

C. Zoe Edelman
Fourth-year Miller Art Scholar
Arts Scholar Fourth-Year Art Award

Forming Landscapes Through the Art of Tufting

Original Project Recap:

In the past few years I have been inspired by the media I have seen online to pick up the art of tufting. This is a form of textile making where thread or yarn is inserted onto another fabric, creating a rug. I am also heavily interested in the climate changes around us and found that a lot of people did not truly feel its effects when the major disasters occurring were not in their immediate area. The plan was to use tufting as a method of scaling down these disasters to a more tangible size, like that of a rug. I'd use the different piling lengths and loop styles to create different landscapes and show various disasters throughout them. Viewers would be able to look from above, or walk on top of the rug to destroy its shape themselves. This immersive project was aimed at making these natural disasters feel more real to shed more light upon them. I wanted this rug project to be a part of my Miller Arts showcase and my fourth-year thesis.

Outcome:

Since last spring, my fourth-year thesis idea has changed immensely. Another topic I am passionate about is sexual liberation. I dabbled a bit into it in the spring, and found that I really enjoyed making art about this topic. Society puts a lot of pressure on women to live a more "pure" lifestyle compared to men, and I think that idea is extremely hypocritical. I've found that I like to play with shock factor and bodily images to get really into the idea of promoting sexual liberation, and thought that for my thesis project I could use tufting to help convey these ideas. My new project will be a semi-immersive piece focusing on the promotion of sexual greed, something no one should be ashamed of. The role of the tufting in this project is to emphasize more-so its texture rather than its visuals, though those also come into play. I find that I love to rub my hands over a short rug to get that numbness on my palm, or run my fingers through a shaggy rug. Using the different piling lengths I want people to feel these desires as well and be drawn in to do just that. Along with the different piling lengths, I will have 3D printed hands in more greedy positions gripping the different lengths, also encouraging audience participation. For the tufting itself I have been working on an array of distorted checkered rugs. The checkered visuals of the rug is to play into censorship a bit, much like censorship of sexual media, or a direct reference to a "WooHoo" in the Sims and their use of pixels there. These rugs are also going to be positioned in a way that allows them to climb up a wall, so viewers who sit in a chair that faces these rugs will follow them up with their eyes.

One part of my original proposal that did stick was the tufting course I took over the summer. I was able to make a large landscape rug, and I learned a lot more in depth about the process and what I needed to have to tuft on my own. A takeaway from this course was a need for a different set of tools to complete the rugs I wanted to make. The biggest thing was that to

obtain different piling lengths I needed to obtain more than one tufting gun. As this exceeded my original budget, I supplemented my funds with the fall mini grant.

I'd like to thank the Miller Arts program for helping me fund this project. Tufting has been a really exciting art form to be able to complete on my own. So far I have created five full rugs, and some smaller ones as well, with more on the way as I count down the days to my thesis showing. I would also like to thank Federico Cuatlatl for his advice and support in my thesis project, as well as Eric Schmidt for assisting in the setup of my tufting frame.

I still hope to make rugs based on landscapes, and plan to do so after my work on my fourth-year thesis is over. Through the course that I took with Tuft the World over the summer I was able to complete a large landscape piece that I was excited to finish as a good base to complete many more in the future.

Final Cost Breakdown	
2-Day Tufting Course	\$350
Tufting Starter Kit with AK5	\$365
Bar Clamps x2	\$27.94
Carpet Backing Adhesive x2	\$125
Final Backing Cloth (3yds) x2	\$120
Dark Twill Tape x2	\$10
Duckbill scissors	\$15
Carpet Carving Clippers	\$60
Shearing Guide	\$75
Primary Tufting Cloth 10yds - Grey	\$325
Multiple Tufting Machine Combo Sale	\$513 (supplemented by F24 Minigrant)
Service Warranty - 1 year x 4	\$400
Yarn (more purchases still to come)	\$91.6
Spray On Adhesive x 2	\$23.12
Total:	\$2,500.66*

*As noted I am still in the process of making rugs for my thesis, so the yarn cost is still not finalized. Anything that might exceed my original grant funds will be supplemented from out-of-pocket funds.



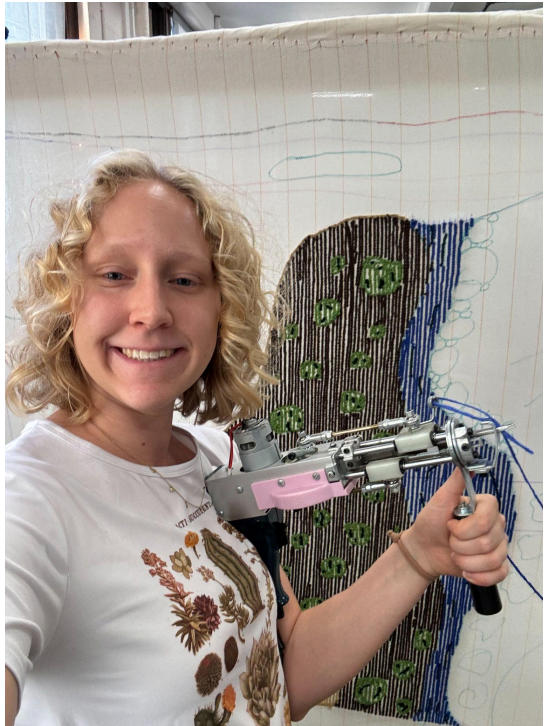
Day one of my summer tufting course



Day two of my summer tufting course



Obtained the equipment to tuft!





The tufting frame setup in Ruffin



Current rug progress!