

## THE UNIBROW

Alison Elizabeth Taylor: "Now You See Me"

By Erin Feher

May 14, 2026



Installation view, photo by Phillip Maisel

Alison Elizabeth Taylor pieces together the feminine experience at Jessica Silverman

"I would love to be their mirror, because I feel like what I reflect back is good for them," says New York-based artist Alison Elizabeth Taylor. We are talking about her new body of work and her first solo show on the West Coast, on view at Jessica Silverman in San Francisco through May 30. But we are also talking about our teenage daughters. Between us, we have three, a fact I didn't know when I first saw the show. But my heart contracted a little when I studied *Grahamsville Fair* (2026), a tightly cropped image of three feminine bodies from the shoulders down: Tiny frayed jean shorts, the tumble of oversized sweatshirts, slices of midriff, and wrists trimmed with secret meaning—a string, a band, a bracelet. I recognized these signifiers instantly, and I could tell that the rendering of them was an expression of both curious fascination and deep love. Exactly what it feels like to have a teenage daughter.

Taylor is moving into her third decade as a celebrated artist, known for her exquisite and expressive marquetry work. Her craft is so precise that the complex medium only comes into focus through close study. Over the years, her subjects have varied widely, from foreclosed homes to nude men to desert landscapes. Taylor's current show, "I'll Be Your Mirror," doesn't focus on the edge of adolescence exclusively, but it does confine its focus to women and the feminine experience.

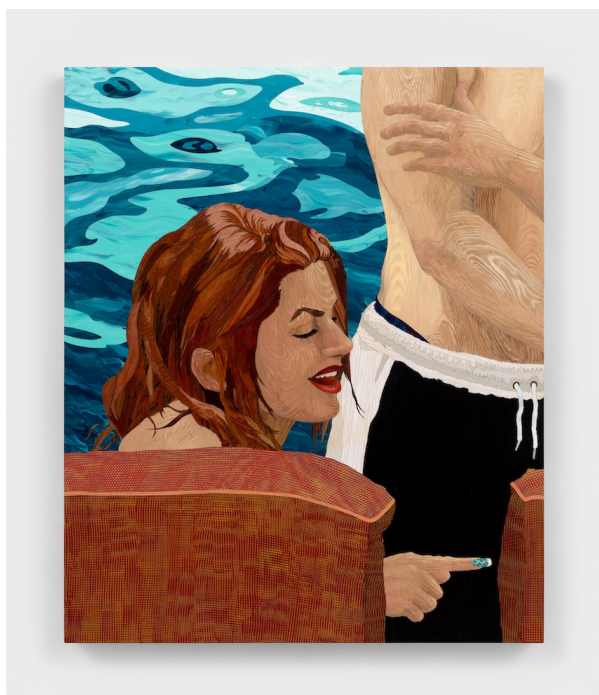
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"The show centers around young womanhood and the dopamine drip of images and everything that they're exposed to in society: this constant reflection through social media, through phones and photography," says Taylor. Taylor adds to this oeuvre, though her gaze is undeniably empathetic, inquisitive and generous. Each of Taylor's works is made up of countless parts and pieces, painstakingly sketched and mapped and measured and sliced, before being expertly fit together, sanded, smoothed and layered once again. They take months—sometimes years—to complete.

"These little pieces of wood are incredibly brittle and hard to work with," says Taylor, who has a 20-year-old laser cutter that she can use for smaller pieces, but most she cuts by hand with an Exacto knife. "And I hate it. It's boring. I have carpal tunnel. I could bitch about it for 10 more minutes, but it's what's got to get done."

Taylor's words tumble through my head as I study *Untangled* (2026), a masterful collage of countless shades of brown streaked by each wood's signature grain. Thousands of hours of intricate work to capture a head of hair, tousled and perfectly imperfect; and to portray a young woman, at rest and momentarily shut off from the world, dreaming and vulnerable and comfortable. For anyone who has witnessed the fraught intensity of a teen at work on their own hair, or has clocked hours in front of the mirror themselves, this work is nothing short of an homage, a sacrifice, and a gift of deep recognition—a sacred mirror. —Erin Feher

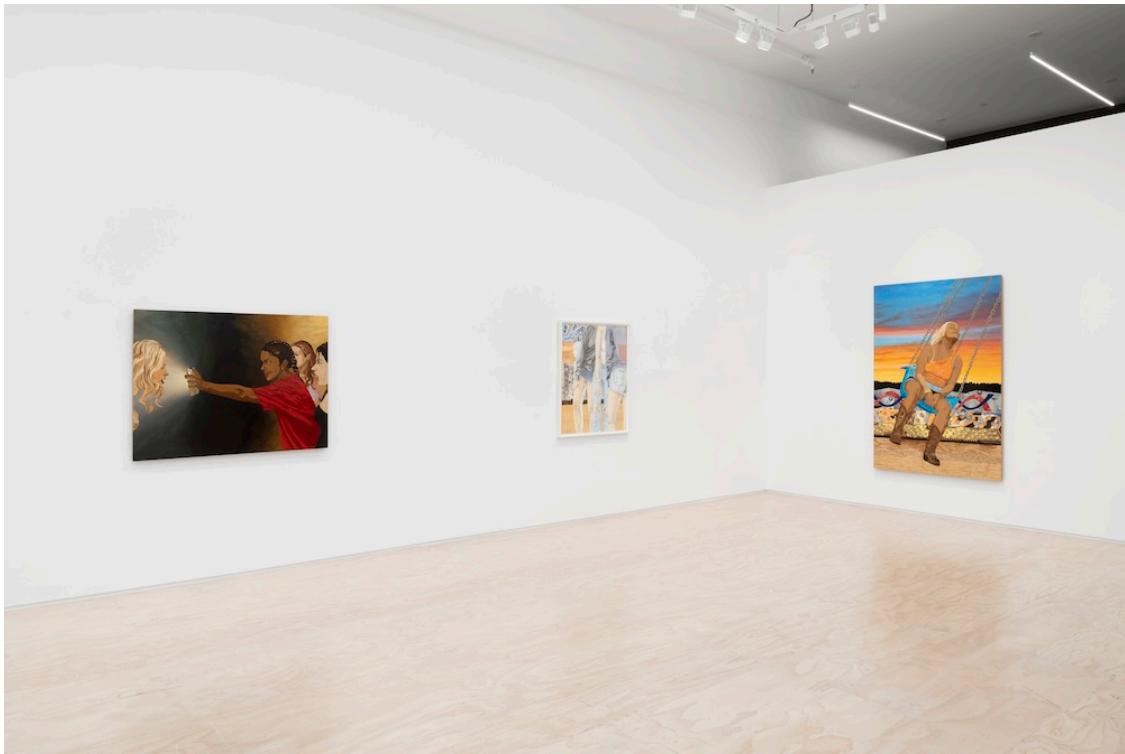


Left: Mother of My Mother of My Mother..., 2025 Wood veneer, shellac, acrylic, oil paint, and glitter on panel 36 3/8 x 30 3/8 x 1 3/4 inches / 92.4 x 77.2 x 4.4 cm // Courtesy of the artist, James Cohan, New York, and Jessica Silverman, San Francisco // Photo by Erin Brady

Right: Mother of My Mother of My Mother..., 2025 Wood veneer, shellac, acrylic, oil paint, and glitter on panel 36 3/8 x 30 3/8 x 1 3/4 inches / 92.4 x 77.2 x 4.4 cm // Courtesy of the artist, James Cohan, New York, and Jessica Silverman, San Francisco // Photo by Erin Brady

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Left: A Library of Fatherly Wisdom, 2026 Wood veneer, shellac, and acrylic on panel 21 1/2 x 19 3/4 x 1 3/4 inches / 54.6 x 50.2 x 4.4 cm // Courtesy of the artist, James Cohan, New York, and Jessica Silverman, San Francisco // Photo by Erin Brady



Right: Portrait of the artist by Erin Brady // Courtesy of the artist, James Cohan, New York, and Jessica Silverman, San Francisco

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