

# COLOSSAL

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## Amelia Cross Blends Bespoke Tailoring and Trompe-L'œil Painting in Her Sartorial Studies

By Grace Ebert



"The Fool" (2026). All images courtesy of Amelia Cross, shared with permission

Although Amelia Cross subscribes to the belief that our sartorial choices are a way to signal who we are and what we care about, she also knows there are more subliminal details hiding in personal style. A nametag curling at the edges or a pen bleeding through a shirt pocket stand in stark contrast to a perfectly pressed collar or shiny brogues, but each also has the potential to conceal or obscure. These covert elements are what the London-born artist is most interested in unpacking.

After receiving a degree in bespoke tailoring at the London College of Fashion, followed by a master's in painting at the Royal College of Art, Cross began to meld the two disciplines. "I originally painted figureless compositions of clothing on a flat linen surface but felt my hands itching to use my sewing machine alongside painting. I started making small studies of sewn pockets and structured collars with painted objects and buttons, and I found this odd juxtaposition of the real and painted shadows really intriguing," she said.



"The Ice-Breaker" (2026)

The artist landed on the concept of "sewn paintings," which combine trompe-l'œil methods with constructed, sculptural details. Illusory in technique and legible in subject matter, the works prompt the viewer to decipher which three-dimensional components are real.

Cross stretches her own canvases and sometimes thinks about the wooden armature as a body, one she's able to dress and style. More focused works hone in on a singular pocket or pair of shoes. Many of her ideas, though, emerge while observing other commuters on the London Underground. She explains:

*During rush hour, you're often packed in a carriage like sardines, which is sometimes why my paintings have a slim tight crop as I can only see a partial element of clothing at a time. You can almost build up a whole character for someone based on what's inside their pocket or what socks they are wearing to work!*

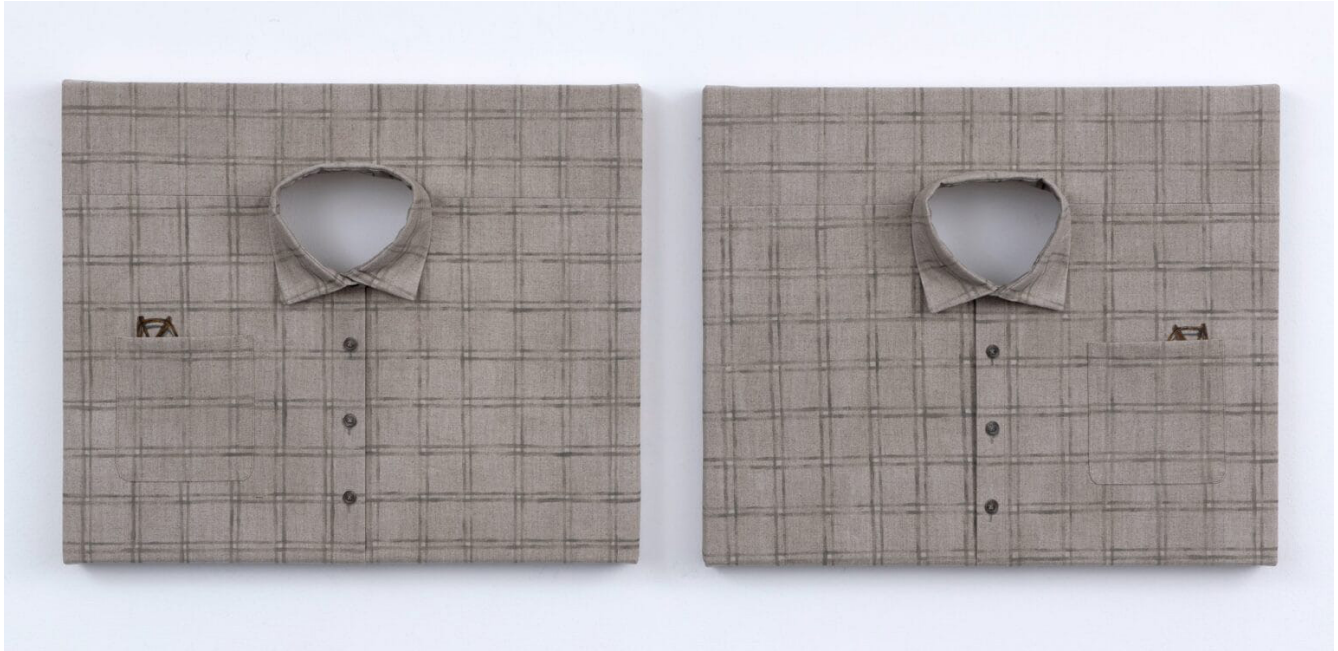
For her solo exhibition *Discipline and Display* at Nino Mier Gallery, Cross leans into dress codes, uniforms, and the overt or more subconscious rules that inform how we put together an outfit. The hidden agendas and social structures that inform fashion appear in the artist's compositions, too.



"The Brit" (2026)

"I often conceal secrets or confessions in the works (some on display and some totally hidden) such as painted inner collar labels, messages inside pockets and buttons on the sides and undersides of paintings," she adds. The goal is to entice the viewer to get up close and personal with the disembodied forms, offering the opportunity to study the minute details and signals we might otherwise overlook.

If you're in New York, *Discipline and Display* is on view through August 7. Otherwise, find more from Cross on Instagram.



"The Pair" (2026)



"The Compromise" (2026)



"The Miscreant" (2026)



"The Cowboy" (2026)



Detail of "The Ice-Breaker" (2026)



"The Compromise" (2026)