

prairie excellence



## BEST MID-CAREER CRAFT ARTIST

# best



MATT GOULD, Red Deer, Alberta

A practicing artist for over 30 years with work in private and public collections across Canada, the United States and in Europe, Matt Gould drew first blood as a needler pulling thread over a decade ago when he created his first textile piece *blanket.statement* based on the button blankets of the Northwest Coastal tribes. Over time, Matt's addiction to linen, wool and gingham has inspired him to create pieces large and small.

"I enjoy the mechanics of the work, giving "mistakes" their due. I enjoy being a man challenging stereotypes and perceptions as to what is and what is not acceptable as a masculine pursuit."

*The Italianate* was created through advertising on the internet for male figure models that would both pose and answer a simple "erotic" questionnaire about themselves. Matt started with a drawing and then, using the information gleaned from the questionnaire, added details. *The Italianate* makes reference to both the country of origin of the model and the rather ornamented way in which this very masculine man lived (his room was filled with extravagant art in gilt frames and toile covered chairs). In his statement he found "everything sensual, erotic, even a fence post" and was very highly sexually driven. In the gay community (and perhaps beyond) he classified himself as a sex pig, thus the mask on his face.

*Photo by Laura O'Connor*

## THE ITALIANATE

2010, Vintage wool, linen, industrial felt, cotton thread  
29 x 54 inches  
\$1900

*Not long ago, Matt Gould's idiosyncratic approach to embroidery and textiles first came to my attention in an Alberta Craft Council exhibition, InTENSIONS. Marrying medium and content, the artist brings a contemporary sensibility to his craft by, for instance, making the flaws found in the vintage fabrics he uses apparent and by challenging societal mores as to what is acceptable as a "masculine pursuit". Gould also explores gay culture through works like The Italianate and as child-like as the wall-mounted felt-lined piece may appear on first glance, it is a portrait of a masked erotic man.*  
- MBL

