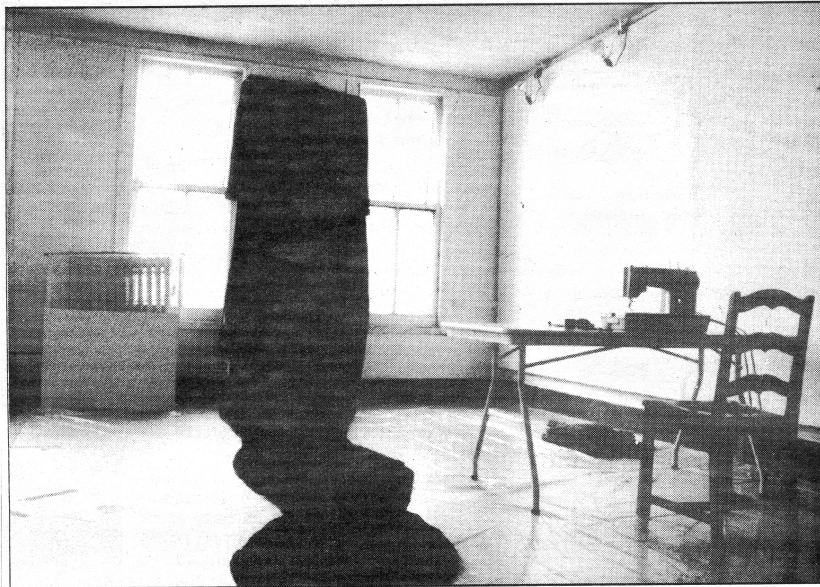


Kunter, Janet. "Beverly Semmes: More than window-dressing", *The Dallas Morning News*. 22 October, 1993.

FRIDAY, OCT. 22, 1993



Beverly Semmes, a New York artist, exhibits one of her offbeat installations based on women's clothes at 5501 Columbia gallery through Jan. 22.

Beverly Semmes: More than window-dressing

By Janet Kutner
Art Critic of The Dallas Morning News

Beverly Semmes is a hot young New York talent who has recently begun to gain widespread attention for her offbeat installations based on women's clothes. This site-specific work, jointly commissioned by Contemporary Culture of Dallas and the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art (SECCA) in Winston-Salem, N.C., consists of a colossal purple velvet gown with a pale-yellow train that covers virtually the entire floor of the gallery.

Ms. Semmes describes the object as "a giant prom dress that is so good-girl-like that it has become twisted and evil." By expanding a traditional form into monumental proportions, the artist succeeds in taking it beyond any normal context, so that it reflects not only a stereotypical form of wearing apparel but makes a strong statement about feminist issues.

Alan Govenar, who runs Contemporary Cul-

ture with his wife, artist Kaleta Doolin, first saw Ms. Semmes' work last year, when she did an installation at the Sculpture Center in New York.

The huge, red dress that was the focal point of that exhibit sparked his interest, and the initial plan was to show that same work in Dallas. When the red dress sold, he approached SECCA about collaborating on an exhibit, and Ms. Semmes agreed to create a new work specifically for the two venues. The exhibition will appear at SECCA from April 23-July 17 of next year.

Ms. Semmes has been in Dallas this week to install her work and will be present at the opening reception tonight. She will return to the Dallas Museum of Art on Feb. 12 for a DARE (Dallas Artists Research and Exhibition) lecture.

■ **DETAILS:** "Beverly Semmes: A New Installation," at 5501 Columbia gallery, 5501 Columbia. Friday through Jan. 22. Opening reception Friday from 6 to 8 p.m. Gallery hours: Thursdays and Fridays 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturdays noon to 5 p.m. Free. For information, call 823-8955.

The Dallas Morning News