

GOYA CONTEMPORARY GALLERY

Both Sides Now ***The Spirituality, Resilience & Innovation of*** ***Elizabeth Talford Scott***

February 20 – April 21, 2023

Reception:

March 16, 2023, 6:00–8:00pm

Curator: Amy Eva Raehse



Image: © Carl Clark, Courtesy the Estate of Carl Clark/ Linda Day Clark

Goya Contemporary Gallery is pleased to announce ***Both Sides Now: The Spirituality, Resilience & Innovation of Elizabeth Talford Scott*** on view from February 21st through April 21st with a reception held on March 16th from 6-8 pm.

Elizabeth Talford Scott (b.1916 – d. 2011) was born near Chester, South Carolina to Southern sharecroppers who worked on the land where their parents previously were enslaved. The sixth of fourteen siblings who lived on the Blackstock Plantation, Elizabeth quickly learned to repurpose commonly scrapped materials into useable resources.

Quilting was a familiar part of the black American experience, especially in the South. It was a keystone for innovation, upcycling, expression, and for passing historical narratives from one generation to the next. Talford-Scott honed her quilting skills at an early age, though her advancement within the medium would develop over many years, moving away from domestic function into improvisational, sculptural wall hangings that live squarely within the vernacular of Fine Art.

Migrating to Baltimore in the early 1940s, Elizabeth and Charlie Scott Jr. welcomed a daughter into the world -- the now celebrated artist and MacArthur Fellow Dr. Joyce J. Scott. During this era, Elizabeth worked in food services, as a hired caregiver, and as a mother devotedly caring for her own child.

With limited time in her demanding work schedule, Elizabeth took a hiatus from quilting, and it was not until her daughter was self-sufficient that the artist returned to her creative practice with dedication, vigor, and potency. Developing techniques that acknowledged her family history yet moved beyond, Scott began to innovate, creating fiber works that incorporated unconventional objects amassed in bright, bold, and lively compositions with heavily layered surfaces of organic, unstructured shapes much richer in detail than many distinguished contemporary paintings.

Immersed and embedded within the lush surfaces of these works live personal and worldly narratives, and an alphabet of ancestral symbols that tell us as much about aesthetics as they do about the artist's history. Making references to flowers, animals, intergalactic astronomy, insects, sea creatures, monsters, fantastical beings, dreams, sky maps, superstitions, and good luck charms, Talford-Scott's objects converge in a cacophony of pure visual energy where commonplace materials metamorphose into lessons on abstract design informed by all that she could see and imagine.

During her lifetime, although she exhibited infrequently, Elizabeth presented her work in national venues including The Studio Museum of Harlem, NY; Museum of American Folk Art, NY; and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY. In 1987, Elizabeth Talford Scott was bequeathed the Women's Caucus Award for Outstanding Achievements in the Visual Arts. In 1998, she was the subject of a retrospective exhibition curated by George Ciscle titled *Eyewinkers, Tumbleturds, and Candlebugs: The Art of Elizabeth Talford Scott* that opened at the Maryland Institute College of Art and traveled to the Smithsonian Institution's Anacostia Community Museum in Washington, DC among other venues. And while the artist frequently collaborated with her daughter to conduct workshops that aimed to teach techniques, her presence in the larger art world remained slim because at that time, there simply was close to no space carved out for black, female makers who worked in fibers.

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Elizabeth Talford Scott died in 2011. In 2019, the estate management was awarded to Goya Contemporary Gallery. Later that year E.T. Scott was the joint subject of the exhibitions *Hitching Their Dreams to Untamed Stars: Joyce J. Scott & Elizabeth Talford Scott* at the Baltimore Museum of Art and *Reality, Times Two: Joyce J. Scott & Elizabeth Talford Scott* at Goya Contemporary Gallery. The following year, the gallery mounted the artist's first solo show titled *Upside-Downwards*. In 2021, Talford-Scott was the subject of the gallery's solo-artist booth at **The Armory Show, NY** and was subsequently listed as one of the top-10 MUST SEE booths [out of hundreds] by **The New York Times** coverage of the fair. As a result, major works have recently entered esteemed public collections such as the Philbrook Museum, Toledo Museum, Mint Museum, Baltimore Museum, and Museum of Fine Arts Boston, as well as prestigious private collections across the country.

Elizabeth Talford Scott's posthumous success points to the long-standing, systemic structures that failed to recognize the work of significant female makers in their lifetimes, yet encouragingly many institutions have newly incited reinvestigations into these overlooked, yet important artistic practices.

Talford-Scott's practice is unlike others, and she has been cited by a sundry of celebrated contemporary artists as an influence; counting her own daughter --Joyce J. Scott-- among those she inspired.

Elizabeth Talford Scott's objects feel as fresh and relevant today as the days they were constructed, proving Scott a significant artist whose work was not only of her time but is timeless. In this way, the artist preserves the distinctive cultural heritage and storytelling that these extraordinary works embody, while sanctioning us to learn from them now, and in the future.

Both Sides Now: The Spirituality, Resilience & Innovation of Elizabeth Talford Scott reaffirms Goya Contemporary's commitment to represent the artist's estate and opens an exciting phase in chronicling the work of Elizabeth Talford Scott. In addition, the Estate is pleased to be working with the Baltimore Museum of Art, George Ciscle, and MICA's Exhibition Development Seminar on a broad initiative to further advance understanding around Talford Scott's artistic practice that will kick off later this year.

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Goya Contemporary is free and open to the public. Hours of operation: Tue – Fri, 10am – 6pm | Sat., 12-4pm by appointment.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Amy Eva Raehse, Executive Director & Partner at Goya Contemporary Gallery
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About Goya Contemporary Goya Contemporary Gallery promotes the art and culture of our time, presenting ideas through exhibitions, curatorial practice, catalogues, print publishing, artist representation, and cultivation of collecting. The gallery builds private & public collections, assist in acquisitions, and facilitates auction activity. Goya Contemporary has earned international acclaim for its thought-provoking exhibitions, innovative programming, and unique collaborations with artists. Known as one of the most ethical, prestigious, and long running galleries in the mid-Atlantic, Goya is dedicated to scholarly programming, and promoting the work of mid-career artists globally and locally. #####