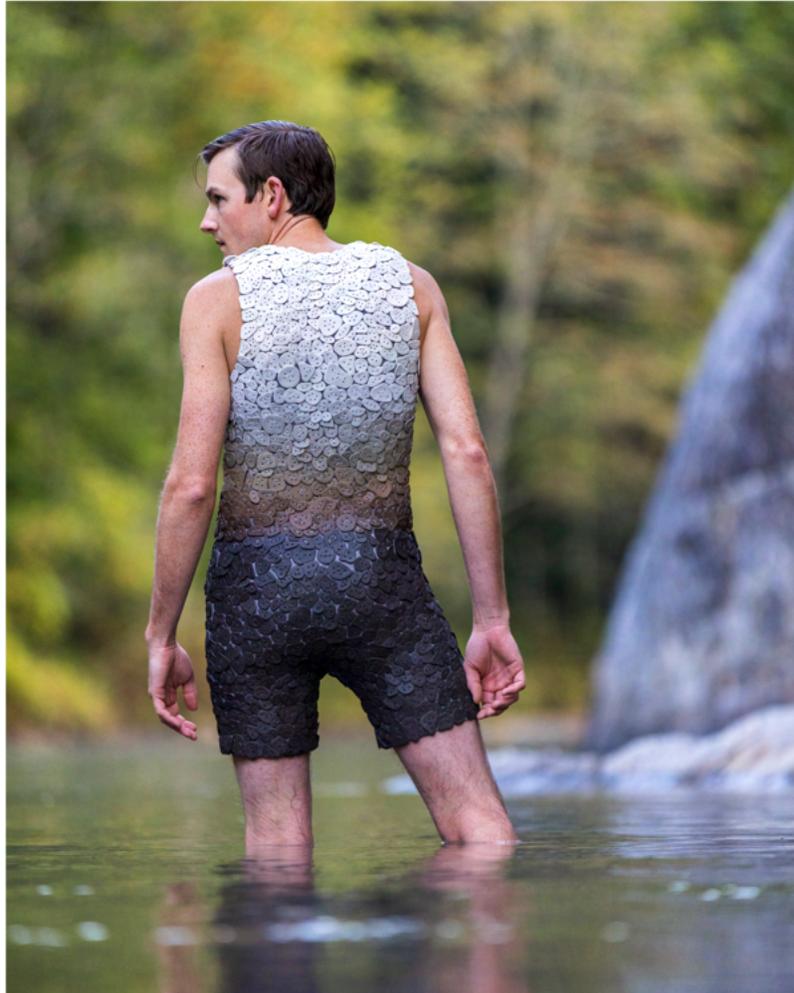


I IS ANOTHER.

Shae Bishop

Exhibition List



SHAE BISHOP

A Swimsuit To Wear While Looking For Hellbenders

Ceramic, wool, PE braid

Image on artist by Myles Pettengill

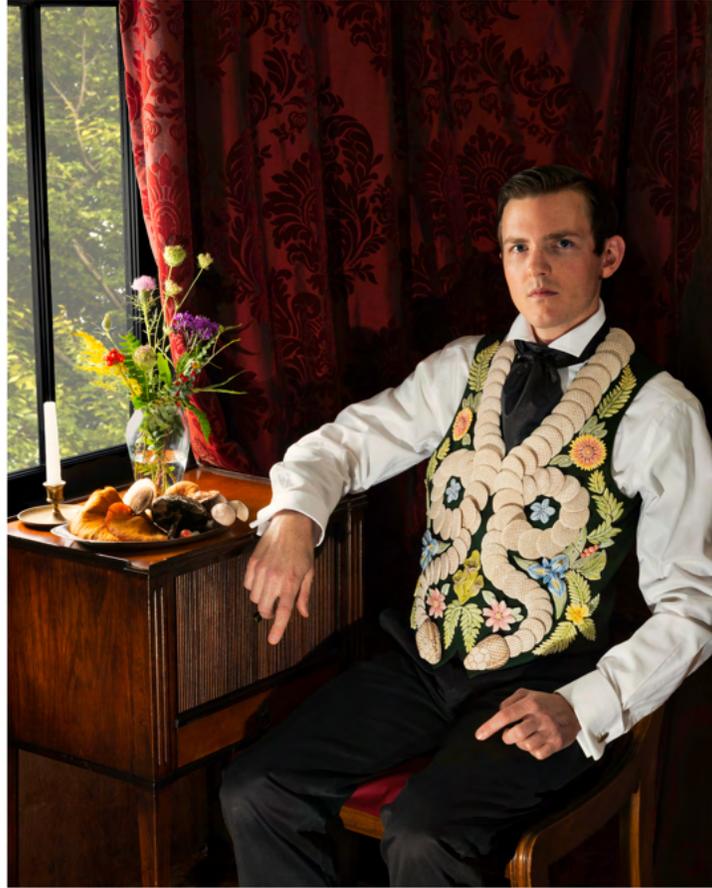
6800.

The hellbender: a creature of legendary proportions and near-mythic status. Splashing through Kentucky streams in childhood, it was my white whale, my holy grail: always sought, never found. Moving to the Blue Ridge Mountains as an adult, I finally met this grandfather salamander face-to-face. Wading and snorkeling in the cold mountain rivers, not yet ruined by runoff and sedimentation, I entered the hellbender's world to observe its secret life.

I made this swimsuit to help me in my quest. Taking cues from the garments of the past, it is lined with knit wool, which insulates even when wet. Starting with a white porcelain, I pressed each tile in my fingers, gradually blending in more and more of a nearly black stoneware clay. Light fading below water, stones tumbling smooth in swift currents, I thought of the river and felt amphibian auspices as I worked.

When I slide the suit onto my body I feel an immediate change. The soft rustle of the tiles, the weight hugging me closely, I feel pulled toward the water. The hellbenders are patient, as they always have been. They walk the stones, draw oxygen through skin folds, feel the light, smell the water. They wait for me.





SHAE BISHOP

Waistcoat of Earthly Delights

Ceramic, underglaze, wool, poly satin, PE braid, wire

Images by Loam

SOLD

Nature is the original source of all human design, and certainly in clothing nature motifs have been prevalent through much of history. During the mid-19th century in Europe, a time when male fashion was becoming less ornate, the waistcoat was often a last bastion of elaborate fancy, vivid color, decoration and individuality. Amidst throngs in plain muted colors, a brilliant few inches peeking out between coat edges was an acceptable lapse in masculine solemnity. Here, kept close to the chest, gardens of floral designs burst forth in embroidery and brocade.

Despite these trends, nature motifs in a modernizing culture rarely held much specificity and particular significance. Cloth was shipped long distances, designs copied freely from various sourcebooks, nature removed several degrees, abstracted and glossed with an unconcerned sheen of civilization. If an Englishman wore a waistcoat embroidered with a certain type of flower, it is unlikely that he chose it for this reason or thought much about where it was from or what it meant, beyond aesthetic pleasure.

Superficial sensory pleasure is often what has been meant by phrases like “earthly delights.” This has been seen as a negative opposite to the spiritual. In my waistcoat, I instead propose a dichotomy between thoughtless and specific homage to nature. Here, the snakes are Eastern Cottonmouths, surrounded by the native flora of the Southeastern states they inhabit. It is a waistcoat for one who observes and feels connected to the natural inhabitants of a particular place, true earthly delights.





SHAE BISHOP

Eternal Cowboy

Ceramic, underglaze, glaze, PE braid, leather, canvas, brass, silver

Image on artist by Myles Pettengill

10,600.

The cowboy is America's ultimate protean figure. But what is the origin? The heyday? The legacy? One incarnation thrills crowds, dripping rhinestones and embroidery in the bright glow of stages and arenas. One rides the shaky monochrome reels of moving pictures. Certainly one worked in motley multicultural bands on the dusty cattle drives across western plains yet to be fenced, heading for distant railheads. One was a Spanish colonist tending herds and traversing new lands, equally unfamiliar to human and animal. And perhaps all the way across the sea, back when Arabian hooves first galloped across Iberian lands, there was a glimpse.

What we can say, certainly, is that cowboy style and identity persists, through all the vicissitudes of history. It exists at the intersection of tradition and new frontiers. We think we know it, but it can always surprise us. With a seemingly infinite power of reinvention, the American cowboy embodies every time, always changing and always the same. Cowboy never dies.







SHAE BISHOP

"You Lookin At Me Pardner?"

Ceramic

Image by Loam

1600. special order

Eye contact is key in personal interaction. How we look at one another can say as much as the words we speak. One look from someone can tell if you are being respected or disrespected, and this is especially important when protecting your fragile masculinity. Maybe a fella looks at you funny; that's as good as fighting words. Or maybe he has the grit to look you in the eye and talk man-to-man. What's he thinking behind that long stare?

Rest assured, when two cowboys put on this hat you'll never have to wonder "you lookin at me?"



SHAE BISHOP
Garden Variety Cowboy
Ceramic, underglaze, silver
Images by Loam
2200.

This ceramic hat is the first in a series exploring the theme of “fragile masculinity”. The cowboy hat is an iconic emblem of American manliness as a mythic ethos but has also been repurposed in myriad ways. Now I present it once again, in ceramic, to look at these ideas and distinctions and suggest how delicate they can be.

Floral and nature motifs in clothing only began to be perceived as female-gendered in the 19th century in the Euro-American world. But they have held a place in cowboy & western menswear which has waxed and waned, but never gone away. The influence of American Indian beadwork and embroidered folk textiles of European immigrants (all the way down to Nudie Cohn) contribute to this, but it’s a complex picture. So, who is a “garden variety” American cowboy? The self-reliant frontiersman? The Nudie-suited 70s superstar in Hollywood? The 21st century teen questioning gender in fashion? In some ways the answer to all of these could be: Yes.



SHAE BISHOP

Shorts To Wear While Looking For Pythons

Ceramic, underglaze, glaze, PE braid, cotton, leather, brass

Image on artist by Hannah Patterson

3800.

I began making these ceramic shorts while working in Bali, Indonesia. I was spending time going into the fields and jungles, day and night, searching for the many snakes that inhabit the island. I wanted to make a garment to wear, both functional and symbolic, to bring luck and power while looking for pythons. Like the Mande hunters' shirts of Mali, adorned with amulets, animal parts, and mirrors to show mastery of and protection from the physical and spiritual forces of the jungle, I would create my shorts to help me in my quest.

The glazed colors and pattern arrangement of the scale-like tiles reference the reticulated python, one of the largest and most beautiful snakes of Indonesia. The shorts, while seemingly impractical, are immensely comfortable. When donned they impart a feeling of transformation—the weight and slight clinking sound making every movement feel intentional and focused. As I walk through the forest I feel a heightened sense of purpose leading me on in my search. Searching for pythons.





SHAE BISHOP

Shirt

Ceramic, underglaze, glaze, canvas, PE braid

Image on artist by Mercedes Jelinek

4000.

The shirt is the fundamental item of the modern wardrobe. In centuries past, shirts were viewed almost as undergarments. Usually plain, only collar and cuffs were meant to be seen. Exposed shirtsleeves in public were improper, even with a waistcoat. But with relaxing dress styles in the 20th century the shirt transformed into a standalone top of stunning variety as we know it today.

During my first year living in the mountains I committed to a project of making all the shirts I would wear for a year. Leaving clay for a time, I refined my understanding of sewing and textile processes. At the end of that year I constructed this piece based on the sewing patterns I had made for myself. The essential shirt.

