

Lyall Slaughter, Annie, *10 Women Who Found Freedom in Their Art*, *Cultured Magazine*, 22 March 2023

CULTURED

ART

10 Women Who Found Freedom in Their Art

This Women's History Month, CULTURED delves into the magazine's archives to highlight 10 female artists who confront gender inequities by redefining the erotic, quashing the idea of women's work, and refusing to go quietly.

When fear ferments long enough, it turns into activism, producing some of the world's most arresting and necessary art. If we turn to the history of contemporary works by female artists, we find a record of protest, rallying-cries, and subversive exploration. As women's rights over their voices, bodies, and autonomy are increasingly threatened, these artists have set themselves and their successors on the course of righteous indignation.

Erin M. Riley's Tapestries Confront the Anxieties of Womanhood

Last year, the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum in Connecticut revisited its 1971 exhibition of all-women artists—the first of its kind in the U.S.—putting a contemporary spin on the seminal exhibition. Among the artists included in “52 Artists: A Feminist Milestone” was maverick Erin M. Riley. As a fiber artist, Riley weaves her worries into tapestries, working through her trauma one stitch at a time. The Massachusetts-born artist's anxiety-filled works from the Covid-era illuminate her struggles with dermatillomania—a skin-picking disorder—and catalog her search for personal identity in a perilous moment for American women.



Erin M. Riley, *Anxiety*, 2020. Image courtesy of the artist and PPOW, New York.