

JUXTAPOZ

Art & Culture



Cheryl Pope's "Variations on a Love Theme" @ moniquemeloche, Chicago

moniquemeloche, Chicago // June 11, 2022 - July 30, 2022
July 15, 2022 | in [Textiles](#)

[moniquemeloche](#) is pleased to present [Cheryl Pope](#), *Variations on a Love Theme*. This is the artist's fifth solo show with the gallery. *Variations on a Love Theme* presents a series of new works that feature the artist's unique needle punched wool technique to create richly textured and colorful textile paintings. Referencing the familiar repertoire of the French Post-Impressionist, Intimist¹, and Imagist paintings, Pope recreates deeply personal

recollections that cinematically compose the silent complexities of beautiful and tragic oscillations between love and loss in our everyday lives.

Spanning both galleries, the works on view feature interior scenes of couples, portraits of women, and depictions of motherhood. At once autobiographical and fictional, the paintings offer a unique perspective into the artist's memoirs. Images of couples are drawn from memory, referencing the artist's own relationships and moments of disconnect, anxiety, and desire, while beach scenes depicting a mother and child accentuate a tender stillness of caregiving. Portraits of women—often friends of the artist—reveal an orchestra of silence depicted through the subjects' inward gaze and the psychology of interior spaces. In these scenes, the figures exist in a nest of choreography—a rotating stage of mystery, tragedy, and poetry of day-to-day living with feelings of presence and absence woven throughout.

Through material intervention, Pope employs a sense of magical realism where the foreground and background are collapsed into patterns and basic shapes, blurring the lines between fantasy and reality. Taking inspiration from Les Nabis² artists, the works seek to create an art of suggestion and emotion, and calls forth the malleability of experience, memory, and storytelling. *Variations on a Love Theme* is a telling and a withholding of the real and the imagined where memories of love and loss are both fact and fiction. By placing the viewers in a surveillance perspective—simultaneously inside and outside the figurative frame—we become implicated in the artist's memories, bearing witness to the complexities of love and words left unsaid.

This exhibition will travel to the Ulrich Museum of Art, KS August 25–December 3, 2022. A digital catalogue will be published with an essay by Ksenya Gurshtein.