

Alissa Alfonso



Alissa Alfonso — About

Alissa Alfonso is a Miami-based artist whose multidisciplinary practice transforms everyday materials into meditations on ecology, memory, and care. Alfonso creates sculptural works that reimagine the natural world, working primarily with upcycled textiles, reclaimed objects, and hand-formed botanical elements. Her practice is rooted in the belief that the materials surrounding us—whether humble linens, discarded fabrics, or remnants of domestic life—carry histories that can be rewritten through acts of making.

Inspired by South Florida's diverse ecosystems, Alfonso engages closely with native plants and medicinal species, translating their regenerative capacities into three-dimensional form. Her meticulously crafted flowers, herbs, and organic clusters embody the restorative qualities of nature, offering viewers a contemplative encounter with the environment. These works often reference practices of healing and nurturing, suggesting that creativity itself becomes a form of stewardship: a way of tending to both material and emotional landscapes.

Sustainability is foundational to Alfonso's approach. She embraces materials that already exist in the world, choosing to work with textiles and found elements that arrive with their own lived histories. Through stitching, shaping, layering, and dyeing, she transforms these remnants into intricate sculptures that blur the line between the natural and the handmade. This slow, intentional process underscores the value of reuse and the beauty that emerges when objects are allowed to evolve beyond their original purpose.

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Alfonso's work is deeply informed by personal memory and the intergenerational knowledge passed down through family, gardens, and everyday rituals. Her sculptures reference the comfort of touch, the act of care embedded in craft traditions, and the emotional resonance of objects that accompany us through life. In this way, her pieces become small monuments—markers of growth, resilience, and the possibility of renewal.

Through exhibitions, public projects, and collaborations across Miami's cultural landscape, Alfonso continues to expand the possibilities of sculptural practice. Her work invites viewers to slow down, look closely, and recognize the delicate systems that sustain life around us. By honoring both material histories and ecological wisdom, she offers a vision of art as a site of connection—between people, places, and the natural world that shapes us.

Alissa Alfonso — CV

Lives and works in Hollywood, FL

Education

1992 BFA Savannah College of Art & Design, Savannah, GA

Exhibitions

- 2025 “Weathering”, Miami Beach Botanical Gardens, Miami Beach, FL
Golden Thread II, South Street Seaport, NYC
- 2024 NADA, Baker—Hall, Miami, FL
Baker—Hall, Echos of Nature, Miami, FL
Studio 1608, On the Horizon, West Palm Beach, FL
Kates-Ferri Projects, Savage Garden, NYC
Arts Warehouse, “Green” Delray Beach, FL
Faena, Tierra Santa, Miami Beach, FL
- 2023 Faena, Tierra Santa, Miami Beach, FL
Alanna Miller Gallery, Earth Laughs in Flowers, NYC
Bridge Initiative, Biscayne, The Kampong, Miami, FL
Spring/Break Art Show, NYC
KDR305 Gallery, Florida Room No. 2: Biscayne Bay Edition, Hialeah, FL
Club Gallery, Bloom, Miami, FL
pinta PARC, Rubber Stamp Art Projects, Lima, Peru
Historic Carpenter House & Historic Hammerstien House, Hollywood Open Studios, Hollywood, FL
Tenth Street Gallery, Flora: The Impermanence of Beauty, Sarasota, FL

Alissa Alfonso — CV

- 2022 Harvest Project, Life at Street Level, Pinecrest Gardens, Miami FL
the Camp Gallery, A Room of One's Own, Miami, FL
Club Gallery, Variable Elements, Miami, FL
Elephant Gallery, The Leftovers Show, Nashville, TN
Women Pulling the Threads of Social Discourse, MOCA, Westport, CT
ARTSail- Pa-Hay-Okee
Land of Grassy Water, ArtServe, Ft. Lauderdale, FL
Superfine Fair, Miami Beach, FL
The Frank, Elemental, Terra, Tide, & Time, Pembroke Pines, FL
- 2021 SET/RISE The Studio at The Citadel, Miami, FL
WoArt Blog "Patterns in Nature", Virtual
Create Magazine "Healing from Within", Virtual
SHOWFIELDS, Miami Beach, FL
the Camp Gallery, Threads of Resilience, Miami, FL
Every Woman Biennial, London, UK
ILYW podcast "Good Bones", Virtual & Catalog
Contra/Common, "Soft", Bee Cave, Texas
Aloha Redlands, Water Installation, Homestead, FL
- 2020 CICA Museum, Contemporary Landscape 2020, Gyeonggi-do, Korea
Oolite Arts, Materialize, Miami Beach, FL
Harvest Project, "Home Sweet Home," Pinecrest Gardens, Miami, FL
SHOWFIELDS, Miami Beach, FL
the Camp Gallery & FAMA Flags, Miami, FL
Wassaic Project, Summer Exhibition "Now, more than ever"- Wassaic, NY
The Frank Gallery- Virtual workshop "Plastic Puffs"
Young at Art Museum, Virtual workshop "Paper Bag Mushrooms"

Alissa Alfonso — CV

- 2019 Young at Art Museum, Summer Guest Artist series, Davie, FL
NSU Art Museum, Ft. Lauderdale, FL
Harvest Project, Reclaimed Landscapes, Pinecrest Gardens, Miami, FL
Elephant Gallery “Smoke Show,” Nashville, TN
IKT Curatorial Alissa Alfonso “Nature’s Medicine”
Dimensions Variable, Miami, FL
IKT Curatorial “Cloud Installation”, Miami Beach, FL
Fort Lauderdale Art Fair “Interactive Initiative,” Ft. Lauderdale, FL
Fort Lauderdale Art Fair “Cloud Installation,” Ft. Lauderdale FL
Art and Cultural Center “Exposed,” Hollywood, FL
- 2018 Art and Cultural Center “Dual Roles,” Hollywood, FL
Girls Club “BarkWalk,” Ft. Lauderdale, FL
Marine Environmental Education Center “Jellyfish Installation,” Hollywood Beach, FL
Art and Cultural Center “Exposed,” Hollywood, FL
Outstanding Program Organizer, Broward Co Schools “Off the Canvas”
Raw POPUP “Alternative Future” Miami, FL
“Cushvator” Mana Contemporary 777 International Mall, Miami, FL
Humane Society Broward County Adoption Collaboration, Dania, FL
- 2017 Fort Lauderdale Art Fair, Ft. Lauderdale, FL
Solo Exhibit “Upcycled Nature” Miami Dade Public Library, Miami, FL
Art and Cultural Center “Plush,” Hollywood, FL

Alissa Alfonso — CV

- 2017 Outstanding Program Nominee, Broward Co. Schools “Off the Canvas”
Humane Society Broward County Adoption Collaboration, Dania, FL
- 2016 Superfine Art Fair Miami Art Week, Miami, FL
Pinta Miami “Mi Cuna” Miami Art Week, Miami, FL
La Mano Femminile, Hollywood, FL
Miami Makers Faire, Miami, FL
Humane Society Broward County Adoption Collaboration, Dania FL
- 2015 Outstanding Program Organizer Nominee Broward Co Schools “Off the Canvas”
Odd Duck Indie Bazaar, Instructional Workshop, Hollywood, FL
Humane Society Broward County Adoption Collaboration, Dania, FL
- 2014 Miami Mini Maker Faire, Wynwood Warehouse, Miami/Wynwood, FL
Stitch Rock, Historic Gymnasium, Delray Beach, FL
Girls Club, Art Fallout, Fort Lauderdale, FL
Red Shield Redesign, Salvation Army Art Auction, Fort Lauderdale, FL
- 2013 Stitch Rock, Historic Gymnasium, Delray Beach, FL
Miami Mini Maker Faire, The LAB Miami, Miami/Wynwood, FL
Art and Culture Center of Hollywood Sixth ALL, Media Juried Biennial, Hollywood, FL
- 2012 Made in Florida, Florida Craftsman Juried Exhibit, Lighthouse ArtCenter, Tequesta, FL (Group Exhibit)
Fresh Design, Fiber Art in the New Millennium, Florida Craftsman Juried Exhibit, FAU Second Avenue Studio Gallery, Ft. Lauderdale, FL (Group Exhibit)

Alissa Alfonso — CV

- 2012 Odd Duck Indie Bazaar, Hollywood Performing Arts Center,
Hollywood FL
TOC Project, Pop-Up Exhibit, Florida Craftsman, Bienes
Center for the Arts, Davie, FL
City Hall Exhibition, Hollywood, FL (Solo Exhibit)
Something of that Nature, Hollywood ArtsPark Gallery,
Hollywood, FL (Solo Exhibit)
- 2011 Art Basel, Alma Fine Art Gallery, Wynwood, FL (Group
Exhibit)
World and Eye Gallery, FAT Village, Fort Lauderdale, FL
(Group Exhibit)
Stitch Rock, Historic Gymnasium, Delray Beach, FL
Clay Fiber Wood, Florida Craftsmen, BC Downtown Center
Arts Space, Fort Lauderdale, FL (Group Exhibit)
Odd Duck Indie Bazaar, Historic Old Davie School House,
Davie, FL

Jen Clay



Baker—Hall

Jen Clay — About

Baker—Hall is pleased to present *Wild Dogs*, a new series of six quilted textile works (five pictured) by Jen Clay at NADA New York.

Wild Dogs is inspired by the strays, coyotes, and Carolina dogs that frequented the artist's childhood home in western North Carolina, with the core being her grandmother's threat that wild dogs in the woods would come get her if she was being bad. These warnings, later becoming a shared joke, form the foundation for a body of work that revisits memory, care, and inherited language.

As a child, the artist used to say, "At least I won't be alone." That idea of presence, of even fear becoming company, runs through the work, where remembered figures return as a pack of quilted forms.

The works are constructed from vintage 1960s–70s spring-themed bedsheets belonging to the artist's grandmother. Spring, with its associations of renewal, cyclical change, and perpetual return, becomes a material and conceptual anchor in the work, held in tension with the experience of time passing and what cannot be recovered.

Sewn messages are hidden beneath the tongues and along the gum lines of the forms, transforming language into something tactile, partially concealed, and bodily. The text is drawn from fragments of the grandmother's voice and remembered conversations, reshaped into memory-language that holds longing, belonging, and emotional residue. Each work includes a puppet mouth that softly bites, allowing for a physical, interactive engagement with the work.

Jen Clay — About

Following her grandmother's passing, Clay returned to this story as a way of giving form to grief and remorse. In the work, these feelings are embodied as a pack that persists over time, hounding and gnawing, rendered in soft, familiar materials that soften their weight while keeping their presence intact.

By using humor, softness, and play, *Wild Dogs* reframes difficult emotional states through approachable, tactile forms. The works invite viewers to engage physically and emotionally, encountering vulnerability through interaction, texture, and proximity.

Together, the six works function as a shifting pack, each holding a different fragment of memory, care, and emotional persistence.

Jen Clay — CV

B. 1985, Mountain View, NC
Lives and works in Miami, FL

Education

2014 MFA, Sculpture, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL
2010 BFA, Sculpture, University of North Carolina, Charlotte, NC

Solo Exhibitions

2025 Blasted Belonging, Girls' Club Collection, Fort Lauderdale, FL
2023 The World Doesn't Belong To You, Emerson Dorsch Gallery, Miami, FL
2022 Our Canopy, Pompano Beach Cultural Center, Pompano Beach, FL
2019 Welcome To You&Me, Young At Art Museum, Davie, FL
2018 We All Share, Practice Gallery, Philadelphia, PA

Selected Group Exhibitions

2023 Summer Gatherings, Project Art Space, New York City, NY
Imaginary Persons, Patient Info, Chicago, IL
Wild Garden, Wasmer Art Gallery, Florida Gulf Coast University, Fort Myers, FL
Our Canopy, The Frank Gallery, Pembroke Pines, FL
SouthXeast: Contemporary Art Triennial, Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, FL
2022 Lean-to, 924 Gallery, Oolite Arts, Miami Beach, FL
2020 Fruiting Bodies, Florida Biennial, Hollywood Art and Culture Center, Hollywood, FL
Mound, Idioms and Taxonomies, Oolite Arts, Miami, FL

Jen Clay — CV

- 2019 Soft Sanity, Performance, Norton Museum of Art, West Palm Beach, FL
Welcome Friends, South Florida Cultural Consortium, Museum of Contemporary Art, Miami, FL
- 2018 Crawl Out, Cubed: Luminous, Pensacola Museum of Art, Pensacola, FL
Steady Lack, The Front, New Orleans, LA
- 2017 Steady Lack, Rough Textures, Artists & Fleas, Brooklyn, NYC
Nearing, Off-site Performance Series, Girls' Club Collection, Commissioned by the Venue, Fort Lauderdale, FL
- 2016 Stewardess, Pink Noise: Flexing The Frequency, Girls' Club Collection, Commissioned by the venue, Fort Lauderdale, FL
Live Show, Performance, Swine Gallery, Chattanooga, TN
- 2015 UnderNeath, Outdoor Projection Series, Girls' Club Collection, Commissioned by the venue, Fort Lauderdale, FL
SpaceShow, Miami Performance International Festival, Museum of Contemporary Art, Miami, FL
- 2014 Mothers and Fathers, Art Grease, public broadcasting, Squeaky Wheel, Buffalo, NY
Live Show, Haunted Mill, Wassaic Projects, Wassaic, NY
- 2012 Go, Invitational, Harn Museum of Art, Gainesville, FL
- 2010 Monsters, Fresh, Association of Visual Arts, Chattanooga, TN
Visitors, Changing Places, Levine Museum of The New South, Charlotte, NC

Commissions & Public Projects

- 2023 Eyes of The Skin, Locust Projects, Miami, FL

Jen Clay — CV

- 2022 We Grew When You Weren't Looking, Miami-Dade Art In Public Places, Brisas Del Este, Miami, FL
- 2021 Patterns, Light The Night, Broward County Cultural Division, NSU Art Museum, Fort Lauderdale, FL

Notable Collections

- Oolite Arts, Miami Beach, FL
- Girls' Club, Fort Lauderdale, FL

Residencies & Fellowships

- 2024 Vermont Studio Center, Windgate Artist Fellowship, Johnson, VT
BMC Active Archive Residency at Black Mountain College, Black Mountain, NC
- 2022 Studio Resident, Oolite Arts, Miami, FL
- 2020 Home + Away Residency, Oolite Arts x Atlantic Center for the Arts, New Smyrna Beach, FL
- 2019 South Florida Cultural Consortium fellowship, Broward, FL
- 2017 Existent Books, Nocturnal Press and IS Projects, Fort Lauderdale, FL
- 2015 Digital Residency, North and Found, London, England
- 2014 The Wassaic Projects, Wassaic, NY
- 2011 Bakehouse Art Complex, Studio Resident Artist, Miami, FL

Grants & Awards

- 2022 Knight New Work Award, Knight Foundation, Miami, FL
- 2016 Creative Investment Program Grant, Broward, FL
- 2013 Visiting Artist Grant, New World School of Arts, Miami, FL
Travel Grant, UFL, Gainesville FL

Jen Clay — CV

2010 Women's Achievement Award, Charlotte Charter Women's Fund, Charlotte NC

Selected Press & Publications

2023 Creating Spaces, episode 1101, Artist Loft, South FL PBS
2022 Katz, Jason, Stange Bodies, Strange Days, Burnaway
2020 Stories Cultivated by Oolite Arts, episode 811, Art Loft, Special Episode, South Florida PBS
2019 LaVelle, Ciara, Jen Clay's Annihilation-Inspired Exhibit at Young at Art Isn't Just for Kids, Miami New Times
2018 Soller, Kristen, Episode 12: Beautiful Unsettling Things, Kidnapped For Dinner, Jolt Radio
2017 De Los Angeles, Maria, Artist Jen Clay on Nearing, Sesame Street, and Ghosts in the Woods, Miami New Times
Barbist, Maria Theresa; Batista, Elysa D., Volume 20, Rocking Chair Sessions, Podcast
Ramos, Olivia, Conversation between Jennifer Clay and Olivia Ramos, WorkUntitled Magazine