

Artsy

3 novembre 2025



Par Cristina Sanchez-Kozyreva

The Artsy Vanguard 2026: Élise Peroi

I stumbled just before reaching the door of Élise Peroi's home and studio in Arles, France. While the steep medieval stairs were partly to blame, I had been distracted, thinking about Peroi's translucent, pastel-hued weavings, which I first encountered two years earlier. Suspended within window-like frames reminiscent of looms, her silk works open up ethereal spaces evoking ancestral tapestries, yet speak a diaphanous contemporary language entirely their own.

Before settling in Arles, Peroi studied textile design at the Académie Royale des Beaux-Arts in Brussels, where she earned her MFA in 2015. At the end of her studies, she received the Prize of Excellence from the City of Brussels, which led to institutional projects and residencies all over the world. Today, her work continues to subtly evolve as projects and accolades accumulate. On November 19th, Peroi will receive the Pierre Cardin Prize in sculpture. Last spring, she had her first solo exhibition in New York, "For Thirsting Flowers," with Carvalho. In 2026, the gallery will also present her work in a solo booth at Frieze Los Angeles.

"I wanted to do everything I could to keep weaving, and my work eventually found its voice in the contemporary art field," said Peroi, reflecting on her education. She felt drawn to painting and pigments, intertwining images — such as illuminated manuscripts — with textiles. "It took the form of installations, with a focus on frames and how the viewer moves around them."

Peroi's process is rooted in the hand-weaving and repetition of ancestral techniques, into which she braids her own reflections on landscape, gesture, architecture, and breath. "I can only work on one composition at a time, and it can take me anywhere from a week to three months," she noted. After an initial phase of research and drawing — often sparked by a resonant philosophical or poetic sentence — she begins weaving, which can be a cathartic process.



Increased Interest

Elise Peroi
Songes II, 2022



Elise Peroi
Région de passage I, 2023
Carvalho

Early on in her practice, weaving had a psychoanalytic dimension. “It was difficult, though not in a negative way. It was about letting things come out of the body,” she explained. But her relationship to the loom has since evolved. “It’s not meditative, exactly, but it calms me,” she says. “I reconnected the warp threads just before you arrived,” Peroi told me, almost as a confession. “It gave me a sense of relief.” She exhaled visibly to show what she meant. It’s as if the loom catches her in the midst of the leap of faith that creating a piece requires. “When I start weaving, I feel like I’m moving forward. I see something taking shape.”

As the work progresses, Peroi paints abstract and nature-inspired motifs directly onto the silk. She then cuts into the painted surfaces and reweaves selected fragments, leaving others open. The tapestries are mounted onto wooden, rectangular structures or frames, usually in pairs.

Diamond-shaped openings appear at the sides, echoing the rhythmic openings and closings of the silk weft interlacing with the linen warp. Peroi installs these weavings so that our gaze travels through up to four layers—such as in the large installation *Vestige des plantes absentes* (2025), currently on view in the group show “The Rose That Grew From Concrete” at the Museo di Sant’Orsola in Florence.

Her works feel at once painterly and architectural: sculptures where threads and images float are held in soft tension. They seem to breathe, pulling us in like a gentle draft—not unlike the voile curtain I saw billowing softly in the sunny breeze at her studio window.



Élise Peroi, installation view of "The Rose That Grew From Concrete" at the Museo di Sant'Orsola, Florence, Italy, 2025. Photo by Claudio Ripalti. Courtesy of the artist and CARVALHO.



Élise Peroi, installation view of "The Rose That Grew From Concrete" at the Museo di Sant'Orsola, Florence, Italy, 2025. Photo by Claudio Ripalti. Courtesy of the artist and CARVALHO.

"I don't have much of a background in painting or the visual arts," Peroi admitted, "but there are two important figures in my family. The first is my mother, who's a highly skilled seamstress. The other is my grandmother, on my father's side, who was an illuminator and calligrapher. She worked on the *Kalendrier des Bergiers*, a medieval calendar printed from engraved wood."

As a child, Peroi spent hours among the sewing machines and tools of her mother's workshop. "From a very young age, I had the urge to create pieces that spoke of literature or poetry, interweaving the materiality of fabric with poems," she recalls. With her grandmother, she acted as a helping hand, making labels and performing other repetitive tasks. She also learned to write with a quill and apply gold leaf with a brush.



Élise Peroi, installation view of "For Thirsting Flowers" at CARVALHO, New York, 2025. Courtesy of the artist and CARVALHO.

During her textile studies, she practiced the Chinese meditative martial art *qi gong*, and she's since sought to integrate its embodied understanding of space into her process. Today, the non-woven spaces in her work evoke breath, inviting a form of presence within the landscapes she constructs.

The writings of philosophers such as François Jullien — especially his 2014 book *Vivre de paysage* — offered her a way to think of landscape not as a static image, but as something traversed and inhabited. This experiential approach continues to guide Peroi's installations, which hover between architecture and nature — spaces of circulation where even the veins of a leaf can be read as a narrative.

More recently, Peroi has grown especially excited about exploring the relationship between weaving and painting, two practices that have long shaped her work. She's interested in painting not just as an image, but as a material ensemble — canvas, frame, and support — where no element dominates and each holds equal weight in shaping the work. This has led her to experiment with smaller formats that recall classical marine paintings. Since moving to Arles, she has also embraced a broader palette and begun playing with the natural sheen of silk threads — dulling where it's painted, glowing where left bare.

Her work often seems to lead her before she fully knows the way. And yet, there were clues even when she was specializing in weaving in Brussels. "I don't remember saying so but apparently," she said, "friends remind me I always wanted to make woven paintings."

For Peroi, it seems, the thread has been there all along.