artist's own experience with solitude, and the stories we create when we are alone that can teeter between magic and madness. In Riesing's work round bodies emerge from flatness, embroidered patterns materialize the translucent or barely there, and personhood is fleeting. Riesing's probing of coherence and confusion is both gentle and profound, pointing in many directions of introspection, feminist reawakening, and sensuality.

*Katarina Riesing was born in Knoxville, TN and lives and works in Alfred, NY. She received a BA from Smith College, Northampton, MA, and an MA and an MFA from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Solo and two person exhibitions include Ithaca College, NY, Downtown Gallery, Madison, WI, Seligmann Center for the Arts, Chester, NY, SoHo20 Gallery, NY, and an exhibition with Amy Pleasant at University of Tennessee Knoxville, and group exhibitions include Eve Leib Gallery, London, Dinner Gallery, NY, Essex Flowers, NY, Kristin Lorello Gallery, NY, New Discretions, NY, Field Projects, NY, Spring/Break NY, Laney Contemporary, Savannah, GA, and Bertrand Productions, Philadelphia, PA. She has been awarded residencies at Haystack Mountain School of Craft, Maine, Saltonstall Artist Residency, Ithaca, NY, Cite International des Arts Residency, Paris, Icelandic Textile Center, Vermont Studio Center, and New York Artist Residency and Studio Foundation (NARS). Her work has been reviewed in New York Magazine, The Observer, Juxtapoz Magazine, Cool Hunting, and Cornelia Magazine, among others.*



Katarina Riesing  
*Shed, 2023*  
Dye and embroidery on silk  
44h x 34w in



Katarina Riesing  
*Detail: Cinch, 2023*  
Dye on silk  
18h x 13.50w in