NARRATIVE THREAD

Chuck Stolarek 02 FD was living in England and working as a womenswear developer when his sense of the absurd took his art in a new direction. He began sketching and stitching embroidered “paintings”: quirky combinations of commonplace objects, which read like the setup for a great joke.

Working on fabric with a combination of hand and machine embroidery stitches (plus the occasional sequin), Stolarek brings mundane objects together like characters in an illogical story. The pieces provoke smiles and head-scratching in equal measure, paired as they are with titles such as Ants on a couch in a canoe on sawhorses with radio reception or for this piece, Hose gushing water above a clock on a table. This year he’ll share the series at a solo show-within-a-show at the San Jose [CA] Museum of Quilts and Textiles (February 28 – April 15).

Stolarek brings an offbeat sensibility to his womenswear, too. He just launched In House Label, a line of “softly tailored, uniform silhouettes, smothered and covered in just-odd-enough combinations” of over-dyed prints.

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