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KARIN JONES

Blind Spots

Opening: Fri, Mar 6, 6-8PM

Exhibition: Mar 6 – Apr 4, 2025

Image:
Karin Jones
The Bond (detail [dress]), 2023
Mixed media (fabric, Kanekalon [synthetic hair])

Documentation by Michael Love



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Blind Spots brings together recent works by Karin Jones, which examine the politics of adornment and beauty within contemporary material culture. Jones' interdisciplinary practice emerges from a background in jewellery and metalsmithing, where she consistently mobilizes craft traditions as conceptual tools for societal critique. For example, she highlights how materials such as human hair, operate as carriers of cultural value, racialized histories, and social expectation. Her work occupies a productive tension between ornament and excess, seduction and unease, troubling colonial conventions of material language.

Extending Jones' long-standing engagement with bodily scale and crafted form, her sculptural works hover between jewellery, sculpture, and relic—objects which emphasize tactility, while resisting a fixed categorization. Here, Jones foregrounds how adornment functions not only as decoration but as a site where identity is negotiated and disciplined.

Central to the presentation are works from *The Golden Section* series, composed of commercially sourced blonde hair extensions knotted onto vinyl mesh. Referencing ideals of proportion, the repetitive act of knotting becomes both labour and language, transforming hair into a modular, architectural surface that implicates systems of standardization and value. In, *Untitled Neckpiece*, Jones collapses adornment and constraint into a wearable form. Combining human hair with bronze and magnetized elements, the work evokes historical associations of ornament and bodily regulation, positioning jewellery as both intimate object and weighted cultural signifier.

Anchoring these works is the photograph *Swatches 2 (More Fun)*, an earlier self-portrait that underscores hair's role in performative identity and self-representation. With humour, the image stages hair as a mutable surface through which norms of femininity, race, and desirability are rehearsed and unsettled.

Together these works articulate Jones' sustained inquiry into how materials circulate: disseminated through bodies, economies, and histories. In *Blind Spots*, Jones details the social weight embedded in everyday materials.

Karin Jones is an interdisciplinary artist with a background in jewellery. She received a Diploma in Jewellery Art and Design from Vancouver Community College in 1993, before embarking on a more than twenty-year career as a goldsmith and independent artisan. Since 2007, her work has moved away from traditional jewellery and into contemporary art. She completed an MFA in Jewellery at Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) in Halifax, Nova Scotia, followed by international apprenticeships in jewellery and blacksmithing techniques, and since 2013 has been the Department Head of Jewellery Art & Design at Vancouver Community College. Her work is held in the permanent collections of the Royal Ontario Museum, the Vancouver Art Gallery, and the Metal Museum (Memphis, Tennessee).

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Karin Jones
The Bond, 2023
Mixed media (fabric, Kanekalon [synthetic hair])
Dimensions variable



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The Bond (installation)

Karin Jones

The Bond (detail [dress]), 2023

Mixed media (synthetic hair extensions, fabric, custom mannequin)

Dimensions variable

Artist Statement

The dress that Queen Victoria wore to her wedding in 1840 sparked the tradition for brides wearing white, a tradition that many assume is centuries older. White is seen to symbolize purity, virginity and innocence. Similarly, blonde hair has been seen to represent youth, beauty, and European racial purity. By bringing these two symbols together in a dress worn by Queen Victoria, I am questioning the ideals of whiteness and European culture that were forced upon the world during the expansion of the British Empire during her reign. By using Kanekalon, a material created specifically for African braiding styles, and making the dress out of cornrows, albeit blonde ones, I am pointing again to the invisible presence of Africans in this narrative, as well as the tendency of empires to appropriate all aspects of the cultures of their colonized subjects. Ideas of race have always been created in opposition to one another, and where I explored notions of blackness in *Worn*, I am here addressing the notions of whiteness to which we are expected to aspire while being continually excluded from their realms.



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Karin Jones

The Bond (detail [mirror]), 2023

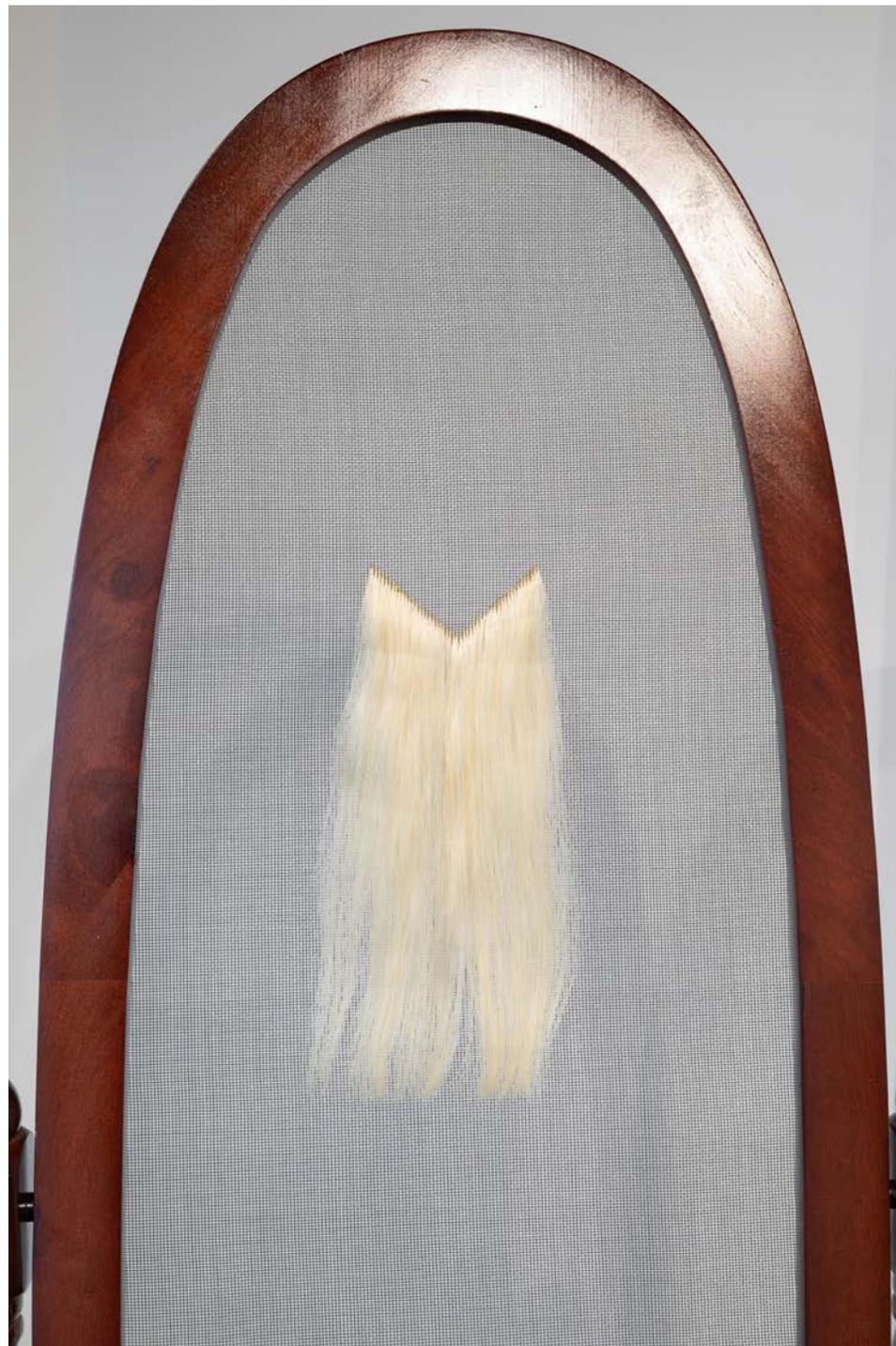
Mixed media (human hair, vinyl mesh, found mirror frame)

Dimensions variable



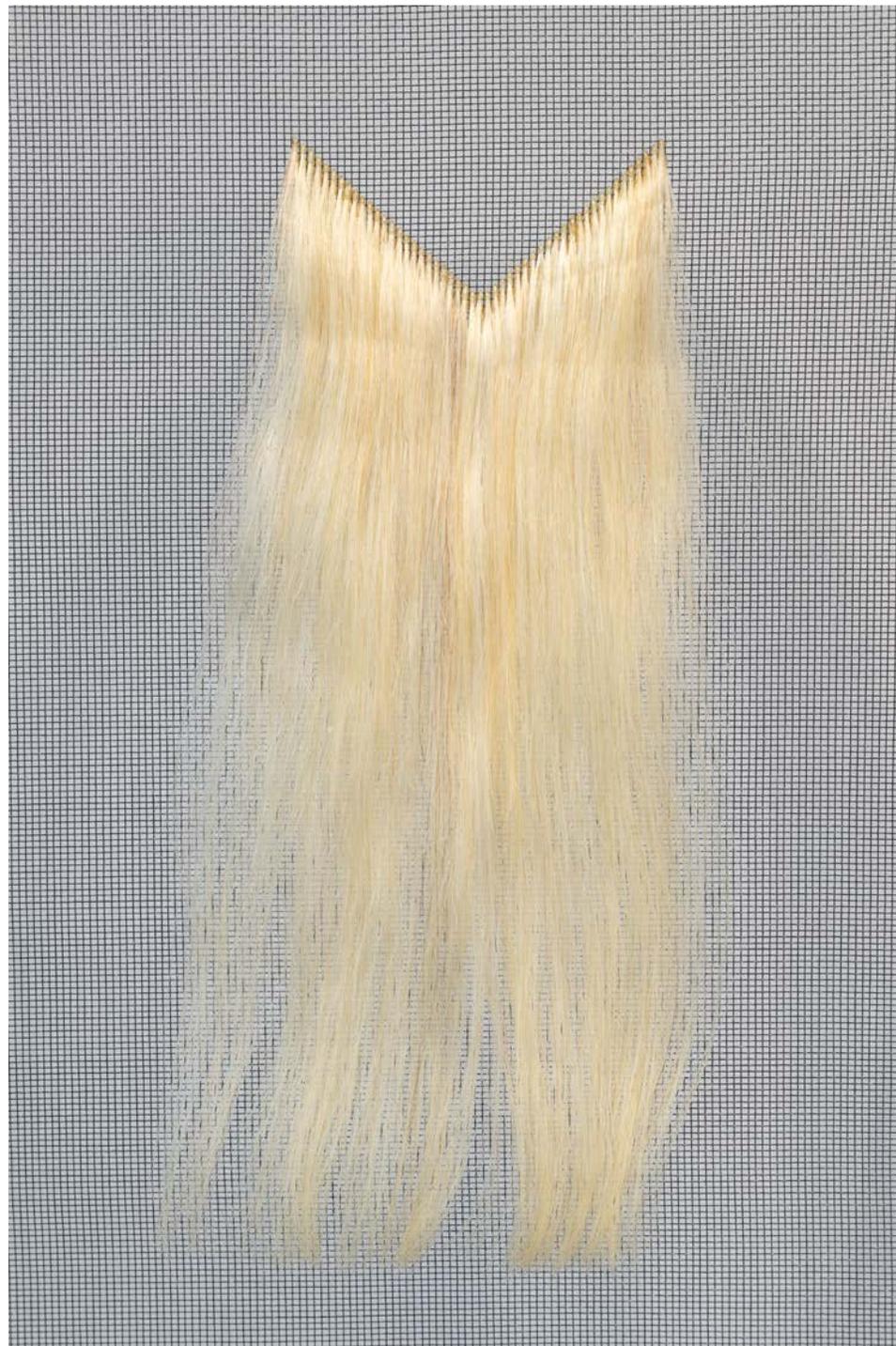
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The Bond (detail [chair and gloves]), 2023

Mixed media (found chair and gloves, dried corn)

Dimensions variable



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The Golden Section series

Karin Jones

The Golden Section 7, 2021

Commercially available human hair extensions, vinyl mesh
48 x 48 in (121.9 x 121.9 cm)

Artist Statement

My most recent work on hair and identity examines blonde hair as a symbol of European beauty ideals. The pieces are made of commercially available human hair extensions, which I have applied to vinyl screens using wig-making techniques. Most of this work was created at the Burrard Arts Foundation Residency in Vancouver, BC, Canada, which resulted in a solo exhibition in 2022.



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The Golden Section series

Karin Jones

The Golden Section 1, 2019

Commercially available human hair extensions, vinyl mesh
24 x 17 in (61 x 43.2 cm)



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The Golden Section series

Karin Jones

The Golden Section 3, 2019

Commercially available human hair extensions, vinyl mesh
28 x 19 in (71.1 x 48.3 cm)



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The Golden Section series

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Untitled Neckpiece (from The Golden Section), 2022

Human hair, bronze, vinyl tube, magnets

5 x 6 x 0.5 in (12.7 x 15.2 x 1.3 cm)



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Swatches 2 (More Fun), 2013

Edition of 3 + 1 AP

Photograph; Self-portrait, photographed by Kristy Depper

10 x 8 in (25.4 x 20.3 cm)



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