

Thousands of Brushstrokes: Antonio Santín's New Rug Paintings



Antonio Santín, *I'm Only Happy When It Rains*, 2023 (detail)

This month in New York, artist Antonio Santín presents shockingly hyperreal oil paintings that depict life-size undulating ornate rugs. On view at Marc Straus Gallery, each painting is a surprising illusion of a carpet in 3D space, but up close, they're even more impressive. Painstakingly applied with a modified syringe, thousands of tiny brushstrokes demand sustained inspection and a new fascination for both textile and paint.



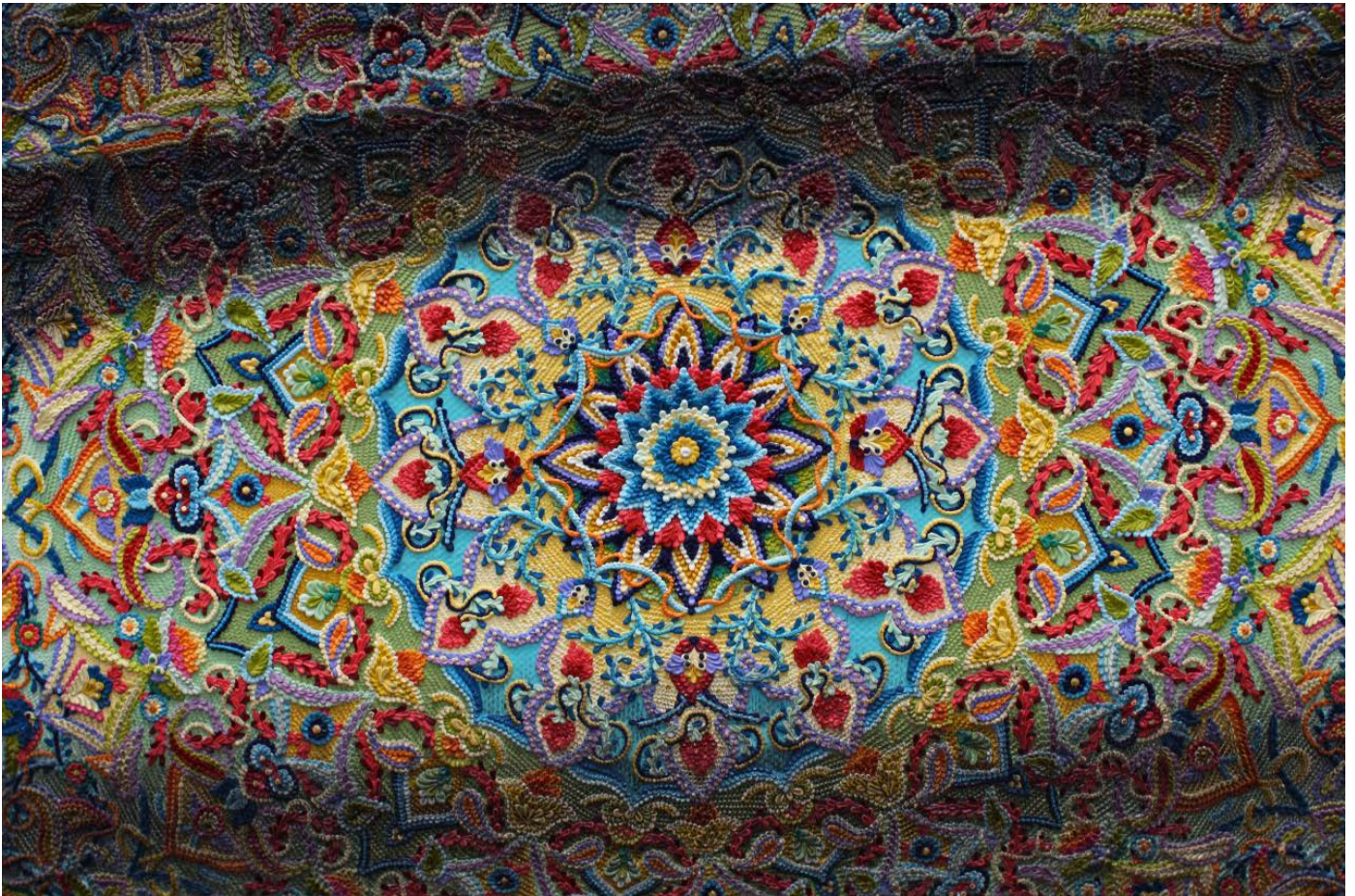
Installation view, Antonio Santín, MARC STRAUS Gallery, New York

The largest paintings here span over seven feet across and depict geometric and floral patterned rugs in space. Thousands of paint dots mimic the warp and weave of intricate patterns while longer extrusions of paint perfectly impersonate knots and fringes on each side. Taking up to 9 months to complete, the final stage of the process is an application of black glaze that introduces areas of shadow.



Antonio Santín, *Poligamia*, 2023

Born in Madrid, Antonio Santín's work is inspired by classic painting traditions like chiaroscuro and trompe l'oeil while introducing an inventive new application process. Each painting is also a play between illusion and real physical depth: though the folds of the rugs are an illusion, the paint itself is sculptural. Santín has described his work as "micro sculptural reliefs" – a texture that is only magnified by the black glaze.



Antonio Santín, *Bonanza*, 2022 (detail)

Santín's choice to render these rugs as scrunched 3D landscapes also provides satisfying distortions of the original patterns. In one of my favorite works, "I'm Only Happy When It Rains," rows of octagons bend and crop from their original grid. In "Supernova" a folded central geometric star provides enough information to imagine the full unfolded design – all adding to sense that these paintings are even bigger than their physical dimensions.

Link: <https://design-milk.com/thousands-of-brushstrokes-antonio-santins-new-rug-paintings/>