

CINDY RIZZA

# The Fabric of Life



The life in Cindy Rizza's paintings is woven, stitched and knitted into fabrics, afghans and comforters piled on chairs or airing on the clothesline. Their makers and the people they comforted have become part of their presence.

Piling folded fabrics on a chair to keep them organized, she became fascinated by the juxtapositions, complements and contrasts of their colors and patterns. They please the eye with their colors, and evoke memories of comfort and, perhaps, loss. For Rizza, "The inspiration always comes from a darker undercurrent about the habits of the human condition and a spiral of questions with unknown answers."

She explains, "My recent still lifes are celebratory portraits of the remains of caretaking. These material things used for function and decoration are experienced close to our bodies and thus form some of

our most intimate memories of sanctuary. Stacked textiles and domestic comforts bloom with patterns and repetition ensuring us that their comfort is unyielding even when no longer needed."

Painted with soft, natural light that emphasizes the texture of the objects and suggests the fading day, the paintings begin with a monochromatic tonal foundation upon which she builds up layers and glazes.

The light reflects the various textures of the materials in her stacked paintings and, in pieces like *Blooming*, not only reflects but shines through and casts shadows as the fabrics wave in the breeze.

In *Heartland*, a quilt is tossed on a well-worn chair placed in a New Hampshire field. Rizza notes, "When juxtaposed with natural settings outside of their native interior habitats, these heirlooms tran-

scend their functions to become identities in themselves, creating order and beauty in an unmanageable world."

She borrowed another chair from her local café, Apotheca Flowers in Goffstown, New Hampshire. A chair that she's "sat in many times enjoying conversations with neighbors and friends over coffee" seemed to her to be the perfect subject for a painting. In *Jungle*, the upholstered chair sits in the woods away from the sophisticated conversations of the café and, perhaps, communes with the natural environment from which its materials came.

"In her newest collection of work, Cindy Rizza renders everyday objects of domesticity into evocative, vulnerable scenes that transform the banal," says gallery owner George Billis. "Through her nostalgic, poetic lens, Rizza's emphasis on



2



3

light and color generates even the most mundane materials to take on a higher significance and sense of emotion. Rizza elegantly balances the rugged and wild landscape of New Hampshire with the materiality of vintage consumer goods and lovingly created bed covers that provokes the viewer to contemplate our emotional relationship to these man-made and hand-made items. Ultimately, Rizza's oil paintings delicately sit somewhere between charming and haunting—evoking a range of emotions that leaves the viewer absorbed in thoughtful contemplation regardless of their personal response.”

Rizza's recent paintings will be shown in an exhibition titled *Mother Garden* at George Billis Gallery in New York through December 30. ●

**George Billis Gallery** 527 W. 23<sup>rd</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10011 • (917) 273-8621  
[www.georgebillis.com](http://www.georgebillis.com)

**1**  
*Blooming*, oil on canvas,  
38 x 60"

**2**  
*Jungle*, oil on linen,  
20 x 16"

**3**  
*Matriarch*, oil on linen,  
48 x 36"

**4**  
*Heartland*, oil on linen,  
30 x 30"



4