

Jennifer Salzman

Artist Statement

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My work speaks to the multiple roles of the female voice. I have throughout my career worked with the ideas that women are expected to do more in their lives, and are often judged more harshly by the outcomes than their male counterparts in society. I am a daughter, a wife, a mother, a feminist, an activist, an educator, a cancer survivor, and through all these rolls I also continue to be an artist. My work reflects the most relevant moments in my life. I feel I define a unique segment of society that wants to be heard and longs for emotional connections on the everyday struggles that are faced in these many scenarios.

I am formally trained as a photographer. My early work was traditional darkroom printing using portrait narrative as the backbone of my dialogue. Over the years, I have experimented with various printing techniques and digital photography. I classify my newest body of work as mixed media. I am transitioning into combining photography and textiles. I create imagery using 35mm photographic film that is then printed onto alternative textile surfaces, most currently silks and organza. I then use silk thread embroidery to stitch and enhance certain parts of the imagery over the top of the photograph. I use my black and white photography to convey a sense of tradition and history. An elevated sense of visual importance to the subject. The stitching that I work with was originally a play off the "red thread of fate". Though this folklore is one of marriage and destined loves, my work uses it to expand on the destiny of life and the roles of strength, control, understanding, and love that compel a person to move forward.

I find it important to use "old" technology such as film-based photography and traditional embroidery to create new mixed media-based narratives. I feel that along with the content of my work discussing continued dynamics of life history, the construction of my work supports the content using a historical craft that is also commonplace in female history.