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Helen Rae working on a fashion-inspired drawing.

Photo: Sami Drasin

Helen Rae

by GALERIE EDITORS

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At 81, Helen Rae does not fit the bill for a typical emerging artist. She got a late start—at age 52—when her mother enrolled her at California’s First Street Gallery and Art Center, a program for adults with disabilities. Although she’s been nonverbal and deaf since birth, Rae’s drawings have a strong, clear voice that shows her gift for sourcing inspiration from the world of haute couture.

Personal Style: Rae’s drawings in colored pencil and graphite reinterpret high fashion images in the artist’s unique, expressive technique.



Helen Rae, *June 15, 2016*, (2016). Photo: Courtesy of Tierra Del Sol Gallery

Model Subjects: She combs magazines for images that catch her eye—whether that’s Karlie Kloss in a black-and-white Oscar de la Renta gown shot by Annie Leibovitz or a model in a Julien d’Ys floral headdress captured by Willy Vanderperre.

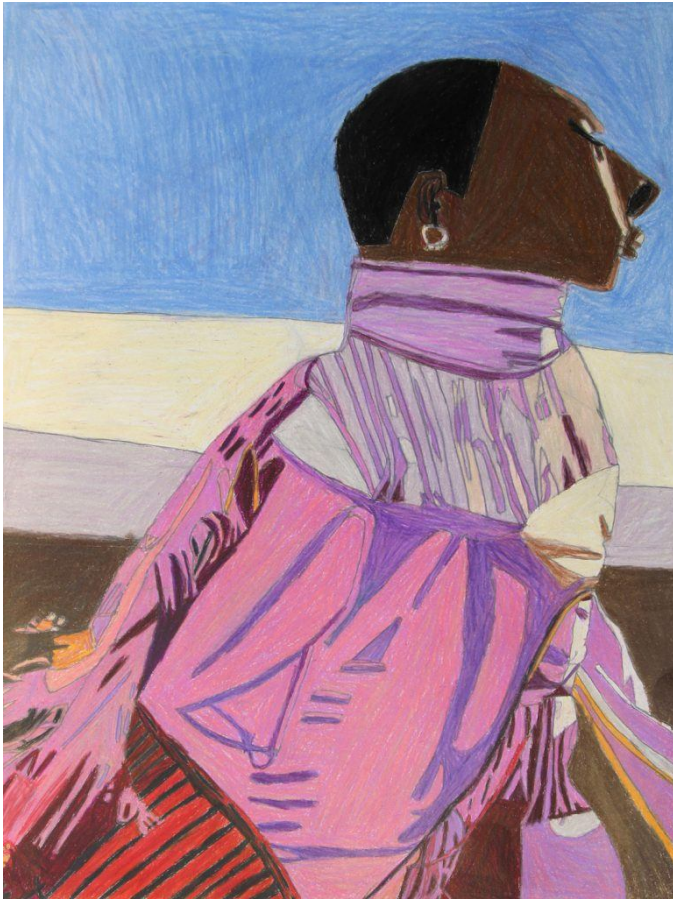
Big Break: No one saw her work publicly until 2014, when gallerist Paige Wery showed her drawings in a group show at the [Good Luck Gallery](#) in Los Angeles. Rae then received her first

solo show there in 2015, which sold out, followed by an exhibition in 2017 at White Columns in New York.

“I love Helen’s interpretations of fashion ads, her bold use of colors, and great fashion sense.” — Beth Rudin DeWoody



Helen Rae, *June 5, 2018*, (2018). Photo: Courtesy of Tierra Del Sol Gallery



Helen Rae, *July 16, 2018*, (2018). Photo: Courtesy of Tierra Del Sol Gallery

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