



Overflows

Michelle Drummond • Evelyn Politzer • Andrea Spiridonakos

FAU UNIVERSITY GALLERIES
Florida Atlantic University

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University Galleries, School of the Arts
Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters
Florida Atlantic University
777 Glades Road, Boca Raton, FL 33431
561-297-2661 | www.fau.edu/galleries

University Galleries staff:

Véronique Côté, *Galleries Director, Curator*
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Khanh Ho, *Art Handler*
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Droplets | 2022 | yarn, glue and acrylic paint on wood | 30" x 30" x 10"



Rain Showers | 2023 | yarn, glue and acrylic paint on wood | 6' x 30" x 24



Every Drop Counts | 2017 | hand-dyed yarn, embroidery, repurposed fiber

"Because I Say So" signed Mother Nature | 2022 | reupholstered chair, cotton canvas, acrylic paint and embroidery | 42" x 24" x 46"

Director's Foreword

Worldwide, females spend an astonishing 200 million hours collecting water daily. This relentless burden robs them of time to learn, play, earn an income, rest, and care for their family. Against this backdrop of adversity and resilience, OverFlows brings together three South Florida fiber artists to study water's political, aesthetic, and economic implications. In the hands of artists Michelle Drummond, Evelyn Politzer, and Andrea Spiridonakos, inherently soft materials—yarn, felt, roving, and thread—are transformed into mesmerizing masterpieces that reverberate with hard impact!

Using inherently soft materials - yarn, felt, roving, and thread - Michelle Drummond, Evelyn Politzer, and Andrea Spiridonakos create captivating works that pack a hard punch! Conveying nature's plea for interconnectedness while sensitizing us to the inequalities and privileges around access to natural resources, these three creators use water as a theme, a tool, or a metaphor for movement, power, balance and flow. Their traditionally feminine crafts of weaving, knitting, and felting are strenuous work of repetitive motions resulting in a tapestry of revelations where the labor-intensive processes mirror the toilsome tasks inherent in pursuing justice, equality, and environmental sustainability.

Amidst the contemplative beauty, it is crucial to recognize the global crisis surrounding water cleanliness. Shockingly, over 2 billion people still lack access to safe drinking water, leading to a cascade of health challenges and impeding progress across societies.

As patrons of the arts, we are beckoned to immerse ourselves in the layers of OverFlows, to engage with its stories, and to introspect upon the pivotal issues they so eloquently bring to the forefront. In celebrating the fluidity of artistic expression, we also acknowledge the steadfast resolve required to dismantle barriers and effect meaningful change that can empower women and girls, alleviate their burdens, and pave the way for a future where every individual can partake in the fullness of Mother Nature's offerings.

—Veronique Cote, Galleries Director, Exhibition Curator

Michelle Drummond

The Flow of Water series investigates water's societal and environmental impact in its natural and altered form, bringing light to its importance in sustaining life.

Geography, demographics, and social prominence frequently influence water accessibility and quality. Inaccessibility to safe running water and inadequate or nonexistent infrastructure, including exposure to unsophisticated sewer systems, are prevalent in poor, underdeveloped, and rural areas. As a result, residents from certain communities, mainly women and children, expend an unsurmountable number of hours seeking water sources where contamination is frequent, and water quality for domestic use is deplorable, causing an alarming rate of illness and death.

Michelle Drummond's work draws references from identifiable tools and conduits to water sources that impact the access to safe running water for communities. Her playful, effervescent hues stimulate the senses to increase emotional and physical awareness in the viewer. The whimsical nature of her work conveys a lively but thought-provoking aesthetic while informing the audience of a critical element that is often taken for granted.

Using solely multi-weighted and multicolored fiber and glue, she sculpts and enhances the forms with vibrant hues referencing her Jamaican heritage and stimulating positive emotions despite her challenging topics. Each piece manifests her life experience transcending the precincts of culture, religion, gender, and ethnicity. Although whimsical, Drummond's work conveys optimism, strength, and perseverance while increasing awareness of human survival issues.





Artist Biography

Michelle S. Drummond was born and raised in Kingston, Jamaica. Early on, her humble upbringing influenced her life pursuits, driving her to focus on academia and field hockey to carve her path.

A former Jamaica Women's Hockey Team member, Drummond represented her country in various international events. In 1995, she was the first Jamaican national to receive a scholarship to pursue undergraduate studies at St. Lawrence University, Canton, NY, while representing the University playing field hockey.

Although technically inclined and pursuing a degree in Mathematics, Computer Science & French, she relented to her creativity and experimented with mixed media in her senior year. Manipulating multicolored fiber and acrylic paint on canvas helped her navigate and cope in unfamiliar environments. She later completed her postgraduate education

and a career in Project Management in Washington, D.C. She relocated to South Florida in 2018.

In 2022, the City of West Palm Beach commissioned *The Metamorphosis*, created for the Mandel Public Library, minting Drummond as the first Black female artist to have received this honor.

Drummond's CV includes solo exhibits at the Cultural Council for Palm Beach County (2022), Cornell Art Museum, and Pompano Beach Cultural Center (2020). Participation in Red Dot Art Fair (2018) and Muse Art Fair (2019/2022) during Art Basel, Miami, Art Palm Beach 2019, the Cultural Council for Palm Beach County 2021 Biennial, and Island SPACE Caribbean Museum (2023). She was also featured in *Luxe Magazine*, *Delray Magazine*, *Palm Beach Illustrated*, *The Arts Issue*, *Boca Magazine*, and *Ebony Magazine*.

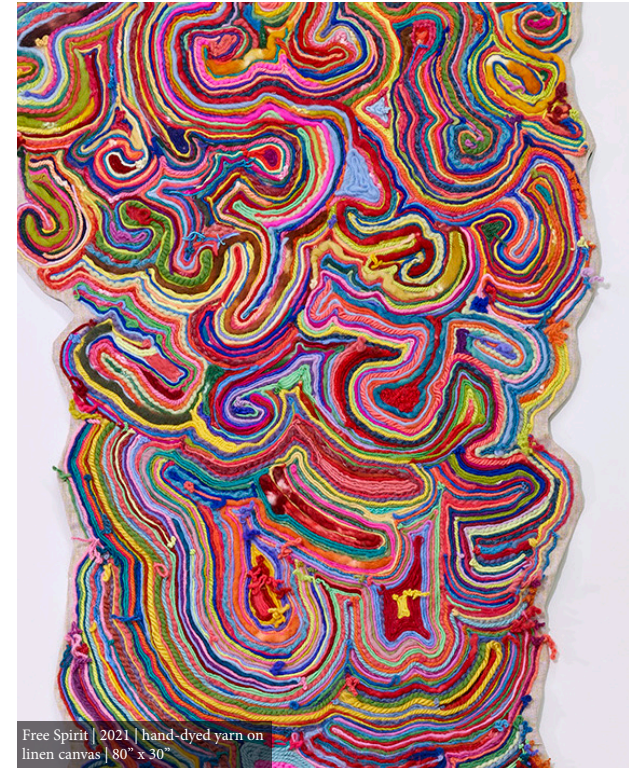
Evelyn Politzer

Fiber artist Evelyn Politzer conveys nature's plea for interconnectedness through yarn, thread, and fabric. Using traditional methods like knitting, crochet, and embroidery, Politzer creates unconventional objects, from small two-dimensional tapestries to monumental sculptural forms and installations. She mainly works with hand-dyed, soft, natural fibers because of their unique tactile quality that allows her to enjoy the passing of time through her sense of touch.

Her practice has roots in her native Uruguay, a country where sheep outnumber people and where wool and other natural fibers are still an essential tool for the livelihood of many, especially women. The relationship between the fibers Politzer works with and the place where she was born evokes the comfort of belonging, no matter where she is.

Womanhood and the fragility of our natural environment are recurring themes in her work. An eternal optimist, Politzer strives to show a sense of the unexpected while treating subjects that touch her deeply, such as motherhood and nature. She connects her mind to her hands and heart by exploring materials, textures, and colors.

The OverFlows exhibition features work from various series spanning many years, including *Overflowing Dreams* (2022), *Walking Through Brick Walls* (2019), *Nesting* (2017-2023), and *Every Drop Counts* (2017). Together, these artworks form a strong narrative of the role of women's work in shaping humanity's access to and stewardship of natural resources.



Free Spirit | 2021 | hand-dyed yarn on
linen canvas | 80" x 30"



Every Drop Counts | 2017 | hand-dyed yarn,
embroidery, repurposed fiber



Artist Biography

Evelyn Politzer was born in Montevideo, Uruguay, and now lives and works in Miami, Florida. Her practice has roots in her native land, a country where sheep outnumber human inhabitants and where wool and other natural fibers continue to be an essential tool for people's livelihood. She received an MFA in Visual Arts (2021) from the Miami International University of Art and Design. She is a 2020 recipient of the Ellies Creator Award by Oolitearts.org.

Working in textile art allows artists to foster community, bringing people together to knit for different positive causes. In that frame of mind, Politzer co-organized Worldwide Knit in Public Day in Miami from 2016 to 2019.

During the 2020 pandemic, Politzer felt compelled to create a platform for others to share their textile art journey. Teaming with two other local artists, FAMA (Fiber Artists-Miami Association) was born to educate about and advance contemporary fiber arts in Miami.

Notable solo exhibitions by Evelyn Politzer include Nature and History (2023) at the Hidden Garden in Pinecrest Gardens, FL; Tree Huggers and Nests: The Art of Evelyn Politzer (2022) at Miami Beach Botanical Garden; Invisible Threads (2021) at Hialeah Cultural Center, Miami Dade College; and Knitting as Poetry, Reflections on the Natural Environment (2018) in The Eye Has to Travel Gallery, Miami International Airport, American Airlines Terminal.

Every Drop Counts | 2017 | hand-dyed yarn, embroidery, repurposed fiber

"Because I Say So" signed Mother Nature | 2022 | reupholstered chair, cotton canvas, acrylic paint and embroidery | 42" x 24" x 46"

Andrea Spiridonakos

“There is a vitality, a life force, an energy, a quickening that is translated through you into action, and because there is only one of you in all time, this expression is unique. And if you block it, it will never exist through any other medium and will be lost.” – Martha Graham.

As a former soloist ballerina, Andrea Spiridonakos now builds for the body and the room as a conceptual collectible design and fiber artist based in Miami, FL. As the creative force behind Spiridonakou, she uses a natural balance of asymmetry and irregularity to create a palpable impression of perpetual movement in her works. Taking the viewer on a journey of the senses, her dynamic aesthetic aims to awaken an awareness of our body and how we move through space. Each wild and poetic piece begs for interaction, sparking an interplay of emotion and the five senses.

Her approach focuses on traditional techniques and the undeniable energy of work made through the human touch. Andrea feels strongly responsible for considering her materials and what her creative process will leave behind. Therefore, her handmade textiles are crafted using only natural fibers and sustainable dyes; each work comes from the earth and can decompose back into it effortlessly. Her felt is crafted through a slow, ancient process using multiple layers of fine fibers massaged together with water. On the contrary, each silk is individually painted by hand without using water and then set with steam for permanence.



If Every Tiny Flower Wanted to Be a Rose, Spring Would Lose Its Loveliness | 2023
| raw wool fiber, cotton, cotton thread | 90" x 21"



Let Me Sow Love | 2023 | cuban mahogany, raw wool, silk fiber, mohair, alpaca thread, cotton batting, cotton thread, and glass beads | 18.5" x 60" x 23.5"



Artist Biography

Andrea Spiridonakos was born & raised in small-town Winsted, CT. At fifteen, she moved away from home to study at the School of American Ballet in New York City and, over the next decade, had a celebrated career as a professional ballerina, performing leading roles on stages throughout the United States and Europe to literary acclaim.

Afterward, she graduated with a degree in Fashion Design from the Fashion Institute of Technology, receiving a Critic's Choice Award and FSF Scholarship. She has exhibited at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, in collaboration with the Métiers d'Arts, CHANEL, and was honored to produce hand-painted textile designs for Isabelt

and Ruben Toledo's *Nutcracker*, which premiered at LA's Dorothy Chandler Pavillion.

Her work is featured in and on the back cover of Assouline's book "Miami Beach," acquired into the permanent collection at the DeYoung Museum in San Francisco and is part of private collections across the USA.

She was included in a Knight Foundation's inaugural New Works grant, was commissioned to design costumes for a world premiere by Pontus Lidberg, and her limited-edition fashion collection has been sold at the legendary retailer Bergdorf Goodman.



Various Scarves | 2023 | silk, hand-painted dye | 44" x 44"

"Because I Say So" signed Mother Nature | 2022 | reupholstered chair, cotton canvas, acrylic paint and embroidery | 42" x 24" x 46"

Acknowledgments

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