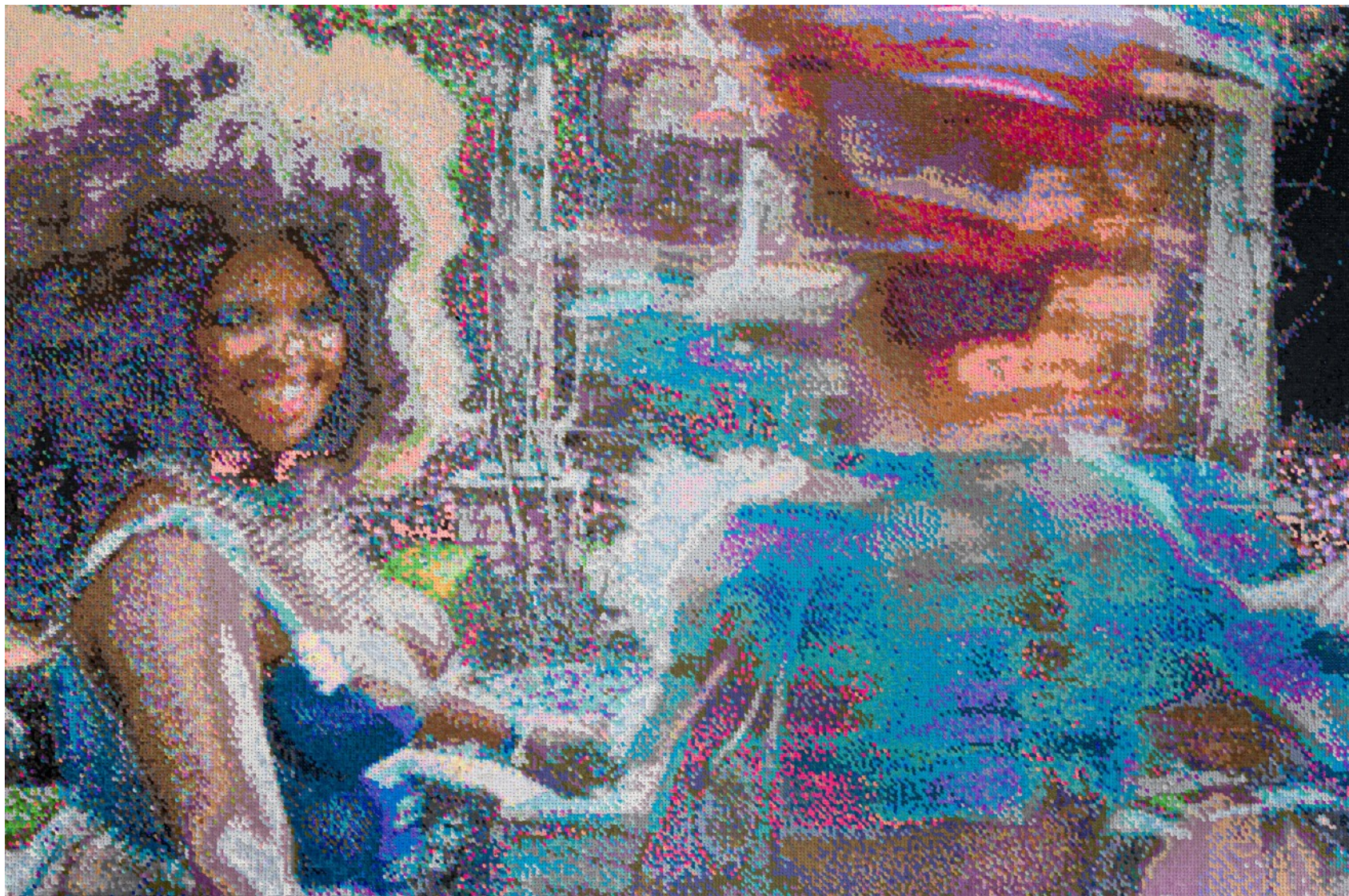




FRANCES GOODMAN

Ecstasy

September 30 - November 12, 2022





Press release, September 2022

FRANCES GOODMAN

Ecstasy

Text by Chloë Reid

*The revellers were apparently hurled back into a non-rational, pre-intellectual state, where the personality was replaced by something completely different - and by 'different', I mean something to all appearances not mortal. Inhuman.*¹⁾

Julian Morrow in *The Secret History* (1992) by Donna Tart

The Greek root for 'ecstasy' is *ekstasis*, meaning 'to stand outside yourself' – a feeling pursued by those who wish to escape or seek renewal through the suspension of rational thought and action.

Frances Goodman's new solo exhibition at SPECTA entitled *Ecstasy* takes as its subject the quest for meaning where material needs, wants and desires have been mollified and money is no object. Perhaps 'the void' is felt more keenly by those unable to obscure it with the pursuit of basic earthly requirements. *Ecstasy* considers existential anguish as it is expressed and expunged by the privileged few.

Two sequin-embroidered panel works *Beckoning* and *The Dance* draw the viewer directly into the realm of iridescent release. *The Dance* is titled after Matisse's famous painting (1910), and follows Goodman's interest in historical depictions of women in nature. Goodman's *The Dance* consists of three panels featuring heavily made-up figures in sparkling, otherworldly costumes moving in a formation that mimics the circle of dancing bodies in Matisse's work. In *Beckoning*, a lone figure in a *Bridgerton*-worthy headdress offers a quick, come-hither look as she disappears into dense green foliage.

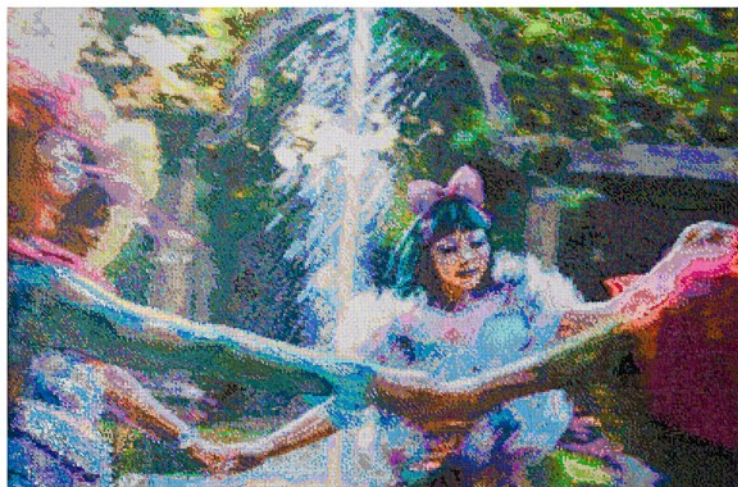
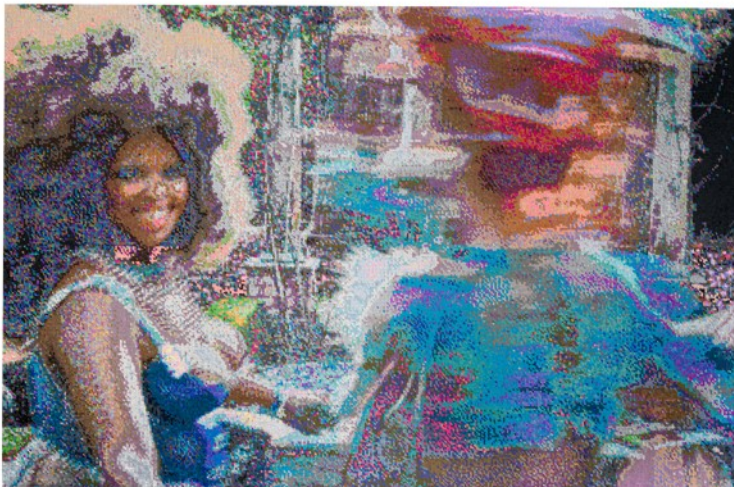
Beckoning and *The Dance* gesture to a culture of carefully curated, ritualised contemporary retreats, festivals and parties in which substantial capital outlay enables temporary access to immersive, redemptive and hedonistic experience. Such events vary dramatically in scope, scale and in the nature of their offerings, but the promotion of healing, self-expression and the shifting of perspective through ceremonial and participatory performance, dance, guided mediation, cultural appropriation, burnt offerings and the use of psychedelics and ecstasy are common features.

Goodman takes a more distinctly sardonic tone in a text-based work. *I WANT MORE* reads a banner of pink, blue and white acrylic nails, echoing an emptiness felt by those who want for nothing, materially. The archetype behind this demand is searching for a world beyond the one they know and own.

The desire to get out of your mind is not the exclusive preserve of the rich, nor is the pursuit of healing and psychological release through ritual, ceremony, drug-taking, or a combination of these. For the purposes of *Ecstasy* however, Goodman is characteristically interested in cultural commodification and social capital. In this case, that means the outfits, the make-up, the glamour and the aesthetic and financial excesses associated with a particular cultural phenomenon. Characteristically also, Goodman's magical, alluring surfaces and blunt missives both marvel at, and critique her subject.

Frances Goodman (ZA, 1975) lives and works in Johannesburg, South Africa. Goodman obtained a Masters Degree in Fine Arts from Goldsmiths College in London, 2000, and holds a Laureateship from the Hoger Instituut voor Schone Kunsten (HISK) in Antwerp. She was a recipient of the Cecily Brown Fellowship for Outstanding Woman Artists in 2014 and took part in Sundaymorning@ekwc Artist Residency in Oisterwijk, NL, 2021. Latest solo exhibitions are *Transmogrified* at Richard Taittinger Gallery, NY, 2021; *Uneventful Days*, at SMAC Gallery in Cape Town, 2020. Group exhibitions include 2021/22: *Ubuntu, a lucid dream* at the Palais de Tokyo, Paris; and *Soft/Loud* at Art in Buildings, Michigan; 2020: *Materiality* at Iziko South African National Gallery; *Romancing the Mirror* at The Museum of Contemporary Art in Jacksonville, Florida; *MY BODY, MY RULES* at the Pérez Art Museum Miami (PAMM); *I am... Contemporary Women Artists of Africa* at the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art in Washington, DC; 2019: *Material Insanity* at the Museum of African Contemporary Art Al Maaden (MACAAL) in Marrakech, Morocco; and *Pop Stars! Popular Culture and Contemporary Art* at 21c in Oklahoma City.

¹⁾ *The Secret History* reflects on the fallout of a murder at the hands of trust-funded revellers attempting to reach a Dionysian high.



The Dance, 2022

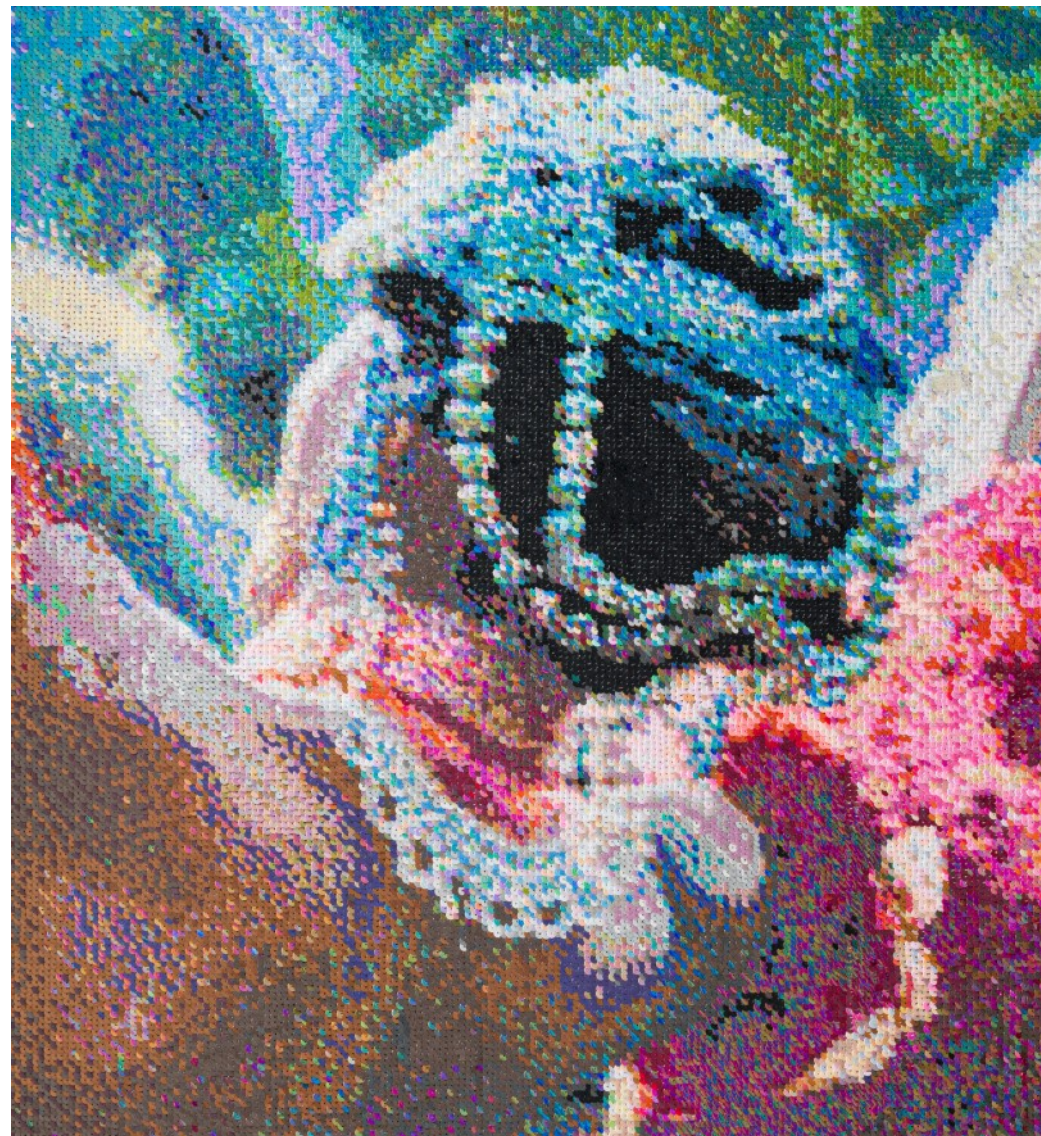
Handstitched sequins on canvas
3 panels, all together 106,5 x 483 x 8 cm
(Each panel is 106,5 x 161 x 8 cm)

EUR 65.000,- / DKK 487.500,- + 5 % VAT



The Dance, 2022

Closeups





I Want More, 2022

Acrylic nails, foam, wire, fiberglass, silicone

128 x 54 x 25 cm

EUR 12.000,- / DKK 90.000,- + 5 % VAT



I Want More, 2022

Closeup

FRANCES GOODMAN

b. 1975, Johannesburg

Lives and works in Johannesburg, South Africa

Frances Goodman is an interdisciplinary artist based in Johannesburg. In her work, she uses materials, processes and forms associated with dress-making, adornment and the beauty industry. These include acrylic nails, false eyelashes, sequins, needlework and crochet.

Through her practice, Goodman reflects on conventional definitions of femininity and its trappings, alternately critiquing and celebrating what it means to identify as a woman in contemporary society. Her work also looks more broadly at the ways in which the self is projected and reflected in social and virtual space.

Physical presentation and transformation is both a crushing expectation and a source of empowerment for the archetypes in Goodman's elaborate sculptures and installations. Glossy, sparkling and sensual textures and a lurid, intoxicating palette, imbue the artist's work with the libidinal energy of material consumption. The latter is at the root of Goodman's inquiry into womanhood. She manipulates the tools and language of the beauty industry in an attempt to understand the commodification of identity.

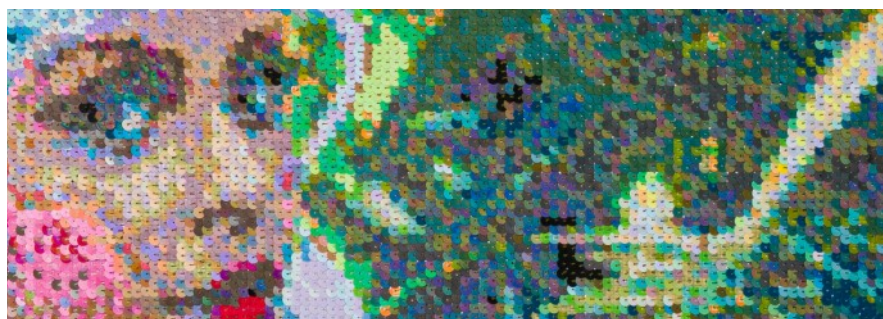
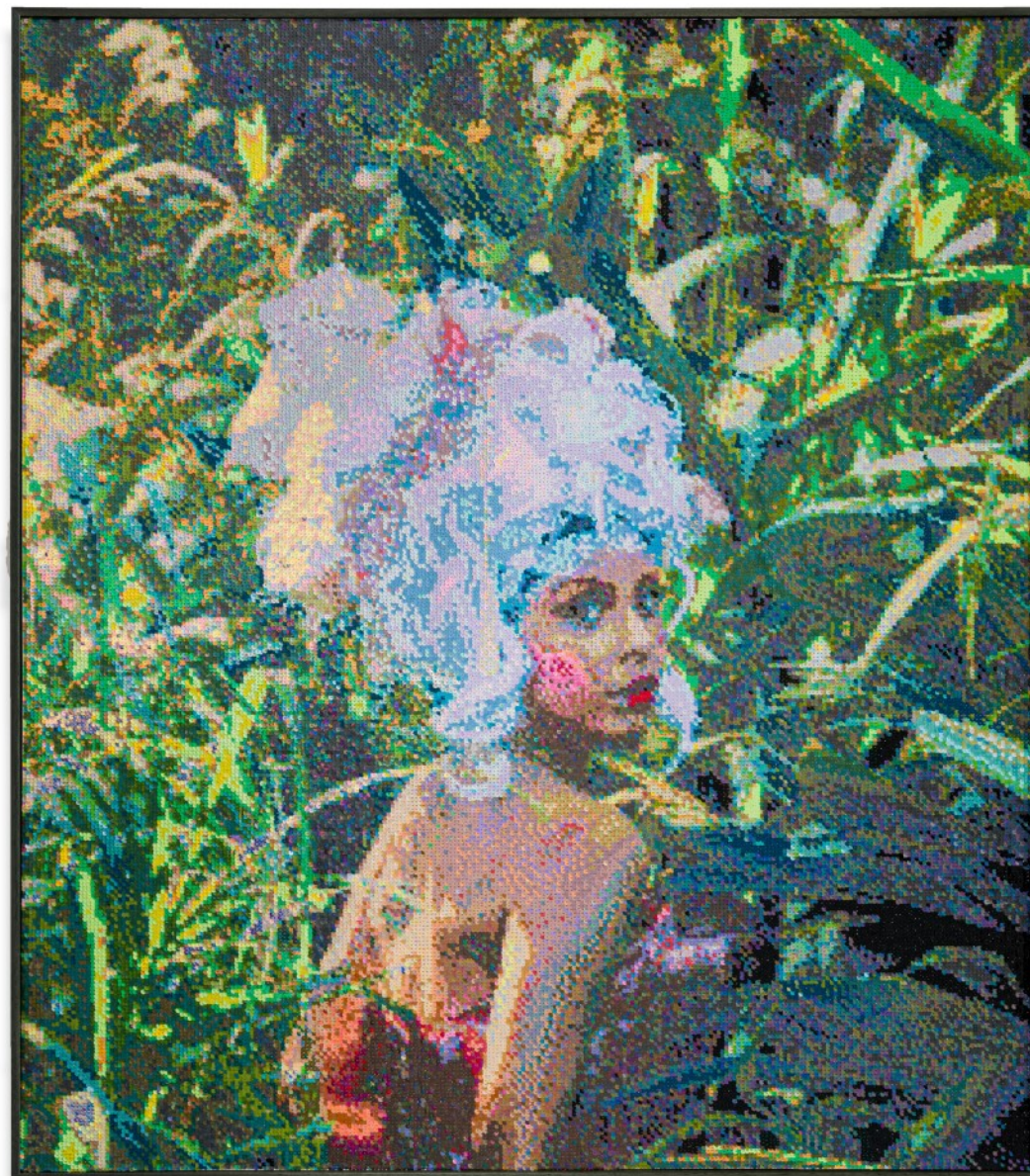
In her most recent series, *Ecstasy*, Goodman looks to the ways in which privilege seeks to liberate itself from existential dread through ritualised and commodified recreation.

Beckoning, 2022

Handstitched sequins on canvas

143 x 126 x 8 cm

EUR 22.000,- / DKK 165.000,- + 5 % VAT





Still Searching, 2022

Acrylic nails, foam, wire, fiberglass, silicone

125 x 53 x 24 cm

EUR 12.000,- / DKK 90.000,- + 5 % VAT