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Beacon Ed

## Review: RAC provides good primer for contemporary textiles



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By Ivy Cooper, special to the Beacon

Posted 10:49 pm Sun., 10.9.11

The ninth occasion of "Innovations," the region's biennial textile event, is a particularly strong one, but if you can't make it to all or most of the exhibitions, a visit to the Gallery at the Regional Arts Commission for Barbara Simon's "Textile Variations/New Directions" will provide a good overview of what contemporary textile artists are up to today.

C. Alana Tibbets has made a series of dapper fabric animal figures, donning suits and seated on books and looking like 19th century dandies. Working with silk necktie and kimono fragments, Marjorie Hoeltzel fashions shimmering, abstract compositions.

Joyce Briscoe and Simon herself have produced intimate pieces engaging memory and efforts to contain it.

Laura Strand's works involve layers of distressed cloth, embroidery, printed images and dyed, handmade paper (by Mary Hark), which combine to produce dense, diaristic narratives.

Erin Vigneau Dimick smuggles subversive feminist statements into primly embroidered tea towels.

Among the largest works in the show are Jo Stealey's hanging "Stelae" pieces, astonishing works of archival leaf paper, silk organdie and cheese cloth, which play the organic against the geometric to marvelous effect.

Also on view are works by Rena Wood, Nicole Ottwell and a terrific collaborative series by Hoeltzel, Sun Smith Foret and Dawn Ottensmeier based on Aubrey Beardsley printed cloth.

*Ivy Cooper is the Beacon visual arts reviewer and a professor of art at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. To reach her, contact Beacon features and commentary editor [Donna Korando](#).*

### THE BASICS



**When:** Through Nov. 6

**Where:** The Gallery at the Regional Arts Commission, 6128 Delmar Blvd.

**Information:** 314-863-5811, <http://www.art-stl.com/gallery/>

Arts: C. Alana Tibbets'  
Rocky Mountain Elk

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