

## CHECKLIST

*Monterey Now: Malin Lager*  
June 6–October 20, 2014

*All artwork is courtesy of the artist  
and Winfield Gallery*

*Gerd*, 2011, 34 x 41 ½ inches,  
Textile, embroidery

*Maria*, 2011, 34 ½ x 40 inches,  
Textile, embroidery

*Ola*, 2011, 36 x 39 ½ inches,  
Textile, embroidery

*Monica*, 2013, 39 x 32 ½ inches,  
Textile, embroidery

*Emelie I*, 2013, 39 x 34 inches,  
Textile, embroidery

*Klara*, 2011, 34 ½ x 40 inches,  
Textile, embroidery

*Emelie II*, 2011, 14 x 19 ½ inches,  
Textile, embroidery

*The Shadows and the Light*, 2009,  
37 x 71 inches (combined),  
Textile, embroidery

*Rattlesnake Grass*, 2014, 25 x 40 inches,  
Textile, embroidery

## ABOUT MONTEREY NOW

*Monterey Now* is an exhibition series organized to present Monterey Bay area artists who have made significant contributions to the visual arts.

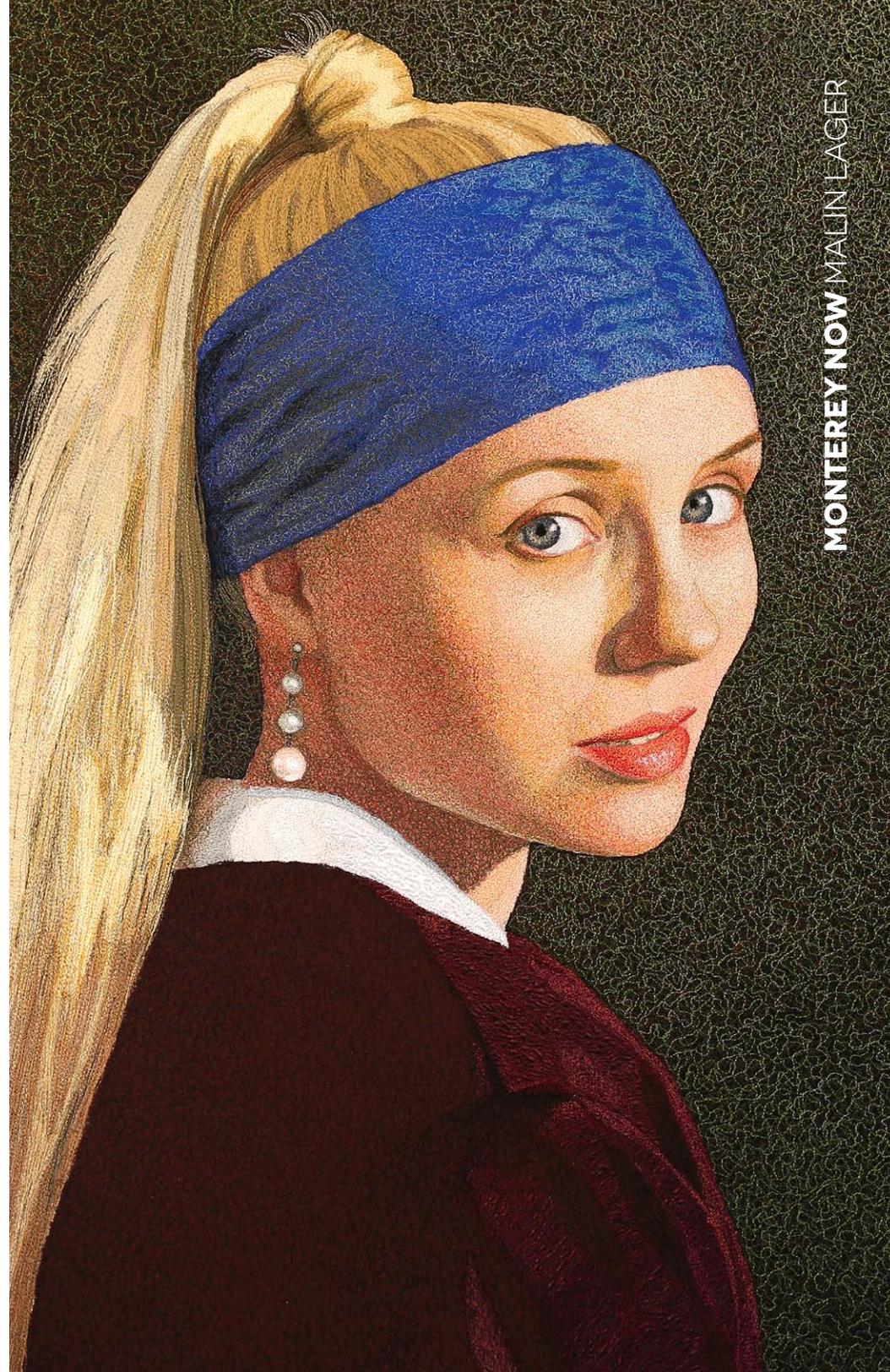
## EXHIBITION SUPPORT

Sponsored by William and Barbara Hyland, Frank and Judith Marshall Foundation, Winfield Gallery, and two anonymous donors.

Exhibition Support Provided by the Fund for Special Exhibitions

Cassandra and Paul Hazen, Peggy and Bob Alspaugh, Mary Cary and Gary Coughlan and the Visa Foundation, Janet and Laine McDaniel and the GE Foundation, Pam and John Wilkinson, Melissa and Jason Burnett, Iris and Stephen Dart, Bill and Jeanne Landreth, John Alger and William Lynch, Johnny Apodaca and Janelle Gistelli, Patricia and Bill Eggleston, Craig and Christine Johnson, Sandor and Josie Nagy, Susan DuCoeur, Mr. and Mrs. David Elliott, James and Lila Thorsen, Roderick and Suzanne Dewar, David Tarumoto, Jonathan and Dionys Briggs, Anne Adams Helms and Ken Helms.

The Monterey Museum of Art is generously supported by its members. Additional support provided by a grant in memory of Louise Bougie Beland from the John H. Marble Endowment Fund of the Community Foundation for Monterey County. General Operating funds are provided by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Monterey Peninsula Foundation, S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation, as well as the General Endowment Fund, the John R. Marron Fund, Laurie and J. Irvine Fund, Donna Roop Endowment Fund, Patricia J. Boles Fund, Scott Fund, Murray Fund and Anonymous Donor-Advised Fund of the Community Foundation for Monterey County. Capacity building support is provided by an Arts Regional Initiative grant from the James Irvine Foundation.



MONTEREY NOW MALIN LAGER



559 Pacific Street, Monterey, California [montereyart.org](http://montereyart.org)



*Rattlesnake Grass*, 2014

**TEXTILE ARTIST** Malin Lager (Swedish, b. 1946) creates astonishingly detailed wall works using a sewing machine and thread. Her masterful creations resemble illusionistic paintings that address evocative and challenging universal themes. Her subjects range from lichen-covered rocks, wet cobblestone streets, sun-dappled meadows, and portraits of her family and friends. Creative experimentation has been part of her environment since childhood, belonging to a Swedish family rich with four generations of skilled craftsmen and artists. Making objects that spring from both the head and the hand is a knowledge and expertise that Lager possesses and holds dear to her heart. Both her grandfather and great grandfather were blacksmiths, and her father was a sculptor and lithographer. Her grandmother who knew how to sew, embroider, and weave became a furniture maker, and her mother is a painter and fiber artist.

The passing of traditions in her family instilled an appreciation for nature and imagination. Lager's dexterity and skill in adapting centuries-old materials has led her to profoundly develop her work into a contemporary aesthetic.

Lager studied sculpture at the School of Design and Crafts in Gothenburg, Sweden. She applied this training to her textiles using layers of thread to create color and implied dimension. Preferring materials and methods that came naturally, she sews images on cloth that are so expertly rendered and sharp that they are often mistaken for oil paintings. Her mastery in this medium borders on the implausible and must be experienced in person to be fully understood. Lager's process is meticulous and promotes a 'slow art' philosophy—a practice that values being mindful of details, cherishing the inherent history of the materials, and encouraging a meditative state during the creative process. This progression can be seen in her work,

*The Shadows and the Light*, 2009, as she brings together sixteen landscapes exhibited like a mosaic, creating a larger, more powerful image. In the absence of a pigmented medium, the artist may change the spool of thread hundreds of times in order to systematically construct the effects of natural illumination seen in the skin-tones of her portraits or the reflective puddles of water in her cobblestone surfaces. Using the sewing machine as an expressive tool, Lager begins with a contour line drawing using a neutral thread over a patched fabric background to outline her desired shape, similar to traditional methods in under-painting to lay down a color ground and composition. Using a lockstitch—the most common mechanical stitch made by a sewing machine—she then incorporates a broad, colorful palette of threads from dark to light. Unlike many textile artists that often expose the gnarled underside of the thread joins, Lager further attaches and sews her finished works to stretched canvas to create a clean finish.

Though Lager pushes boundaries as a contemporary textile artist, she also sews together intimate memories. She creates movement by combining translucent and metallic threads, so that the portraits and landscapes shimmer when light



*Maria* (detail), 2011

hits their surfaces. Creating mood and expression, the reflective quality of her materials imbue her subjects with a liveliness that reminds her of loved ones or moments in time. The orange threads seen in *Rattlesnake Grass*, 2014 ignite with a firelight color, and the brilliant spikelets look like tiny ornaments dancing in the breeze. The soft fibers mimic life-like qualities, seen in the hair of her portraits or the satin blouse in *Maria*, 2011. In the work, *Emelie I*, 2013, her daughter poses in the style of Johannes Vermeer's painting, *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, 1665 (The Mauritshuis, The Hague, Holland). Here, Lager captures the master's effects with her classic, stoic gaze and long, flaxen tresses glistening in the light.

Stitch-by-stitch, artist Malin Lager has created a world that celebrates the details that make-up what is whole. She teaches us that every fiber of each experience, like her family, is connected.

Karen Crews Hendon  
Chief Curator  
Monterey Museum of Art



*Emelie I* (detail), 2013