

**Beauty is Resistance: art as antidote 2025 Fall “Art in the Barn” Exhibition at browngrotta arts
October 11–19, 2025 | Wilton, Connecticut**

browngrotta arts announces its Fall 2025 “Art in the Barn” exhibition, *Beauty is Resistance: art as antidote*, on view from October 11 to October 19 at the gallery’s Wilton, Connecticut location. More than two dozen artists, spanning generations, mediums, and geographies, will explore the potent role of aesthetic creation—particularly within textile, fiber, and material-based practices — as a form of defiance, cultural preservation, and political voice.

In an age marked by political polarization, environmental crisis, and unchecked commodification, beauty might appear to be a luxury — or a distraction. But the artists featured in *Beauty is Resistance* embrace beauty not as an escape, but as agency: a means to mourn, to protest, to remember, to heal, and to imagine a different world.

Four Subthemes: Threads, Protest, Ornament, and Ritual**Threads of Memory**

The “threads of memory” subtheme includes works in which fiber becomes an archive of personal, cultural, and collective memory. Norma Minkowitz’s *Frozen in Time* exemplifies this theme, evoking relics from another era. Her pieces incorporate once-used personal objects — combs, brushes, a diary that won’t open — each rendered in ominous black and transformed into intimate time capsules. These works invite reflection, asking viewers to contemplate lives once lived and stories nearly lost.

Beginning with slides of video stills, Lia Cook creates dramatic, larger-than-life woven portraits of children. Their sheer size could make the subjects less personal, but, because of the way they are rendered — pixels translated in to thread — it does not. Cook’s portraits are a source of intimate information and shared history. The result is compelling — contemplative works of great power and presence that create feelings of recognition, nostalgia, possibly grief and longing.

Reading Between the Lines

Some artists in *Beauty is Resistance* address themes of resistance, politics, and ecology, indirectly, requiring viewers to read between the lines. Aby Mackie, based in Spain, reclaims discarded historical textiles, deconstructing and reassembling them into layered works. “In reworking what was cast aside,” Mackie explains, “my practice becomes a form of quiet resistance — honoring forgotten stories and reasserting the enduring significance of craft in the face of environmental and cultural neglect.”

Historical parallel comes from Ed Rossbach’s 1980s *El Salvador* assemblages. By incorporating camouflage cloth and natural materials, Rossbach critiqued U.S. covert activity in Central America, revealing the long-standing ties between material, message, and protest.

Radical Ornament

In works that reflect radical ornament, artists reclaim beauty, surface, and structure as valid — and vital — modes of messaging. Archi-

tect and artist Randy Walker's *Collider* plays with contrasts: transparency and solidity, stability and collapse, visibility and concealment. His intricately threaded works embody a form of storytelling where ornament becomes a tool of transformation, commanding viewers to look more closely.

Gyöngy Laky's *Graceful Exit* is a brightly colored basket assembled with winding plastic strands, the extruded waste from the process of making plastic caps. Laky was invited to participate in a recycling project sponsored by Johnson Wax. She was motivated by the corporation's involvement. "I have a villain notion about what corporations are doing," she says. "This project was a very positive sign -- I thought, there must be a few enlightened people in their upper echelons."

Ritual and Reverence

This final subtheme includes work rooted in indigenous traditions and sacred craft practices, reimagined for contemporary contexts. James Bassler's *Donald and his Habsburg Empire* draws a line from historical imperialism to modern elitism. Inspired by the double-headed eagle symbol of the Habsburgs and the flamboyance of modern wealth culture, Bassler weaves satire and political commentary into feathered textiles — made from Canadian duck feathers and spun in Mexico based on historic techniques. His work was created in response to 2016 invitation from the Museo Textil de Oaxaca. "Many of the ancient textiles [in the Museum's collection] featured the Habsburg emblem to remind the subjugated who was in charge. My use of double-headed ducks connects that legacy with today's alarming glorification of arrogance, entitlement, and profit."

In her work, *Konstruktion*, Jin-Sook So offers the cultural and aesthetic essence of *bojagi*, a traditional Korean folk art form rooted in wrapping and layering, in a contemporary reinterpretation. In doing so, she demands a reconciliation of tradition and modernity — creating a patchwork of steel mesh, silver-plated to introduce a reflective, precious surface, through controlled oxidation in multiple stages.

Participating Artists (Artist list in formation)

Adela Akers, Polly Barton, Marian Bijlenga, Lia Cook, Neha Puri Dhir, Chris Drury, John Garrett, Mary Giles, Glen Kaufman, Nancy Koenigsberg, Irina Kolesnikova, Gyöngy Laky, Mary Merkel-Hess, Rebecca Medel, Judy Mulford, Misako Nakahira, Laura Foster Nicholson, Eduardo Portillo and María Dávila, Ed Rossbach, Toshio Sekiji, Kay Sekimachi, Karyo Sisson, Jin-sook So, Aleksandra Stoyanov, Blair Tate, Deborah Valoma, Wendy Wahl, Randy Walker, Gisella Warburton, Yong Joo Kim.

Catalog

A full-color exhibition catalog, #61: *Beauty is Resistance: art as antidote*, will accompany the exhibition and be available for purchase.

About browngrotta arts

Founded in 1987, browngrotta arts is a Wilton, Connecticut-based gallery specializing in art textiles, fiber sculpture, and mixed-media artworks with an emphasis on concept and technical mastery. The gallery represents over 100 international artists — many of whom pioneered the field of contemporary fiber art—through curated exhibitions, art catalogs, and collaborations with museums and institutions.

Tom Grotta and Rhonda Brown host the semi-annual "Art in the Barn" exhibitions in their private home/gallery: a two-story 1895 barn expanded by architect David Ling in 2000. The 3,500-square-foot venue — with 21-foot ceilings and a 55-foot viewing vista — offers a unique opportunity to experience and acquire museum-quality works in situ, in both dramatic and intimate settings.

browngrotta arts has published 60 art catalogs and two books and has placed artworks in prestigious public and private collections, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Museum of Arts and Design, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum. browngrotta arts also works with clients, architects, and interior designers offering consultation for artworks, commissions, and site-specific installation for commercial and residential spaces.

Select works are available for viewing and purchase at browngrotta.com.

Exhibition details

Beauty is Resistance: art as antidote

276 Ridgefield Road Wilton, CT 06897

Saturday, October 11th: 11AM to 6PM [Opening & Artist Reception]

Sunday, October 12th: 11AM to 6PM

Monday, October 13th through Saturday, October 18th: 10AM to 5PM

Sunday, October 19th: 11AM to 6PM [Final Day]

Safety protocols:

No narrow heels please — barn floors.

All photos by Tom Grotta, courtesy of browngrotta arts.

High res. images available upon request.

Media inquiries:

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Threads of Memory



120nm *Frozen in Time*
Norma Minkowitz
black crocheted diary and personal items
21.5" x 15.625" x 3"
2023-2025

Reading Between the Lines



11am *Fragments of a Life Lived 3*
Aby Mackie
repurposed textile, gold leaf, shellac
44" X 72" X 4", 2025

Radical Ornament



Gyöngy Laky
136L *Lie-Ability*
apple prunings, acrylic paint, screws
9.5" x 42" x 2.5", 2019

21L.1 *Graceful Exit*
discards from John Wax
13" x 21" x 21", 1994

Ritual and Reverence



5jb Donald and His Hapsburg Empire

James Bassler

wedge weave construction; indigo-dyed linen warp; linen, handspun silk from Mexico, spun duck feathers from Mexico, commercial silk weft
35" x 17", 2016

photo Tom Grotta, courtesy of browngrotta arts