

Walk in My Red Shoes

To the gift my children gave me — the chance to once again step into the enchantment of fairy tales.

To my beloved friend Gary Farmer — for sharing his alluring soul with me.

Walk in My Red Shoes

Silvana Soriano

Miami Beach Regional Library , August 2025

Presentation Text Maria Gabriela Di Giammarco

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Please, Wear My Red Shoes

Artist Silvana Soriano's multimedia practice is a rich survey of texture, color and curiosity. Her commitment to education through art - as a practitioner, teacher and student-embodies the sharp and thoughtful qualities of her body of work. There is a natural and joyful attention to detail that reflects both the time it takes to complete each piece, as well as the decadent pool of references, such as art, literature, language and history, that she keeps close to her heart.

Soriano's printmaking is elegant and haunting, leaving viewers to explore its context on their own terms. Her collages are vibrant, expansive and methodical — each carefully constructed to reflect a remarkable sense of humor. Her embroidery work, often symbolic, is mischievous and minimal.

Within each realm of her practice, there is a spirited reminder that art is really about the human experience, more than it is about social commentary. Similar to fairytales and folk stories, art is about the future and those who will inhabit it. These stories aren't simply about morality or precautions, their purpose is to teach us no matter how fantastical the characters, settings or conditions may be, or how old we are.

Fairytales and folktales contain magical seedlings of truth about the world we live in and those we share it with, but they aren't meant to invite fear into our lives either. In addition to cautioning us about the dangers of pride, defiance, selfishness, or a bad attitude, they function as guides to participating in our cultures. More importantly, these storytelling traditions are living archives of what matters to a society

throughout time. These stories and the ideas within them endure because the human imagination endures. Concepts such as curiosity, collaboration, empathy, kindness, justice, and humility are as vital to our history as those like conflict, loneliness, resistance, and survival.

Soriano's playful versatility lends itself to this investigation of Indigenous and Western tales—of human desire, the notion of destiny, the consequences of one's decisions, or finding safety. She invites young women, as the stewards of our future, to take part in site-specific reinterpretations of stories such as *The Red Shoes* (Hans Christian Andersen, 1845), *Sealskin*, *Soulskin* (Inuit tale), *Little Red Riding Hood* (Charles Perrault, 1697), and the artist's own interpretation of Joseph Campbell's description of archaeological discoveries made in the ancient city of Ur in *The Masks of God: Primitive Mythology* (1959). By welcoming them into this activation and granting them the agency, Soriano captures the essence of art-making as a channel for education, collective understanding and magic.

This collection of work brings old-fashioned and otherworldly ideas to life through collage, printmaking and embroidery - a genre-defying exploration of why we make art, whom we make it for and how we keep it alive. *Please, Wear My Red Shoes* is an imaginative discovery of connection and understanding that honors the history of oral traditions that cultivate creative seeds.

Statement by Maria Gabriela Di Giammarco

The Red Shoes: Being Trapped

When the magnitude of your hunger is immeasurable,
you lose your intuition —
and become prey.

The hunger for acceptance is what binds the red shoes to your feet.

You dance not for joy,
but compulsion.
You can't stop.

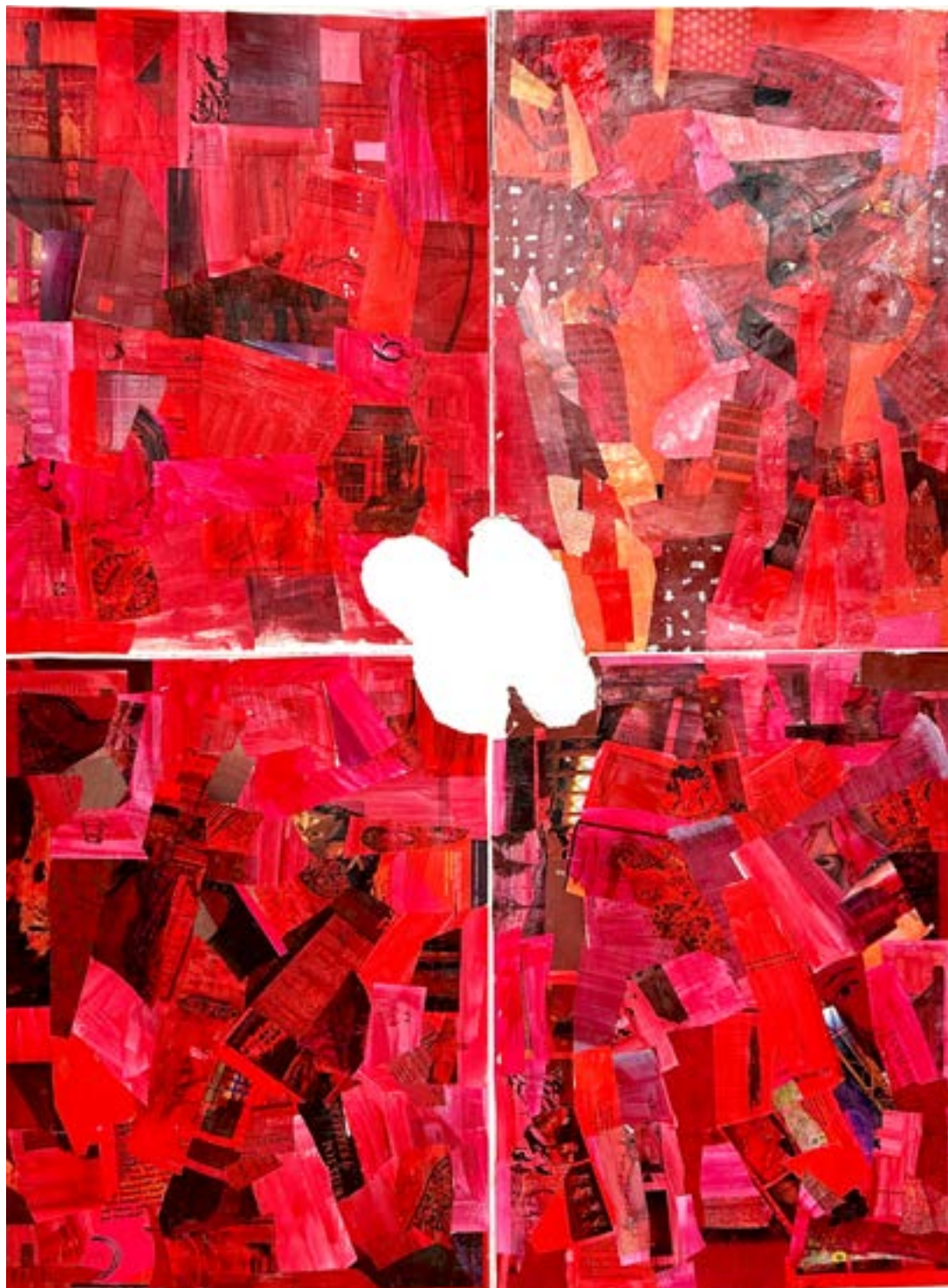
It all started when you lost your handmade shoes — those carefully sewn,
rooted in the earth, formed from the silent knowledge of who you are.

In trading them for something brighter, You lost your innermost self.
Your foundation.
Your truth.
And so the hunger grew and robs you of choice.



Innermost
Collage and assemblage on
paper
56 x 40 in





Suppression
Collage on paper
56 x 40 in



Trapped
Collage and assemblage on
paper
56 x 40 in



Defeated
Collage and string on paper
56 x 40 in





The Ugly Duckling is ultimately about belonging

It speaks to the deep feeling of inadequacy that comes when we don't belong-when we feel out of place, isolated, different.

Finding our tribe is a necessity, yet sometimes, instead, we try to squeeze ourselves into spaces that aren't meant for us.

In doing so, we often force ourselves to adapt, cutting off parts of who we are, reshaping our souls to fit a mold that was never ours to begin with.





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Embroidery on fabric with hoop
23 diameter



€

Embroidery on fabric with hoop
23 diameter



The Daughter of the Sun: questioned destiny

Whatever destiny is-call, purpose, or fate-nothing can truly stop you from accessing it.
Not the world, not others, not even yourself.
Because it's not about what you want, but about a deeper desire.

One that lives beneath language, beneath rationality.
A pulse older than thought, a force that rises from within.

It is this desire, raw and ancient, that guides you toward your path.

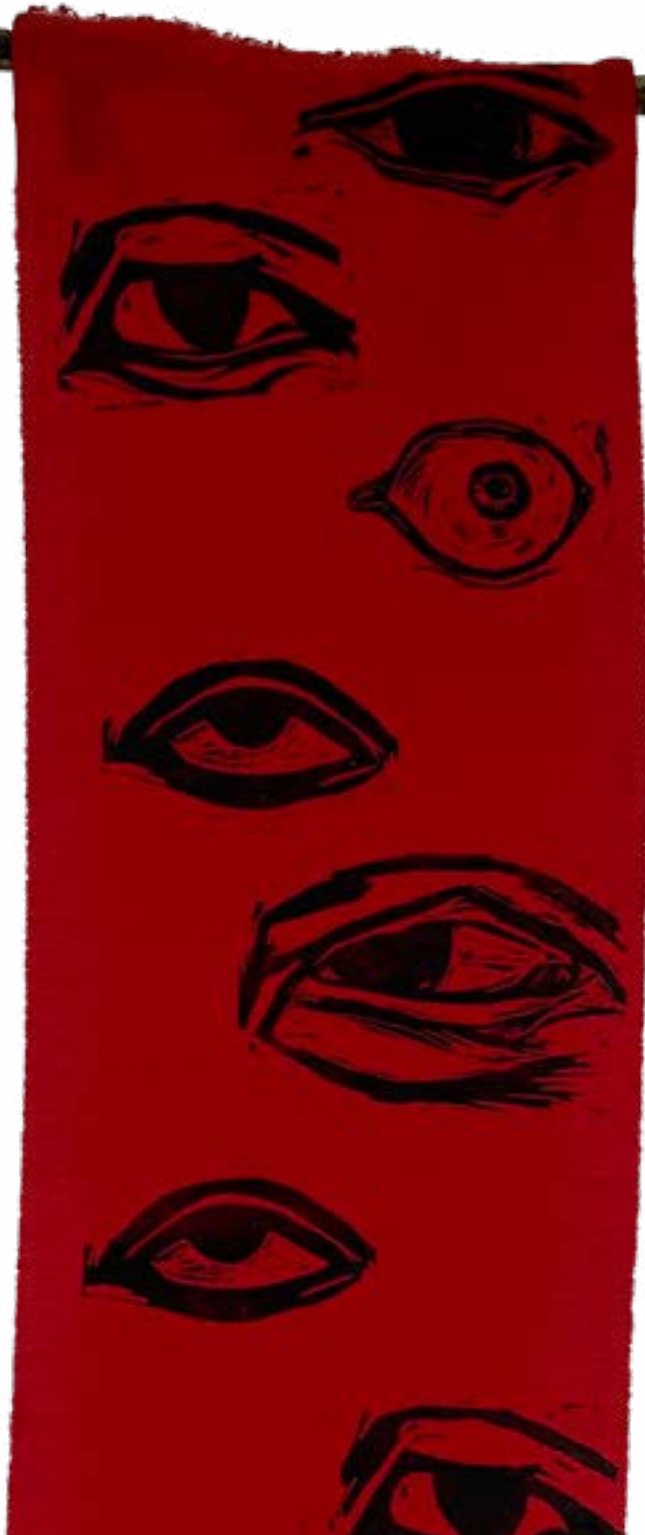
Not a command from above, but a memory from within.
Destiny is not assigned; it is remembered.





Little Red Riding Hood: to Face the desire

To be honest with your desire is dangerous.
The five senses together claim the object of your longing.
Being naive and too close to it—you can be swallowed by it.
Perhaps that's why the story is so popular: the tale and its
characters know the game.
They risk the fall, knowing the experience is worth the abyss.





Almost all Senses
Woocut on Fabric and piece of wood
60 x 13in each
2025

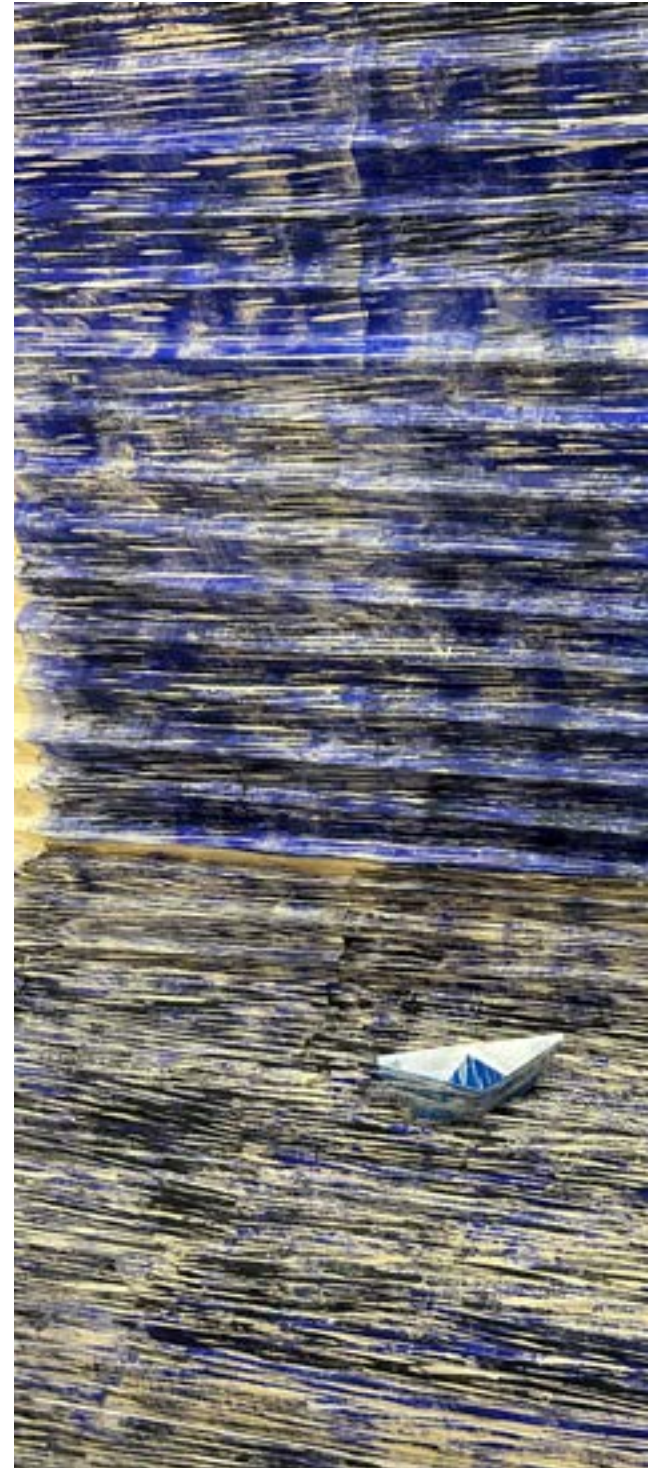
Seal Skin, Soul Skin

In my dreams, the sea plays an important role. It is an immensity whose contours I don't know, but it surrounds me, and I have no other option but to be immersed in it.

Every time my soul wants to communicate with me, I dream of the sea.

It was night. The sea was rough, but a bright light came from the sky. I was fine, swimming without a destination, but feeling calm and at peace.

If the sea is my home, is it also a place of healing?
The story Seal Skin, Soul Skin echoed through me like a tide returning to shore — familiar, ancient, and profoundly personal.



Seal Skin, Soul Skin
(Meu Mar)
Woodcut on japanese paper
140 x 35in
2025



No! In Silence: Resistance

In closed spaces, there are few ways to fight.

Yet within those confines, silent resistance can be more forceful than any scream.

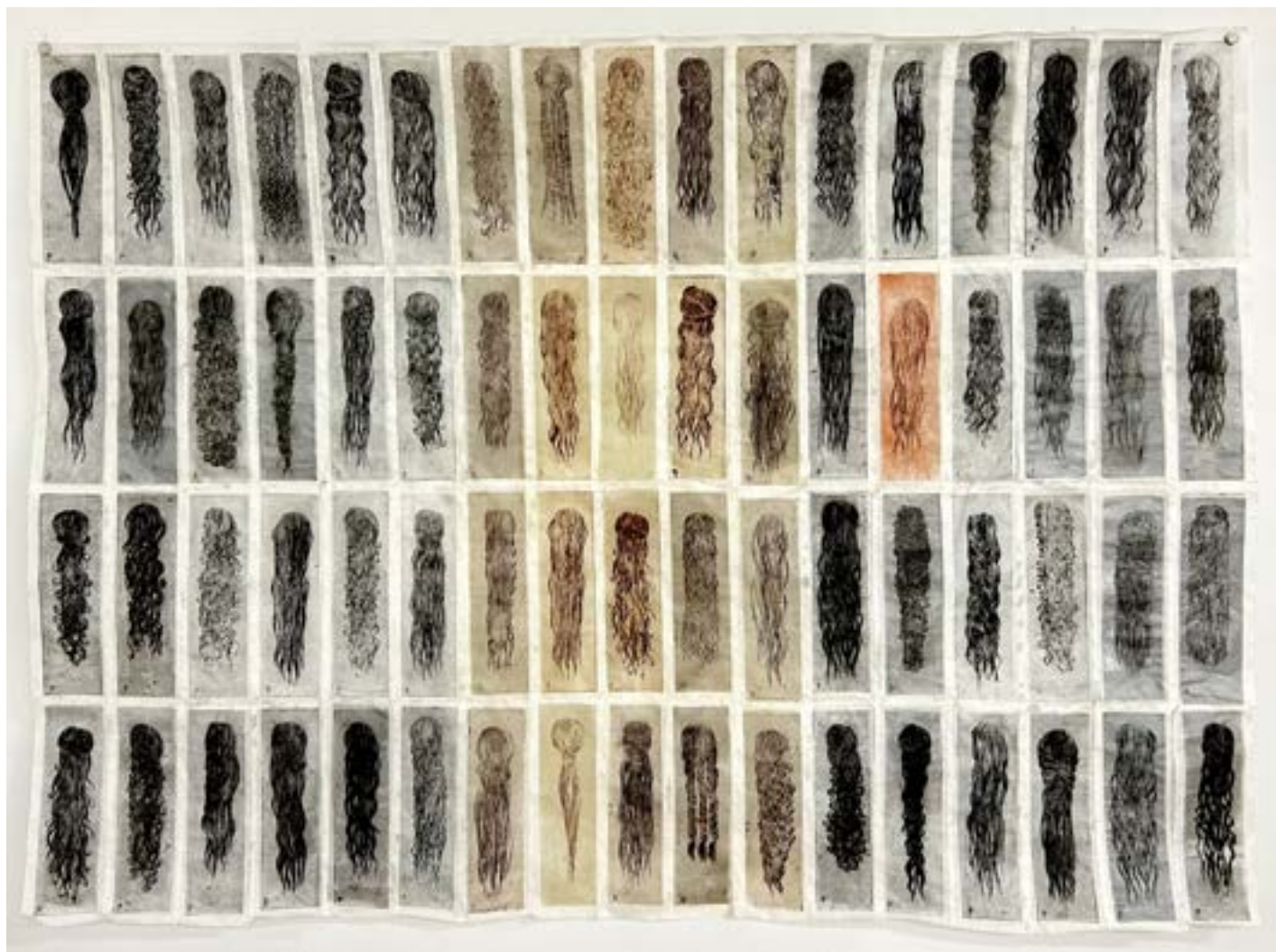
A “no” - unspoken but firm - can become a spark, setting off a domino effect.

A woman interrupts a symbolic ceremony. She removes the ribbon - a simple act.

With that quiet defiance, she rewrites destiny.

She dies in peace, her final gesture an enduring act of change.





No! In Silence
Dry point on japanese paper
32 x 44 in
2025

Hansel & Gretel

Hansel & Gretel: Temptation

When desire grows louder than the whispers of warning,
we follow the sweet trail blindly—step by step into illusion.
Each choice, a thread in a web spun by hunger and impatience.

The shimmering promise blinds us,
and freedom slips quietly away.
What dazzles often deceives;
what glows so brightly
can be the flame that consumes.





Our Path
Monotype and collage on paper
72 x 72 in

Blue Beard: Curiosity

He is a predator.

He lives outside — and inside — of you.

He plays with perception and intuition.

You know. You feel it.

There's something wrong.

But curiosity pulls you toward the abyss.

Maybe that's how it's meant to be.

To taste the risk.

To walk to the edge.

And from there —

see the full picture.

Just make sure

one foot stays behind.

That's your turning point.





Blue Beard
Soul/Core/Body
Magnet/Strings/ Detached
Woodcut on japanese paper

All Kind of Fur/Allerleirauh: Forbidden

Her soul is hidden beneath layers of fur

Allerleirauh, “all-kinds-of-fur.”

Yet within, she wears the dress of the sun, the moon, the stars -
and of all living beings.

Three dresses.

Three sacred, round objects:

A ring, a wheel, a reel.

The ring: an eternal loop, the sense of never-ending.

The wheel: ceaseless motion, the cycle of becoming.

The reel: to rewind and unwind -threads in the long chain of cause
and effect.

She tests the prince.

Three times.

Because all true things come in threes.

There is a third level of knowing.

Beyond sight, beyond form -

With the unity of the ring that binds all things,

One sees through the surface

To the soul.

To the self.

To the essence that endures, clothed in light and shadow.





Three Dresses
Collage and Assemblage on canvas
60 x 48 in
2025

The Touch of Wings

It reflects on the subtle, transformative presence of certain people in my life. Through gentle touches and unseen gestures, they have uplifted me—offering invisible wings that quietly carry me forward. This work is an homage to the intangible yet profound ways human connection sustains us. It honors both the fragility and strength of these bonds—fleeting yet enduring—and their quiet power to propel us with grace. Like in fairy tales, the magic of the unseen is revealed not to the eyes, but to the soul.





The Touch of Wings
 Embroidery on Fabric
 110 x 57 in
 2025

What is Your Mantra?

This mantle holds the whispered wisdom of women — truths, advice, and strength embroidered on its inner lining, meant to touch your skin and remind you of what you are made of.

Every stitch carries a story, a transformation.

On the outside, the garment is black — Nigredo, the phase of dissolution, where silence reigns and the self is stripped bare.

Inside, the lining glows red — Rubedo, the phase of illumination and integration, where the heart speaks, where truths are no longer hidden.

Between them lies the white — Albedo, the purification, where clarity begins to emerge.

This is not just a garment.

It is a vessel.

A ritual.

A memory.

A reclamation.

You may wear it.

You may whisper your mantra into its folds.

And perhaps, you may sew yours in too —

so another woman may one day feel it against her skin

and remember who she is.



What is Your Mantra?
Fabric , ribbon, and embroidery
84 × 20 in