



READ NEXT: ROSALYN DREXLER (1926–2025)

SUBSCRIBE



Barbara Astman

Corkin Gallery | 7 Tank House Lane Distillery District

October 7, 2023 - November 11, 2023

By Brandon Kaufman

October 20, 2023 12:51 pm



Barbara Astman, *The Woven Stories #33*, 2023, woven cotton, nylon thread, 47 x 53".

Since the 1970s, multimedia artist Barbara Astman has turned technology against itself to probe the construction, consumption, and interpretation of images, especially of women. Astman has found an expression apposite to

[READ NEXT: ROSALYN DREXLER \(1926–2025\)](#)[SUBSCRIBE](#)

mini strips by employing a process that involved transferring newspaper images onto lengths of clear packing tape to weave together.

These forty-seven-by-fifty-three-inch collage-like abstractions are flooded with activity. Recurring motifs include fragmented images of women's visages and colorful pink-and-puce abstractions. Astman abates the works' disparate aspects by organizing them into a grid pattern. In creating rhythm and order, the artist limns the process of mass image production, which, as George Trow wrote about television, seeks to "establish false contexts and to chronicle the unraveling of existing contexts [and] . . . to establish the context of no context and to chronicle it."

Part and sum are mutually constitutive in these tapestries. Astman uses this dialectical relationship in her treatment of images of women. Take *The Woven Stories #33*, 2023, in which the top of a woman's face is distributed over four tiles in the piece's lower-right section. The middle two squares are distorted close-ups of her blue eyes. The images, which were created through a digital-weaving process, appear, paradoxically, both pixelated and tactile. They are further overlaid with green-and-taupe abstractions. Were it not for the ears flanking the subject, the middle of this face might be incomprehensible. Astman exposes the seams that hold together pop culture's images of women, binding distorted and fragmented parts to a more legible, if still monstrous, whole.

Astman's capacious work is suffused with all manner of tension: between subject and object, digital and analog, abstraction and figuration, painterly movement and sculptural heft, context and no context. Indeed, the artist constructs mass media images of women just as she deconstructs them.

Artforum Inbox

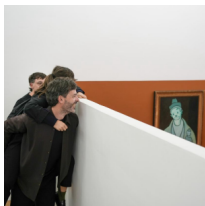
[SIGN UP →](#)

[READ NEXT: ROSALYN DREXLER \(1926–2025\)](#)[SUBSCRIBE](#)

MOST READ



FEATURES
TOOLS OF THE TRADE



DIARY
FULL CIRCLE

PMC

MOST POPULAR

VARIETY

1. Yorgos Lanthimos, Olivia Colman, Ayo Edebiri and Josh O'Connor Among 1,200 Industry Names Pledging Not to Work With Israeli Film Institutions 'Complicit in War Crimes'

2. **billboard**

Here Are All the 2025 MTV VMAs Winners: Full List

THE
Hollywood
REPORTER

3. 'It Ends With Us' Discovery Sparks Lawsuit Against Rebel Wilson in Sprawling Legal Battle Over 'The Deb'

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE

READ NEXT: ROSALYN DREXLER (1926–2025)

SUBSCRIBE



RollingStone

Fran Drescher on the Legend of Bobbi Flekman



VARIETY

Andrew Santino on Hulu Special ‘White Noise’ and Going to ‘War’ With Disney Over Disney Adults...



billboard

Roc Nation CEO Desiree Perez Speaks on the Fight to Bring New York City’s First Casino to...

SUBSCRIBE

SUBSCRIBE

ARCHIVE

CUSTOMER SERVICE

ARTFORUM

LEGAL

FOLLOW US

NEWSLETTERS

Enter your email address

SIGN UP >

By providing your information, you agree to our **Terms of Use** and our **Privacy Policy**. We use vendors that may also process your information to help provide our services.

ARTFORUM

READ NEXT: ROSALYN DREXLER (1926–2025)

SUBSCRIBE

OUR SITES

Artforum is a part of Penske Media Corporation. © 2025 Artforum Media, LLC. All Rights Reserved.