

## Dallas Art Fair Fabrics: Wool, Thread, Yarn, Denim, and Painted Works

The Dallas Art Fair is an incredible, if not at times overwhelming, place to view art. With local, regional, national, and international galleries featuring a wide variety of work, there is most definitely something for everyone.

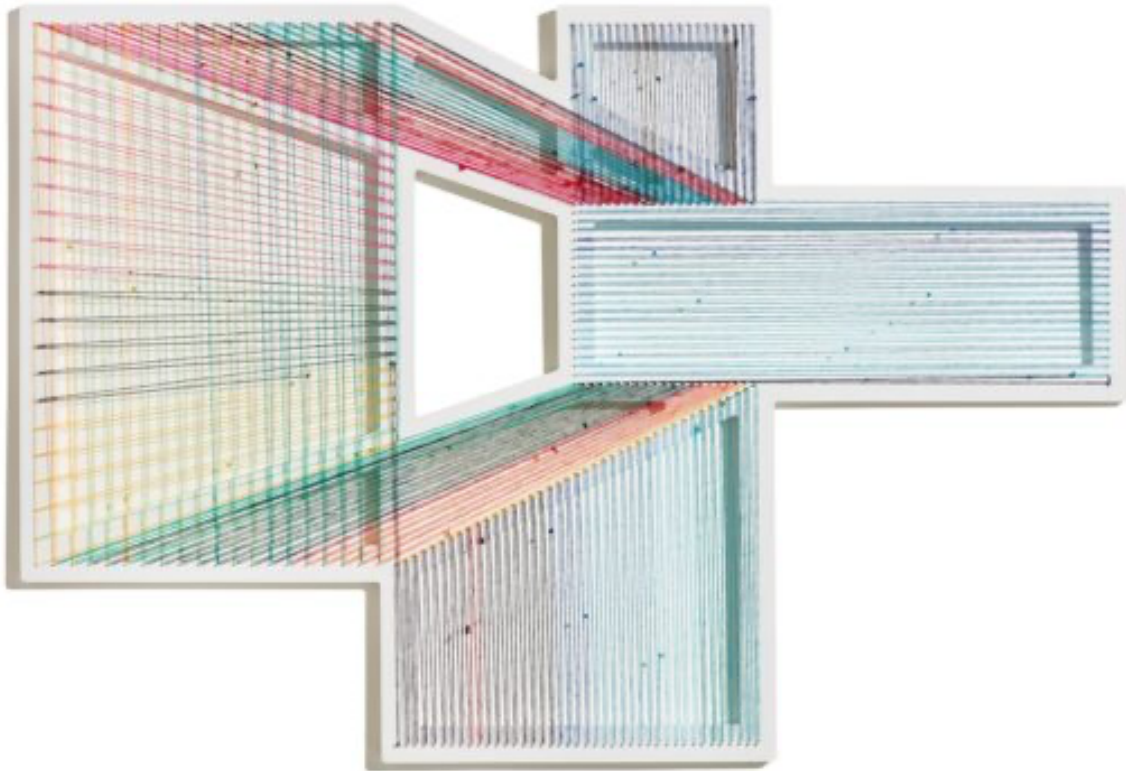


2022 Dallas Art Fair exhibitor map.

I had just a few hours to devote to the fair on its opening day, so opted to take a quick pass when I first arrived, and then a slower stroll through, taking my time to really note which works were not just catching, but keeping my attention. And it was on this second walk-through that I realized that many of the works I came back to featured fabric either as their medium or their main subject matter.



Rusty Scruby, "Thaw," 2022, merino wool knitting on poplar wood construction, 18 x 16 x 6 inches. On view at Cris Worley Fine Arts.

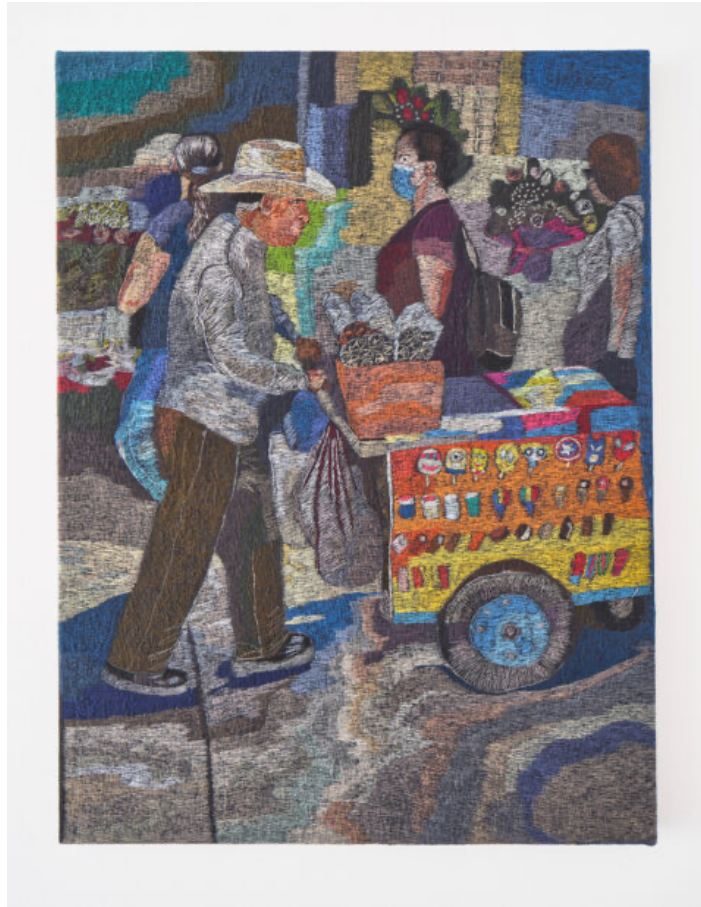


Adrian Esparza, "Renovated," 2021, sarape, wood, nails, enamel, 42 x 62 inches. On view at Taubert Contemporary.

There were sculptural pieces like Thaw by [Rusty Scruby](#) and Renovated by [Adrian Esparza](#), which in many ways feel like opposites of each other. Where Scruby has constructed an intricate, interlocking sculpture and knitted a slip over it, Esparza has created space with his structural form and deconstructed a sarape within it, effectively isolating the textile's various colors.



Gabriel Rico, "The Second cause is meant to be an explanation of the first (Páramo, The reunion I)," 2021, cotton yarn on wooden board coated with beeswax, 100 x 150 x 5 centimeters. On view at Perrotin.



Erick Medel, "Paletero Caminando," polyester thread on denim, 36 x 48 inches. On view at Martha's Contemporary.

Another subset was painterly threadworks. By this I mean two-dimensional works that use thread or yarn to create mostly flat images. And though Gabriel Rico's *The Second Cause* is meant to be an explanation of the first (*Páramo*, *The Reunion I*) and [Erick Medel's](#) *Paletero Caminando* both fall into this category, they are incredibly different works. Rico has coated his yarn with beeswax, giving it a glossy finish, and has meticulously adhered it to a wooden board. His images feel like isolated thoughts floating against a silver backdrop, whereas Medel's work is much more cohesive. Medel's street scene is sewn onto denim and has a sense of layered perspective like you might see in a documentary-style street photograph.



Jamal Cyrus, "Untitled," 2022, denim, cotton thread, cotton batting, metal, 41 x 30 inches. On view at Inman Gallery.

And while [Jamal Cyrus](#) also uses denim, his treatment of the material is starkly different from Medel's approach. His abstract works speak to a long history of using fabric scraps in quilt-making processes.



Angela Anh Nguyen, "Bball Beef," 2022, 50% merino waster, 50% maine wool, 64 x 82 x ½ inches. On view at Albertz Benda.

Angela Anh Nguyen's Bball Beef, drew me in part because of the surprise of seeing cartoon-like depictions of basketball players collaged through a tufted rug process. I can honestly say nothing else at the fair was like it.

Many of the other works that captivated me also featured fabric as the subject matter. In hyperrealistic oil paintings and more stylized mixed media works, the familiarity and tension of the fabrics we use in our daily lives was a major theme.



Gerardo Pita, "Redes IV (Larache)," 2020, oil on canvas 24 x 32 inches. On view at Drexel Galeria.



Bony Ramirez, "La Mancha De Plátano," 2022, acrylic, color pencil, soft oil pastel, silver marker, artist's worn tank top, bristol paper on wood panel. 48 x 48 inches. On view at Thierry Goldberg Gallery.





Clarence Heyward, "In My Hood," acrylic and variegated leaf on canvas, 17 x 17 inches. On view at Turner Carroll.

—Jessica Fuentes

**cris worley**  
FINE ARTS