

**STUDIO MONTCLAIR PRESENTS “STRING THEORY,” AN EXHIBITION VIA
SMI’s INCUBATOR PROGRAM AT ACADEMY SQUARE GALLERIES,
33 PLYMOUTH STREET, MONTCLAIR, NJ 07042**

**October 4 - November 29, 2018
Opening Reception: Thursday, October 4, 6-8pm**

Media Contacts:

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

In “String Theory,” the Studio Montclair Incubator at Academy Square Galleries presents work by three local artists, Zachary Smith, Emma Mierop, and Yana Rodin, whose wildly different aesthetics all connect through the non-traditional medium of yarn and thread to articulate deep associations with both personal and cultural ritual traditions.

Zachary Smith’s painstakingly detailed hand-embroidery takes the viewer along with the artist in his own personal journey to self-realization and sobriety. The meticulous physical act of creating the artwork is both meditative and punishingly detailed. His knots and lines are about the process of creating as an outlet for energies being reigned in and released. The resulting pieces, often on found fabric, read like tight, visual haikus; brief compositions filled with carefully chosen content.

Emma Mierop’s work presents a fascinating counterpoint to Smith’s. Her antiquarian, carnivalesque characters offer a sense of whimsy, revealing a slightly eerie, fantastical dimension all her own. Many of her characters are masked, hinting at a sort of alter ego. Others fuse animals and celestial detail. As opposed to Smith’s hand-stitching, Mierop almost exclusively machine stitches her pieces, making the process more akin to drawing, with thread and machine her medium.

Yana Rodin leaps from traditional use of thread and yarn, manipulating fibers into large-scale hanging installations. Pulling from her Russian lineage, Rodin’s work comments on traditional gender roles, referring to women knitting and sewing. Her brightly-colored geometric sculptures—although at first glance seemingly more related to minimalist abstraction—are inspired by the trajectory of old-world skills and handicraft being replaced and obliterated by mass production and technology.

Each artist employs the same media—thread and string—to extremely different ends, yet all emphasize material as the driving force. Unlike with pen, pencil, or paint; yarn and thread hold a feminine association, traditionally considered to be more of a tool for handicraft and domestic use, rather than an emotionally or psychologically transformative medium. Mierop, Smith, and Rodin all elevate the platform to create work akin to tangible journal entries, simultaneously linking each artist to the past, while also pushing their own narratives forward.

About the Artists

Emma Mierop is an illustrator, machine embroidery artist, and doll maker. She has been working for the past five years at Parcel on Bloomfield Avenue in Montclair, a place that provides her with a great deal of creative inspiration and assignments that allow her to channel her artistic skill sets every day. She is active with her base of private customers, in retail craft shows and with online sales. She also creates dolls and decorative items for wholesale clients both nationally and internationally.

Yana Rodin is a Russian-born interdisciplinary artist with a background in graphic design. Her work combines painting, sculpting and hand weaving to create hanging and immersive installations that connect her to her cultural roots, family lineage, and the natural world. Rodin holds a BFA in Fine Art, Design and Illustration from the Art Institute of Boston. She regularly exhibits her artwork in group shows in New Jersey and New York, and participates in local pop-up markets and indie handmade craft shows in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Montclair, NJ.

Zachary Smith is from New Jersey and studied Communication Design at Carnegie-Mellon University before moving onto a professional career in the medical device field. He currently lives in Rutherford, NJ, and is active with embroidery, music, and multiple local arts organizations in the northern NJ area.

About the Academy Square Guest Mentor

Miriam Jacobs teaches and exhibits as both a fine artist and artisan. She is a certified art teacher, member of Studio Montclair, and has had two pieces published in a book about fabric arts. In addition to doing figurative drawing, Jacobs has been working in and teaching various forms of surface design for many years, including sublimation transfer disperse dye, Shibori (indigo dyeing), and batik. She has taught at the Newark Museum, Montclair Art Museum, Arts Unbound, Deron High School, Sacred Heart of Greenwich, CT, where she had a solo show and teaching residency, and Newark public schools. She recently developed an innovative method of textile design that begins with clay sculptures.

About the Incubator Program

Studio Montclair's Incubator Program, directed by Kathryn Waggener McGuire and Lisa Diamond Rosenthal, seeks to mentor new and emerging artists and provide them with a space for what is often their first solo or small group show exhibit. Miriam Jacobs was guest mentor to Mierop, Rodin, and Smith, helping with installation, concept, and marketing advice.

About Studio Montclair

Studio Montclair Inc. is a non-profit organization of exhibiting professional and emerging artists and others interested in the visual arts. In the past year, it has exhibited more than 280 works of art and has encouraged and interacted with close to 1,000 artists.

Listing Information for the Exhibition

Directors: Kathryn Waggener McGuire and Lisa Diamond Rosenthal

Artists: Emma Mierop, Yana Rodin, Zachary Smith

Exhibition Dates: October 4-November 29, 2018

Gallery: Academy Square Galleries, 33 Plymouth Street, Montclair, NJ 07042

Gallery Hours: Monday to Friday 7am-7pm

Opening Reception: Thursday, October 4, 6-8pm

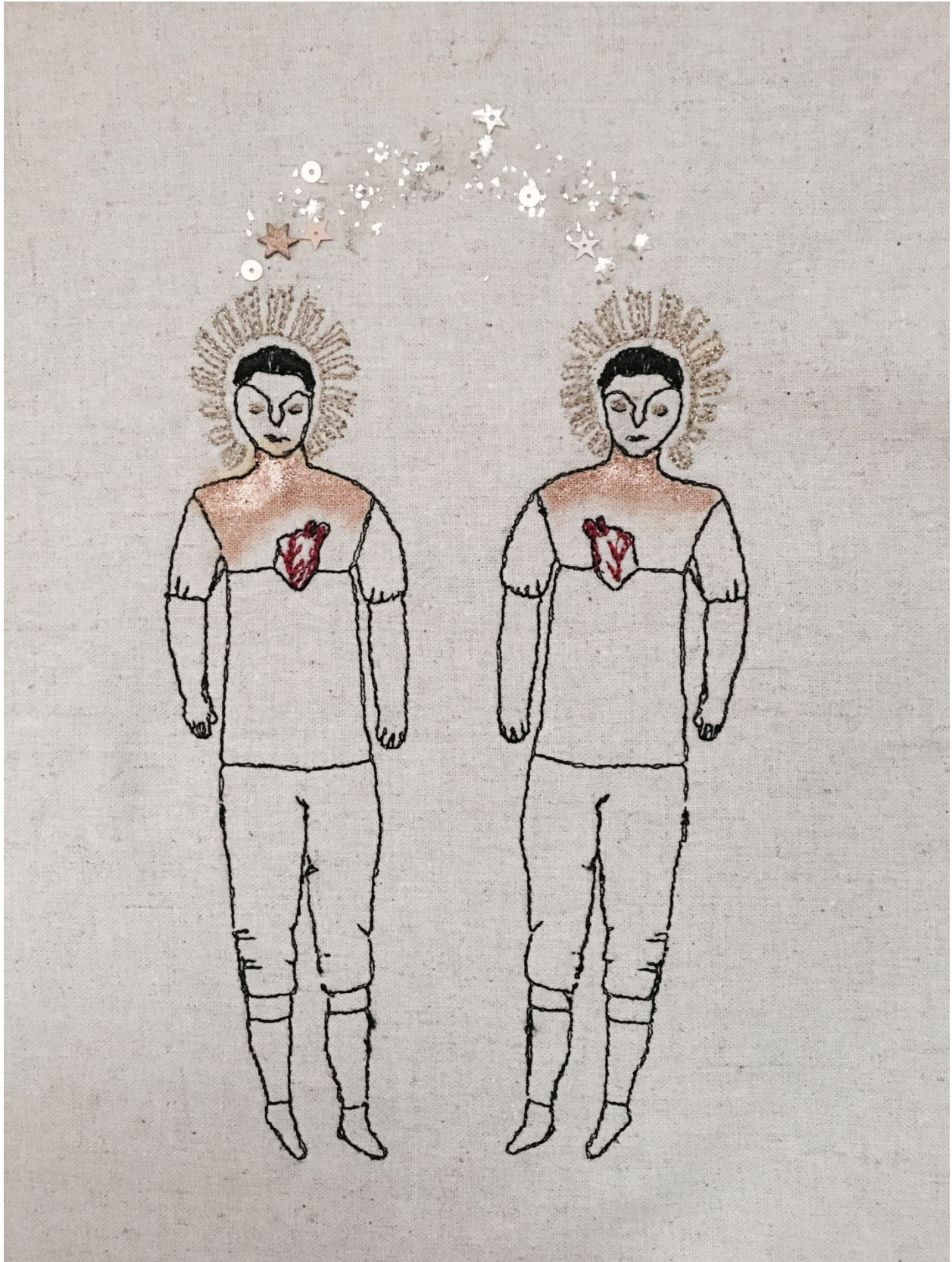
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Images for Press:

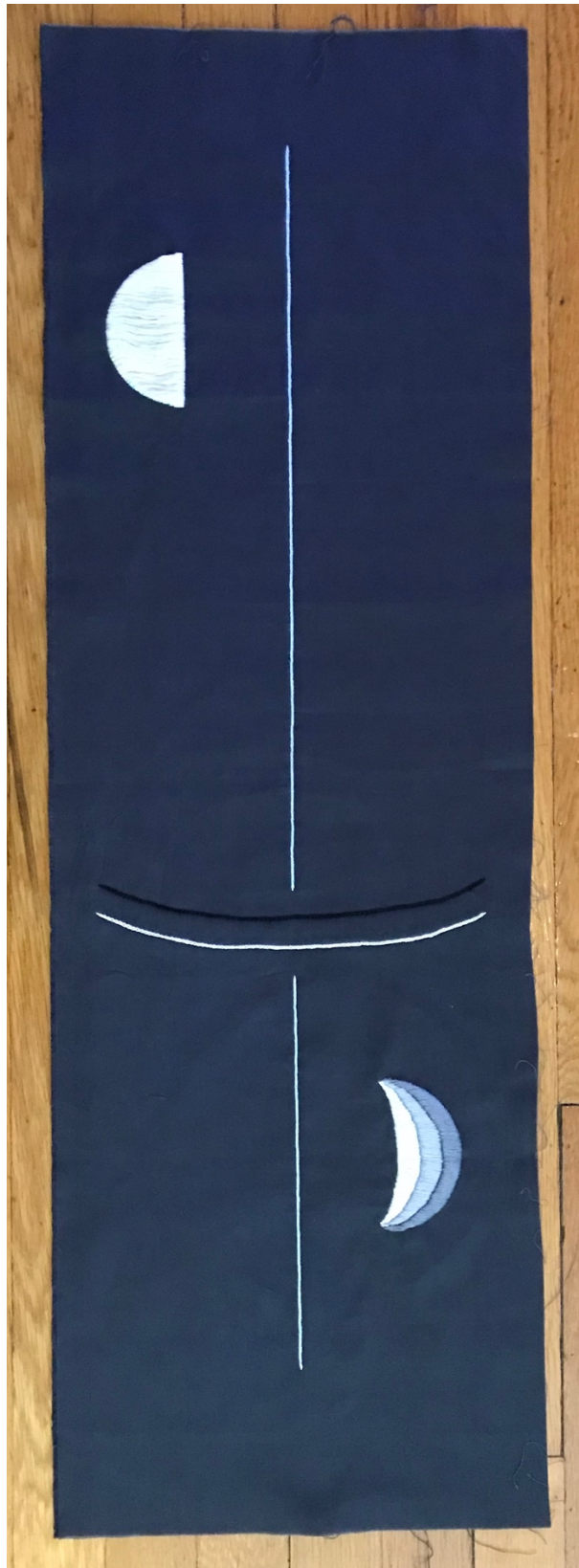
Emma Mierop, *Santos Twins*, mixed media on linen, 2018, 10 x 12"

Zachary Smith, *And I Hallucinated That the Too Large Moon Was a Fake, Being Suspended in the Sky by Human Means*, 2018, fiber, 12 x 32"

Yana Rodin, *Evanescent Aquatica*, 2018, acrylic on polyester nylon



Emma Mierop, *Santos Twins*, mixed media on linen, 2018, 10 x 12"



Zachary Smith, *And I Hallucinated That the Too Large Moon Was a Fake, Being Suspended in the Sky by Human Means*, 2018, fiber, 12 x 32"



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