

BERGGRUEN

GALLERY

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ELSA HANSEN OLDHAM
Entitled to Love

July 27 – September 8, 2023

Berggruen Gallery is proud to announce *Elsa Hansen Oldham: Entitled to Love*, an exhibition of 21 fiber works. This show marks her first solo exhibition with the gallery. *Elsa Hansen Oldham: Entitled to Love* will be on view from July 27 through September 8, 2023. The gallery will host a reception for the artist on Thursday, July 27, from 5:00 to 7:00 pm.

Elsa Hansen Oldham crafts whimsical textiles adorned with miniature hand-embroidered figures sourced from the realms of history, politics, mythology, and popular culture. Her fiber works span a diverse range of sizes, from delicate small-scale creations to grand quilts. These works combine traditional American needlework with a digitized aesthetic reminiscent of virtual game avatars. By merging the enduring tradition of cross-stitching with the computerized style of her characters, Hansen Oldham harnesses the expressive potential of embroidery as a medium for contemporary storytelling.

Entitled to Love showcases a collection of cleverly nostalgic fiber works that explore the complexities of love, passion, and human connection. The exhibition encompasses two distinct bodies of work, each offering a unique perspective on the artist's explorations of humanity and desire. The first series features large hand-dyed textiles adorned with a solitary princess at their center. Initially born out of a collaboration with her 4-year-old daughter, Poppy, Hansen Oldham's princess works highlight the duality of these archetypal figures, addressing both their uplifting and problematic narratives. In the second series of works, the artist pairs a spectrum of iconic characters to create provocative scenes that comment on current events, relationships, and contemporary culture. Hansen Oldham's compositions celebrate the heritage and interconnectedness of these individuals, navigating the darker themes of their legacies with a playful infusion of humor.

Central to Hansen Oldham's creative process is her use of fine materials, which drew her initially to the practice of cross-stitching. As she hand-stitches her subjects using fine threads of silk, gold, silver, and velvet on hand-dyed Eastern European linen, these elements largely define the artist's meditative technique. Marked by the delicacy of their medium and the thoughtful craftsmanship of the artist's hand, the works featured in *Entitled to Love* establish connections that resonate with our shared humanity and the evolving fabric of society.

Elsa Hansen Oldham was born in 1983 in Louisville, Kentucky. She attended Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, where she studied outdoor recreation and discovered her love of cross-stitching. In 2008, Hansen Oldham took a position as an Urban Park Ranger in Brooklyn, New York, before assuming an assistant role to artist Tom Sachs. Later, during her collaborations with experimental filmmaker Van Neistat, Hansen Oldham embraced cross-stitching as a means to pass the time during the film editing process. Today, her work is featured in various private collections in the U.S. and abroad. The artist currently lives and works in Louisville, Kentucky.

Elsa Hansen Oldham: Entitled to Love, July 27 – September 8, 2023. On view at 10 Hawthorne Street, San Francisco, CA 94105. Images and preview are available upon request. For all inquiries, please contact the gallery by phone at (415) 781-4629 or by email at info@berggruen.com.

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