



INTERNATIONAL

TORONTO

LIZ MAGOR

SUSAN HOBBS

Images of sleep and its material articles (such as beds, sheets and sleeping bags) densely populate Liz Magor's oeuvre. Over the past 40 years, she has explored her subject extensively through photography, installation and sculpture that involves rubber or polymer gypsum casting processes. Her most recent production employs old blankets found at thrift stores and asks of this "raw material" a minimum of transmutation. Newly cleaned, neatly folded and draped over hangers of different dimensions, the blankets were irregularly spaced along one wall of the gallery, evoking garments or pairs and groups of individuals.

The label on *Kenwood (salmon)*—all works 2011—declares it "Pure Virgin Wool," but that seems to contradict the artificial texture of its fabric. As with most of these works, *Kenwood (salmon)* relies on an interplay of observation and memory: its antique salmon hue and compositional detailing engage the viewer in the present moment while simultaneously evoking the past. The blanket's worn bottom border has been replaced with a hard gypsum cast—a vestige from Magor's sculptural practice—that appears as an uncanny duplicate of the original satin, complete with creases, bunches and sewing-machine punctures.

The fiery red and orange label of *Maple Leaf* has been stitched on inside out so that it can't be read. Small stained areas of bright red over light blue penetrate this blanket's cream-

colored wool. Visible beneath its top layer on the left side are folds of dull pink synthetic satin and layers of slightly iridescent blue silk ornamented with a flower and vine pattern. Although probably coarse and inexpensive, this elaborately patterned silk seems extravagant and beautiful when seen against the drabber, everyday wool. As in many of Magor's works, the hand of the artist can be difficult to identify at first. Against the pink, blue and yellow plaid pattern of *Eatonia*, thread is stitched in colors that do not match the wool beneath it and in places where, in fact, there may have been no holes to mend. *Moth-proofed* shares the same background color as many of these blankets, an elusive or idealized Caucasian "skin tone." These are subtle works, existing somewhere between the conditions of home and homelessness.

Magor has said she thinks of the blankets as drawings when folded and as paintings when unfolded. *Hudson's Bay Double*, an unfolded 10-foot-long monochrome, initially appears black but really is an impossibly deep blue—like an Ad Reinhardt that the eyes need time to adjust to. Its moth-eaten holes have been filled or edged with a pure silver, moltenlike polarized gypsum, arrested in their chance pattern as if they had been subjected to a surreal cauterizing process. In this work, the "fixing" of damage is beautifully transformative.

—E.C. Woodley