



## MARGRET EICHER



**Margret Eicher,**

***Shallow* (2024) Digital Montage/Jacquard Tapestry, 272 x 153 cm**

***Express Yourself* (2024) Digital Montage/Jacquard Tapestry, 270 x 116 cm**

***Flawless* (2024) Digital Montage/Jacquard Tapestry, 270 x 106 cm**

“Lady Gaga, Madonna, and Beyoncé stand as iconic figures of pop feminism, using the stage to challenge traditional roles and celebrate female independence. In their work, sexual provocation is reimagined: it is not an act of submission, but a powerful expression of self-determination and control. While Madonna first brought these conversations into the spotlight, Lady Gaga and Beyoncé have expanded the narrative. Today, Gaga is a powerful voice for LGBTQ+ rights, while Beyoncé brings feminism together with the vital fight against racism.”

- Margret Eicher

Within GROUND 99, Margret Eicher's Jacquard tapestries operate as a critical hinge between popular culture and historical technique, aligning closely with the exhibition's broader inquiry into how images shape power, desire, and ideology. Using a medium traditionally associated with aristocratic interiors, state narratives, and the slow labor of craft, Eicher reweaves contemporary visual culture into a material form that insists on duration, attention, and historical consciousness. The tapestries function as both images and arguments - sites where the excesses of mediated culture are not simply reproduced, but carefully *cut into*, slowed down, and made legible.

In this context, figures such as Lady Gaga, Madonna, and Beyoncé appear not as celebrities to be consumed, but as emblematic agents within a longer genealogy of feminist self-representation. Historically, tapestries were commissioned by and for royalty, crafted to glorify sovereign power, lineage, conquest, and divine right. By contrast, Eicher positions these three female pop stars as the royalty of the present moment - figures whose authority is not inherited but performed, contested, and continuously renegotiated within the public sphere. Their reign is one of visibility, affect, and cultural influence, shaped by mass media rather than monarchy.

All three artists have used the stage as a contested space - one in which femininity, sexuality, and power are performed, negotiated, and reclaimed. In their work, sexual provocation is not framed as submission to a voyeuristic gaze, but as an assertion of autonomy, authorship, and control. Madonna's early interventions cracked open public discourse around female desire, religious symbolism, and bodily agency, establishing a precedent for pop culture as a site of feminist confrontation. Lady Gaga expanded this terrain by foregrounding fluid identity, artifice, and vulnerability, while becoming a prominent advocate for LGBTQ+ visibility and rights. Beyoncé, in turn, has fused feminism with an unapologetic engagement with Black identity, history, and structural racism, insisting that gender justice cannot be disentangled from racial and economic inequality. Together, these figures illustrate how pop feminism has evolved into a complex, intersectional field - one that is simultaneously empowering, commercial, contradictory, and politically charged.

By translating these highly mediated images into Jacquard tapestry, Eicher performs a deliberate act of displacement. The immediacy and ephemerality of pop spectacle are slowed, woven, and fixed into a medium historically reserved for monumental narratives and ideological authority. This shift exposes the tensions embedded in contemporary feminism as it circulates through globalised media systems: empowerment coexists with commodification; resistance with repetition; liberation with spectacle. The tapestries neither celebrate nor condemn outright. Instead, they hold these contradictions in suspension, asking viewers to consider how feminist imagery is produced, circulated, and consumed within economies of attention.

Placed within the framework of GROUND 99 and the Malta Biennale's call to *clean, clear, cut*, Eicher's works invite a critical pause. They ask what remains when the noise of constant visibility is filtered through time, labor, and historical form. In doing so, they echo the exhibition's wider concerns with excess, memory, and ethical attention - proposing that clarity may emerge not through rejection of popular culture, but through its careful re-materialisation and re-reading.

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**MARGRET EICHER (born 1955 in Viersen, Germany. Lives and works in Berlin, Germany.)**

Margret Eicher is renowned as a digital artist who works with the textile medium of tapestry. Having studied at the Düsseldorf Art Academy (1973-1979) with a focus on drawing, Eicher subsequently developed the technique of "Copy Collage", to become part of the Copy Art movement, duplicating motifs in the public domain by means of ordinary laser copies. Since the early 2000s, the artist has become known for her "Medientapisserien" (Media Tapestries): digital montages of image motifs commenting on the mass media and ever-accelerating information age of the 21st century, which she produces as woven tapestries. Invoking the historical significance of tapestries as signifiers of wealth and power, formerly limited to the nobility, Margret Eicher's tapestries feature the superstars of today. Working for over 25 years with this practice of digital collage, she spins intricate visual narratives combining quotations from art history with diverse icons of popular culture. Drawing on the historical canon of European art, she populates her motifs with contemporary characters from film and television, advertising, the music industry, video games and the vast digital image archive of the internet. These digital collages are then woven on digital Jacquard looms into tapestries. The Jacquard loom, dating back to the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with its binary punch-card technology, is widely considered to be the forefather of the computer. Eicher's Media Tapestries move in a hybrid manner between digital and textile; between mystical narratives and complex media worlds.

Selected recent solo museum exhibitions include: Museum Schloss Gottorf, Schleswig, Germany (2025); Albrechtsburg Castle Museum, Meissen, Germany (2024); Moritzburg Museum, Hall, Germany (2022-23); Haus am Lützowplatz, Berlin, Germany (2021); Museum Villa Stuck, Munich, Germany (2020); Sprengel Museum, Hannover, Germany (2018); YAY Gallery, Baku, Azerbaijan (2015). Selected recent group museum shows: Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, Germany (2025); Kunsthalle Baden-Baden, Germany (2025); Wilhelm Hack Museum, Ludwigshafen, Germany (2025); Deutsches Textilmuseum, Krefeld, Germany (2024); Kasteel D'Ursel Castle Museum, Hingene/Antwerp, Belgium (2024); Museum Merano Arte, Merano Italy (2024); Eutin Castle Museum, Eutin Germany (2023); KAI 10 Arthema Foundation, Düsseldorf, Germany (2023); ZKM Karlsruhe/ European Culture Capitale Luxembourg (2022); Boghossian Foundation Villa Empain, Brussels, Belgium (2022); Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Schloss Pillnitz Museum, Dresden Germany (2021); Zentrum für Aktuelle Kunst, Berlin, Germany (2020); Me Collectors Room, Berlin, Germany (2019); Museum Schloss Caputh, Stiftung Staatlicher Schlösser und Gärten, Potsdam, Brandenburg, Germany (2019); München Kunstpavillion, Munich, Germany (2019); Museum Villa Rot, Burgrieden, Germany (2019); Kunstverein Pforzheim Museum, Pforzheim Germany (2018); Haus am Lützowplatz, Berlin Germany (2018); KunstHaus Potsdam Kunstverein, Potsdam Germany (2018); Museum Liner, Appenzell, Switzerland (2017); Kunsthalle der Sparkasse Leipzig, Germany (2017); Kunstmuseum Singen, Singen Germany (2017); ZKM, Karlsruhe, Germany (2017); Sprengel Museum, Hannover, Germany (2017); Kunstverein Ulm, Germany (2016); Kunstverein Bellevue-Saal, Wiesbaden, Germany (2016); Port 25 Raum für Gegenwartskunst, Mannheim, Germany (2016); Museum Pfalzgalerie, Kaiserslautern, Germany (2016); Kunsthalle am Hamburger Platz, Berlin, Germany (2015); *Spazio Luparia*, Stresa, Italy (2015); Gallery of Art Critics Palace Adria, Prague, Czech Republic (2015); KHM - Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, Vienna, Austria (2015).