

KARIN OLAH



According to Karin Olah, her art falls into many categories. "It can be described as painting, collage age, or fiber art," she says. Her work is also informed by "graffiti art, calligraphy and cursive handwriting, fashion, and language." Olah works on canvas, linen, and paper, creating her signature collage paintings as a way to connect with America's quilt making heritage. Using fabric, often antique textiles, the artist works in a manner that mimics the flow of paint from a brush. Intricately cut, placed, and pasted threads overlap one another and become the paintings' stories. Much of the artist's palette pairs historical Charleston colors with lush complementary tones selected

from her vast fabric collection. Translucent layers of cottons, silks, and linens blend with opaque calligraphic brushstrokes as graphite lines intersect the surface. Karin finishes many of the compositions with a dance of colorful encircling thread.

Karin Olah's style is a tangible patchwork of her experiences. From a small-town upbringing in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, her interest in Amish quilts and textile traditions led her to study Fiber Art at Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore. For several years following art school, Karin managed a textile studio in New York City, developing colors and patterns for clients, including Donna Karan, Marc Jacobs, Ralph Lauren, and Peter Marino Interior Architects. Now applying her fabric know-how to the realm of painting, Karin finds her collage art featured in numerous group and solo exhibitions, as well as in several corporate collections. Karin is active in the visual art scene: curating and directing Eva Carter Gallery in Charleston.

Her time in Charleston has been very influential

to her work, though in an abstract sense. "In Charleston, when you drive over the bridge, you see a bird's-eye-view; where local islands, rivers, and marshes spread out in the distance," she says. "It's a very flat perspective of colors - blue, silver, aqua, green, creamy whites and neutral tones. You see the sky mirrored in the waterways and you see loose threads of rivers circling the islands." The city's center also provides a vivid model. "Picturesque downtown is full of inspiring colors and subjects: pastel colored mansions, wrought ironwork, historic churches, palmetto trees, cobblestone alleys, and the deepest blue sky," she adds.

In general, the medium in which she works excites Olah: "I love the implications of working with textiles. There is something very intimate and domestic about it. My work is really an exploration of material and abstraction. It's about many visual influences seen in my world as well as a history that came before it."

The work of both Eva Carter and Karin Olah can be found at Eva Carter Gallery, located at 132 E. Bay St. in Charleston, SC. For more information, visit evacartergallery.com.

