

Galleri Dropsfabrikken: "Telling Threads" – A Duo Exhibition with Marthe Kampen and Kristine Fornes

On the occasion of the Hannah Ryggen Triennial 2025, Galleri Dropsfabrikken presents *Telling Threads*—a duo exhibition featuring textile works by Marthe Kampen and Kristine Fornes. While each artist has a distinct approach to textile art, they share a deep-rooted connection to tradition—whether through a personal lens or a broader cultural heritage. Their works create a space where tradition is not only preserved but also rewritten and revitalized, bringing forth narratives of culture, identity, and human connections.

Marthe Kampen draws inspiration from her personal and cultural heritage, particularly the traditions of the Finnish settlers in the Finnskogen region of Norway, where ancient shamanistic practices held a central role. Living on her ancestral farm in Eidskog, situated within this historic forest, her artistic practice took a new direction during the pandemic, coinciding with the birth of her second child. This life transition led her to incorporate textiles as an artistic medium—an approach that allowed her to balance her roles as both artist and mother. Kampen employs the Smyrna technique, a tufting method that allows for spontaneity and freedom of expression. Through an experimental use of materials, she creates compositions of strong visual intensity. Her work blends Norwegian folk art, ancient Finnish traditions, and universal symbols, with recurring themes of hope and protection. For *Telling Threads*, she presents a monumental textile work in a radiant palette, designed to outshine a darker world.

Kristine Fornes brings a historically rooted approach to textile art, intertwining materials and techniques from different eras. Her artistic practice explores the possibilities of embroidery and the historical narratives embedded in the textiles she works with. In *Telling Threads*, Fornes presents works inspired by the Silk Road—the legendary trade route that connected continents and cultures through commerce and the exchange of ideas. Textiles dyed with indigo and madder, alongside block-printing techniques that have been used for millennia, form the foundation of her artistic exploration. Her works are not only a tribute to craft traditions but also a reflection on how textiles serve as bridges—mediums of interaction between cultures and their histories.

Within the context of the triennial, where *Mater* serves as the overarching theme, the works of Kampen and Fornes stand as a significant reminder that contemporary art is both a continuation of, and a critical reflection on, a heritage refined through cultural exchange and individual creativity across generations. Threads of past and present are woven together in a continuous dialogue, offering us an opportunity to reflect on our own connection to the heritage that has shaped our identity and understanding of the world. Through their works, we are invited to explore how tradition, craftsmanship, and symbols continue to influence and deepen both our collective and personal histories.

Galleri Dropsfabrikken's Program for the Hannah Ryggen Triennial 2025

Saturday, April 5 at 1 PM – Opening reception

Sunday, April 6 at 12 PM – Artist talk and guided tour with Marthe Kampen and Kristine Fornes

Saturday, May 3 from 12 PM to 4 PM – Embroidery Workshop and Artist Talk with Kristine Fornes and Randi Nygård Lium



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