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EDITORIAL

by Elizabeth Kozlowski

Soft Borders

We put our membership to task with this year's theme of "Soft Borders" for the 2019 *Surface Design Journal* Exhibition in Print, and you did not disappoint. Interpretations ranged from the use of maps and physical demarcations to abstract representations of exclusionary social practices. Materials and techniques spanned from the traditional to the contemporary.

After a hurricane scare here in New Orleans over the summer, I thought a lot about the physical borders we erect. For example, the levee that surrounds the city—for without it, this area would be inhabitable to humans. Managing geographical borders has become the topic of political conversation as we grapple to assist asylum seekers across the globe.

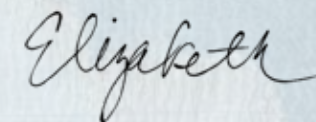
Borders are also a familiar tool for artists. For example, they can be used as a pictorial framing device. I have added a border to a quilt on more than one occasion to save myself from the (sometimes) weary process of piecing. The selvedge or border is also a necessary part of textile manufacturing and keeps the ends of fabric from unraveling. It would seem we cannot escape the boundaries we create.

In the pages of this issue, you will recognize familiar faces and new friends. It is exciting to follow the growth and development of our membership and to learn from those who have dedicated their livelihood to the field of fiber arts. Each round is a blind jury followed by a conversation between the guest editor and myself. This year we had the pleasure of welcoming Monika Auch, a frequent *SDJ* contributor and practicing artist. She brings an international perspective paired with a contagious passion for our field.

I want to thank all of the artists who submitted and congratulate the individuals who were selected as this year's featured artists and award winners. I believe these pages demonstrate that our material contributions have purpose and a voice.

We hope to see you in St, Louis!

Please share your stories of personal and artistic discovery at journaleditor@surfacedesign.org



Elizabeth Kozlowski
Surface Design Journal Editor

Alison Muir *Custodial Water* 2019, cotton, silk organza, dye, Pentel pen, pencil, block-printed, drawn, hand and machine-stitched, 38" x 29". Photo: Andy Payne.



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Cover image: **Hannah Mitsu Shimabukuro** *Minsā in Huck Lace* 2019, installation, cotton fabric, monofilament, stainless steel, wooden platforms, hand-woven, kasuri discharge-dyed, double-woven, 90" x 84" x 32". Photo: Mariah Nehus, models: Nandita Vyas, Hannah Mitsu Shimabukuro.

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SURFACE DESIGN ASSOCIATION

Our Vision: To inspire creativity, encourage innovation, and advocate for artistic excellence as the global leader in textile-inspired art and design.

Our Mission: Promote awareness and appreciation of textile-inspired art and design through publications, exhibitions and conferences to the international art and craft community.

Our Objectives:

- To provide opportunities for learning, collaboration, and meaningful affiliations
- To mentor and support emerging artists, designers, and students
- To inform members about the latest developments and innovations in the field
- To recognize the accomplishments of our members
- To encourage critical dialogue about our field
- To inspire new directions in fiber and textiles
- To raise the visibility of textiles in the contemporary art world

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GUEST EDITOR STATEMENT: SOFT BORDERS

by **Monika Auch**

What is the influence of technological developments, new media and, on a much grander scale, global themes like climate change, political conflicts and identity issues on textile art? **Surface Design Journal's Annual International Exhibition In Print** wanted to pose questions and trigger investigations. Juror **Elizabeth Kozlowski** and I were impressed to receive so many brilliant, thoughtful and skillful contributions. In this essay I wish to pay homage to the dexterous hands and the curious, empathic minds that immersed themselves within the theme of "Soft Borders." The diverse interpretations and commitments resulted in poignant perspectives and beautiful textile art.

The crossing of borders has become a global phenomenon. It can be either a pleasure trip or a perilous flight for economic or political reasons. When related to the artistic working process, it can be the transgressing of traditional methods or appropriation from other disciplines. However, at borders that are meant to divide, an exchange is still possible. This may be a fluent, fertile process and possibly lead to cutting-edge innovation. Or it can be a standoff without exchange, marked by

Susan Smith *The passage: mourning cloth* 2019, linen, woodblock, screenprint, boro-stitched, laser-cut, 72" x 72".



Amy Usdin *Dismount Left* 2019, cotton, linen, paper, silk, wool, repurposed horse fly net (rope), needle-woven, knotted, 31" x 15" x 6".

a mine field in no-man's land, much like the Iron curtain which divided Eastern and Western Europe after WWII. The headlines of news are dominated on a daily basis with stories around borders in the America's and continental Europe including the exclusion of certain groups of people based on race or gender.

Many of the works represented in this publication address these current issues. Artists worked with themes ranging from political questions about equal rights, the use of natural resources and climate change, to works that turn the gaze inward, concerning spirituality, identity and gender. Artists used textile and other techniques and a great variety of materials. They are conscious of their imbued value and meaning and apply them with great dexterity and sensitivity. Some works are critical comments, some quiet reflections. Others excel in prolific engagement and long-term commitments to social and community work.

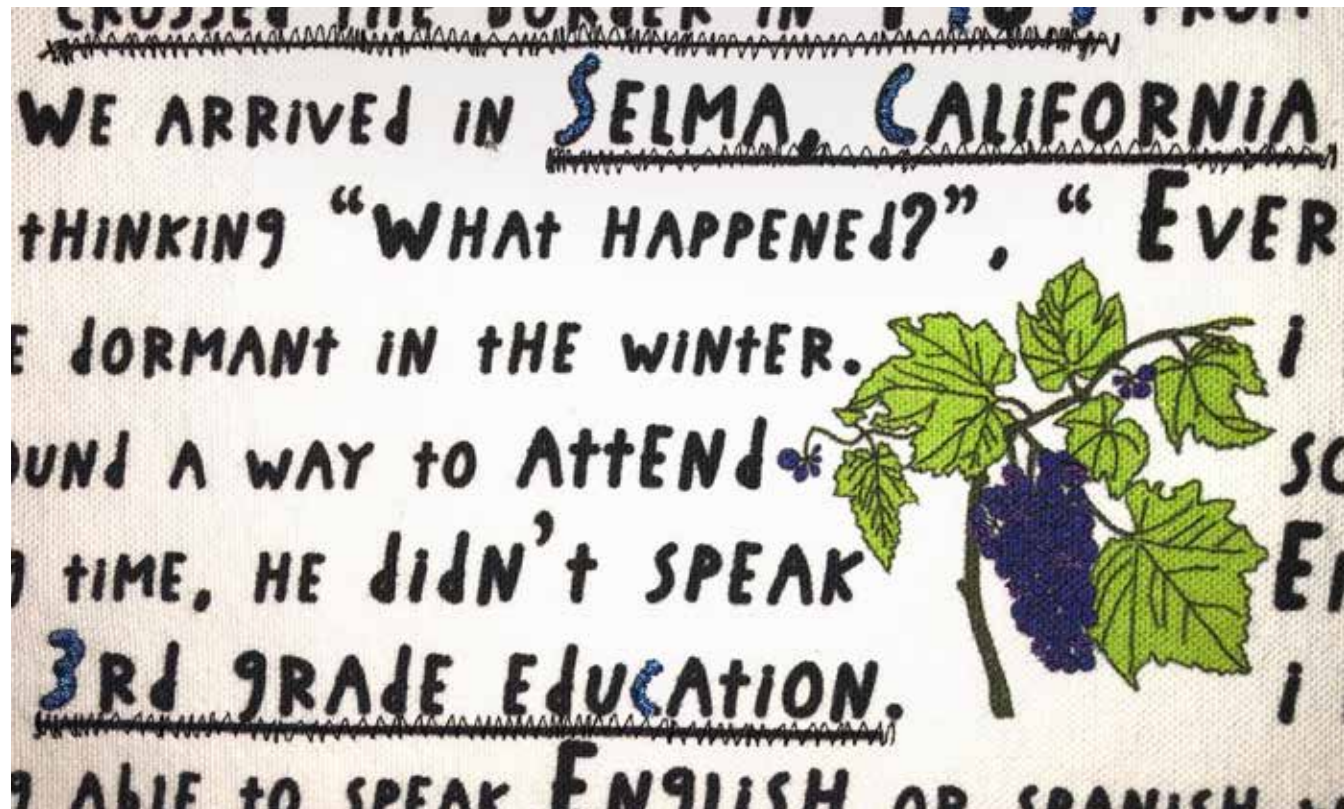
Nomads

A mesmerizing, archaic form is contained in the sculptures crafted by **Amy Usdin**. The loosely intertwined ropes and softly colored, braided and woven leather strips evoke a sense of longing for nature and companionship with animals. Much like traveling on a horse, we long for a pastoral way of life, before climate change started to threaten us. The openness of the sculpture with its subtle use of materials is intriguing and invites contemplation.

Susan Smith's work, especially the canteens covered with cloth, are visually related to Usdin's object but carry a much darker aura. They serve as a harrowing statement about forced nomadism based on long-term research by the artist. The installation and performance documentation depict the inhuman conditions at the site of the Texas / Mexico border in 2019. It is a reminder of the fact that humans need water in



Susan Smith *The passage: canteen* 2019, water canteen, recycled textiles, collagraph print, jute, found objects from Texas/Mexico border, hand-stitched, 20 canteens in series, each 11".



order to survive and points at the cruel act of taking the most basic life support away from refugees. An additional part of Smith’s installation contains clay bricks and a cloth worked in boro stitching: a “mourning cloth” which references the arduous paths refugees follow. Smith uses clay and burlap, materials that have been with humans since the dawn of time supplying shelter and help for carrying essentials like food and water.

Alicia Decker approaches the theme of immigration with scientific diligence. She records personal stories of Oaxacano people and the assimilation process that follows immigration and leads to a hybrid cultural and personal identity. The stories are transferred onto woven cloth stitch by stitch, highlighting the fact that textile practice remains crucial to the cultural and personal identities of many Oaxacano indigenous communities.

Mediation of the eye

Anne-Claude Cotty uses a pin-hole camera to show the viewer a different world. This technique, dating back to Italian painter **Caravaggio** (1571-1610), was used by painters to project a realistically proportioned image onto canvas. Cotty’s image resembles continents being torn apart to reveal the slightest of human figures. The artist taps into her unique views of reality

through the mediation of an age-old technique. She applies it skillfully and fittingly to a silk canvas while adding a sense of poetry and the ephemeral through her stitching.

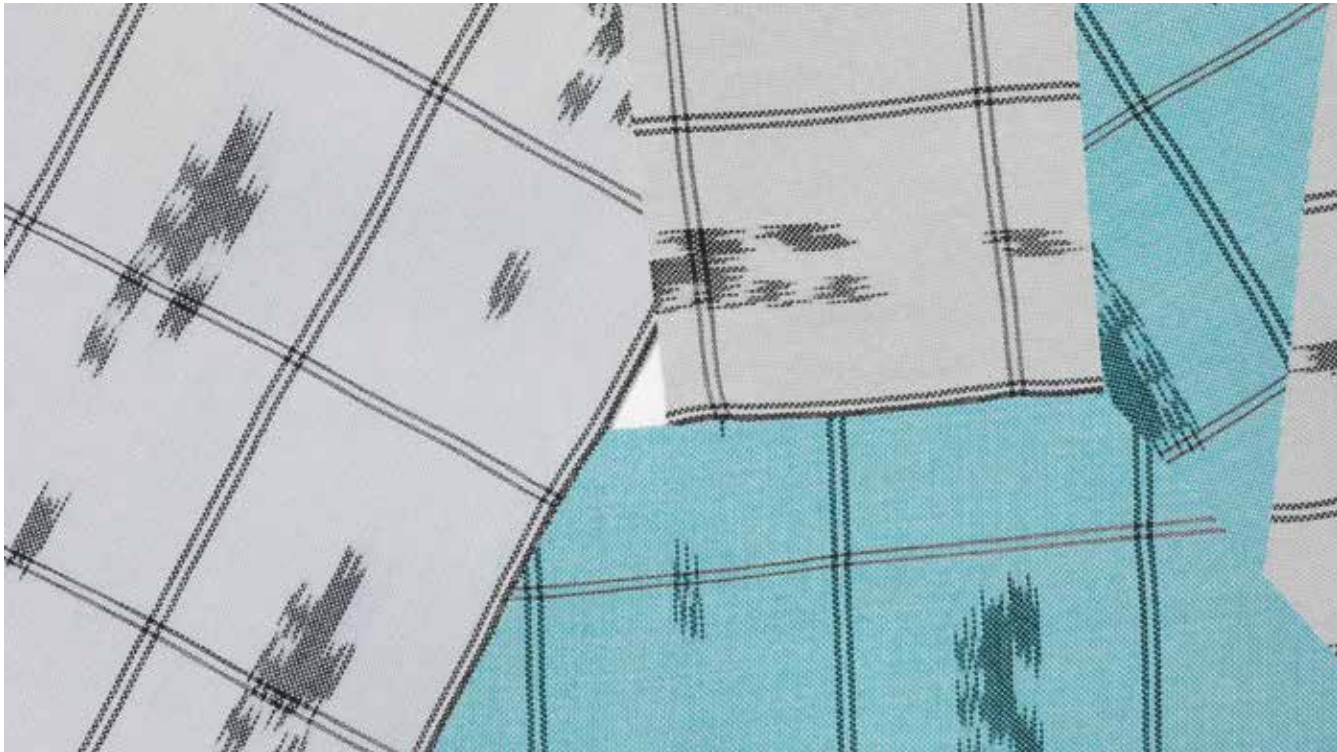
Ruth Tabancay plays with our perception by pushing beyond the limits of what the naked eye can see. Her prints of images taken with a scanning electron microscope reveal the hidden beauty of fibers. Dangerously close to get lost in a virtual world, mediated by aesthetically appealing software, she returns to the material world by adding the slightest touch of embroidery. Moving from the micro to the macro, Tabancay allows the formerly invisible to merge with the touch of her hand. The awesomeness of innovative techniques is counterbalanced by the knowledge of construction. To weave out of materials, to spin from humble fibers, to knot from remnants is the realization of the power of making.

Top: **Alicia Decker** *Crossing Paths* (detail) 2018, cotton canvas, fiber reactive dye, hand-drawn illustration, digital-printed, hand and machine-embroidered, 54" x 42".

Right page, top: **Anne-Claude Cotty** *Without Within / Caged* 2019, silk, cotton, batting, pinhole-photograph, appliqué, quilted, 34" x 32".

Right page, bottom: **Ruth Tabancay** *Nylon Knee Highs 156X* (detail) 2018, watercolor paper, embroidery floss, scanned electron micrograph digital print, hand-embroidered, 13" x 16".





Time and weaving

Andrea Donnelly is fascinated by weaving and the strict laws and rigidity of the loom. She challenges these restrictions by unravelling, de- and then re-constructing her handwoven material. I am reminded of the story of **Penelope** where weaving serves as a metaphor for time. In the Greek myth about the travels of **Odysseus**, his wife Penelope is beleaguered by suitors in his absence. In order to keep the unwanted guests at bay Penelope pretends to weave a shroud for her father and declares that she will only choose a new husband once the shroud is finished. At night, by the light of torches, she unravels the magnificent cloth and eventually gets caught and later betrayed by one of her maids. We learn from this allegory and Donnelly's work that weaving can be more than a production method. It is also a means of slowing down and the experience of time itself.

Top: **Andrea Donnelly** *Portrait of a Recent Storm Cloud* (detail) 2019, cotton thread, dye, PVA, canvas, hand-woven, ikat-dyed thread, immersion-dyed cloth, cut, reassembled, 56" x 80".

Bottom: **Kirsteen Buchanan** *Borders That Unite: Melting Maps* (front) 2019, silk chiffon caftan, velvet bra, silk habotai pant, digital-printed, indigo-dyed, 45" x 65". Photo: Aaron Ottis, model: Sydney Bia.

As an antidote to a complicated world and a mesh of virtual reality, a profound need to reconnect to the tangible and the material world seems to grow.

Technical realm

Contrary to popular thought, maps and borders have always been fluid. Borders have changed with the movement of tribes, colonial conquest or neighbors expanding their territory. Historically the borders of countries have always been in flux. This is visualized by the *Melting Maps* project by **Kirsteen Buchanan**. Working in a complex and confident way that utilizes a wide range of techniques, tools and software applications, she takes an innovative yet lighter stance on the current alterations of coastlines and geographical delineations. The fluidity of a chiffon dress illustrates an artistic interpretation of an ever-changing global map.

Conclusion

As humans we can cross many borders effortlessly, and even fly to the moon. While we are able to look at the intricacies and see the minutest details of our brains, we are still bound to materiality and our physical limitations. As an antidote to a complicated world and a mesh of virtual reality, a profound need to reconnect to the tangible and the material world seems to grow. The rise in popularity of textiles in the past few years seems to be a rediscovery and an attraction to materials and the act of making. The accessibility of information through the internet has rendered many cultural boundaries in textiles obsolete. There is an ongoing, imminent process of change and cross-fertilization between traditional techniques and new innovative ways of making. Examples include Cad/Cam techniques, 3D printing, laser-cutting, digital photography, and the use of smart materials.

However, as the work of the artists chosen for the 2019 SDA *International Exhibition in Print*, emotions, ideas and stories can be expressed in the most mundane materials. Textiles, fiber, and clay have accompanied humans throughout our time on this planet. Whatever shape the future takes, textiles will be a companion for comfort and warmth, a repository for memories.

Thank you to all artists for sharing their inspiring stories and unique, engaging work.

—Monika Auch has a background in medicine and textile design with a focus on weaving. A hybrid of science and art, she set up Weeflab in Amsterdam to investigate 'The intelligence of the hand'. weeflab.com | monikaauch.nl | stitchyourbrain.com

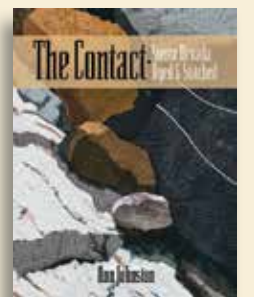
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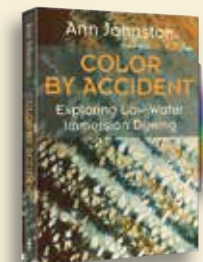
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SURFACE DESIGN AWARD

Amy Usdin

Mendota Heights, Minnesota, US

MY fiber work is a meditation on memory, time, and place. Through needle weaving, knotting, and wrapping, I rescue and redefine aging fiber artifacts: horse fly nets (used to protect horses from insect bites), fishing nets, and similar vernacular forms with warp built-in. I manipulate their functional rope armatures, creating a complexity that disrupts previously existing borders.

Weaving fixed, segmented warp provides unique challenges and unexpected opportunity. The repetitive motion inspires a nonlinear sorting of past and present, conjuring often small yet significant moments. The pieces speak to core experiences from my past, my memories shaping their movement. While the condition and coloration of the existing foundations suggest an

initial direction, the work morphs aesthetically and conceptually throughout the process.

Through overlapping layers that intersect with and expand the boundaries of these vintage fiber structures, the work honors the original framework while transforming it into a physical representation of my recollections. Informed by Kintsugi, the Japanese art of meaningful repair, the imperfections are integrated into the new, and the restoration itself becomes part of the object's history.

Functionally identical, the horse fly nets used in these two pieces are quite dissimilar. Metal hardware and leather strap aside, one is constructed entirely of rope; the other is a unique

combination of rope bound by frayed woven ribbon with brittle leather fringe. Sourcing them as I do, I'm rarely able to pinpoint their true histories. Absent that, I imbue them with my own.

Referencing protocol for stepping off a horse, *Dismount Left* weaves personal narrative into a heavily worn net, exploring the liminal space between meaningful life and absolute death

without instruction for transition. Inspiring this piece, my father slept his entire married life with my mother to his right, rolling out of bed on the left. Of all the indignities of aging, being forced

Right page: **Amy Usdin *Dismount Left*** 2019, cotton, linen, paper, silk, wool, repurposed horse fly net (rope), needle-woven, knotted, 31" x 15" x 6". Left page: detail.





to do the opposite due to his condition and care was unexpectedly profound.

How He Feels relates to the search for identity and finding one's place in the world. This work restructures a particularly senescent horse fly net, the friable warp of its once-functional ropes bandaged by needle weaving. It recalls poet Richard Brautigan's "War Horse"—standing "alone in a pasture... made invisible by his own wounds."

Though horses haven't had overt influence in my life, they hold unexpected power from the first photo of my father as a toddler sitting on a pony in 1919 New York to trail rides on our sporadic childhood trips. To this day, I often recite the names of the horses from those rides, believing them to be one of the last things I'll know when my memory fades.

My work is as much about the concept of memory as the memories themselves—imperfect, conflated, painful, joyful, romanticized—memories that are physically embodied by the knotted and woven forms that comprise these sculptures. The tactile qualities inherent in the threads, enhanced by the life experience of each worn object, invite viewers to discover associations and impressions of their own.

amyusdin.com

Amy Usdin *How He Feels* 2019, cotton, linen, silk, wool, repurposed horse fly net (cloth, leather, rope), needle-woven, 66" x 22" x 5½". Right: detail.

Heather Schulte

Boulder, Colorado, US | heatherschulte.com

Language is code. It cannot fully articulate the intended message. We fill in the blanks and our individual perspectives interpret the gaps differently. My work translates words, phrases and narratives into stitch. *That's Politics!* uses binary code in the form of stitches that simultaneously uncover and veil meaning. It is also a personal response to fast-paced digital interactions.

Stitching, for me is a meditative, physical counterpoint used to examine how methods and contexts of communication affect our comprehension, the ways information is permitted or limited and the effects of positive or negative change. My practice aims to open space between perspectives, where the daily barrage of difficult and piercing subjects can be given a slow and deliberate arena to be explored.



Heather Schulte *That's Politics!* 2019, embroidery thread, newsprint, cross-stitched, 11" x 22½". Right: detail.

Janice Lessman-Moss

Kent, Ohio, US | janicelessman-moss.com

During a residency at the **Icelandic Textile Center**, I absorbed the nuances and dynamic contrasts of my surroundings while weaving on the TC2 loom. The magnificent view, the ever-changing vista spurred my sensitivity and led to the production of several new series of small weavings.

As a reference to micro- and macro-cosmic natural systems and by using a vocabulary of circles, squares and lines, my weavings have always been abstract. Visual connections are thus established between patterns of changing scale, texture and fluidity. I create a cohesive whole through the collage of disparate fragments. A similar complex unity is visible in the distinctive juxtapositions of the Icelandic landscape.



Janice Lessman-Moss #471&473A (diptych) 2018, digital jacquard, hand-woven TC2, painted warp, painted weft, 26" x 11". Left: detail.

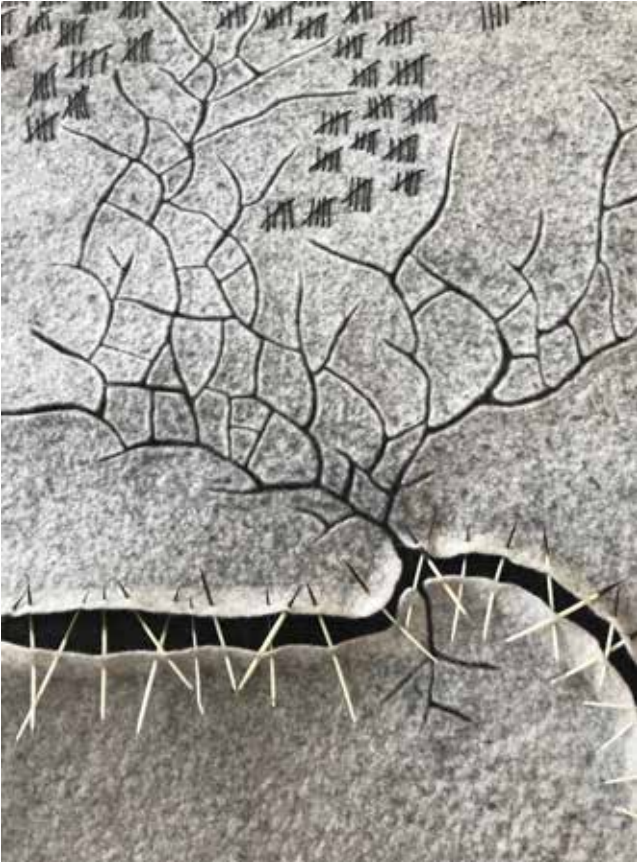
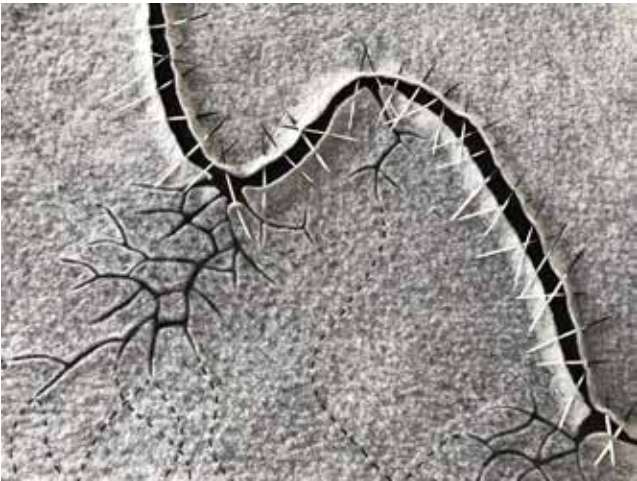


Eva Camacho-Sanchez

Florence, Massachusetts, US | evacamacho.com

On April 26, 2018, **Steven Wagner**, an officer in the Department of Health and Human Services testified on the subject of unaccompanied minors crossing the border from Mexico into the United States, confirming that the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) "was unable to determine with certainty the whereabouts of 1,475 children."

Are borders essential for creating identities, values and ideals? Or are they the physical manifestations of colonial prejudice? **Robert Schuman**, one of the founders of the European Union said "Borders are the scars of history." 1,475 stitches, one for each child, honor those who have suffered such hardship. The work serves as a reminder that this moment in history will create deep, lasting scars on children and their families. With this piece I hope to illustrate how these "border scars" will always remain in our memories, playing a part in the lives of future generations.



Eva Camacho-Sanchez Border Scars 2019, merino wool, cotton thread, porcupine quills, wet-felted, hand-stitched, 35" x 25". Right top and bottom: details.



GUEST JUROR AWARD

Susan Smith

Dover-Foxcroft, Maine, US

The Passage, is an installation composed of artifacts from social practice-based work done at the site of the Texas/Mexico border. The boro stitched and printed *mourningcloth* was part of a performance on the International Bridge between Juarez/El Paso, while the sculptural works are based on border wall fragments embedded with fiber, clothing and items left behind by refugees traveling to safety in the United States. The line of canteens, recreations of those now carried across the desert, are insulated with clothing to personalize and protect, and have been documented as items deemed non-essential, and confiscated at the border.

The Passage was one of a series of socially engaged art pieces I designed to address the worldwide refugee crisis. By working

in two border states (Maine and Texas) I sought also to cast a light on the disparity of attitudes toward the northern and southern borders. In response I have turned my practice toward witnessing the global refugee crisis and emphasizing art's capacity to address inhumanity. As a national crisis was declared at the border, I understood the importance of being there myself, of showing up, that my practice as a socially engaged artist demanded it of me. I went to the border to witness, to let the crisis at the border manifest itself in my work. The objects were created once back in the studio, but are saturated with the experience of having been there, of carrying this linen cloth across the bridge into Ciudad Juarez, of collecting the soil that is this battleground and using it as a pigment on cloth and binder for sculptural forms.

The refugees carry makeshift water jugs, using clothing for insulation as they travel across the desert terrain. By using my own personal clothing stitched and patched to wrap canteens, I also use my own experiences of alienation and displacement to support the struggle of others. Similarly, the laborious boro-stitching on the *mourningcloth* references the arduous paths that refugees follow for a precarious chance at safety. The sculptural wall fragments, with their earth, clothing, burlap and detritus gathered at the border walls and crossing, suggest that any walls built to keep out refugees are actually built from the shattered lives of the people themselves.

The use of textiles is particularly important here since it is not only an article of clothing that conforms to the body—the bodies being rejected, controlled, and punished for being in the wrong place—but also speaks to the simple domestic act of sewing. This act not only binds families together, but suggests that borders emerge when two surfaces are brought into

contact, sewn into a single relationship. The *mourningcloth*, printed with hand and laser-cut blocks, screen printed and rubbed with earth from the site, with its imagery of suffering at the border, connects, sews, binds disparate pieces of cloth together in defiance of what has been torn.

I have traveled to the child detention camps in Tornillo, Texas, as well as Homestead, Florida. My belief is that all art is inherently political, and that any artist who suggests otherwise is accepting of the status quo, and that art has a unique ability to address the humanitarian emergency we all face. My participation in socially engaged art practices and collectives, as well as in my teaching in the Intermedia MFA program at the University of Maine, speak to my focus on collaborative

Susan Smith *The passage: mourning cloth* 2019, linen, woodblock, screenprint, boro-stitched, laser-cut, 72" x 72". Left page: detail.





Jessica Wildman Katz

Highland Park, Michigan, US | jessicawildman.com

Felt Century explores the textuality of felt, transforming its multiple meanings—including the soft sensation of physical touch and the visual aspects of woolen cloth—into physical form. My '94 Buick Century, a mass-produced object, is combined with the work of the hand to articulate an experience of how memory, emotion and value are ascribed to things.

By enveloping the car in felt and then removing it, a woolen chrysalis appears, leaving behind a vestige of its spirit. Only an impression remains. A metamorphosis occurs at the edge of memory and possibility.

Top: **Jessica Wildman Katz *Idols of the Century*** (back) 2018, Buick Century backseat cushion, faux gold leaf, gilded, 58" x 32".

Bottom: **Jessica Wildman Katz *Felt Century*** 2018, wool, index of 1994 Buick Century, fiberglass frame, faux gold leaf, needle-felted, 14½' x 5' x 4½'.



My belief is that all art is inherently political, and that any artist who suggests otherwise is accepting of the status quo, and that art has a unique ability to address the humanitarian emergency we all face.

approaches to addressing social injustice through art, hoping that if art helps us understand what is uniquely human about us, it also can help us face our own inhumanity.

For me, the objects presented are often primarily documentation of a process, and it is the process of art creation and collaboration, that is my focus, though I have also established a place where social practice and creation of the art object can coexist. To

produce something in the moment and on site, allows me later to layer it into my art in the studio, where it can be stitched into my work through time and attention to detail. My work is often highlighted by the ephemeral act of being present, or witnessing, or, as in the final performance of *The Passage*, of using a broom, made in Mexico, and purchased at the El Paso border, attempting in vain to sweep away the shadow cast from the barbed wire fence from the ground. This captures best that aspect of my practice that is willing to confront injustice and feelings of futility and yet still create.

susansmithstudio.com

Left: **Susan Smith *The passage: canteen*** 2019, water canteen, recycled textiles, collagraph print, jute, found objects from Texas/Mexico border, hand-stitched, 20 canteens in series, each 11".

Right: **Susan Smith *The passage: wall fragments*** 2019, soil from Texas/Mexico border, discarded objects and textiles found at site of El Paso/Juarez border wall, peat moss, cement, dimensions vary.



Betty Vera

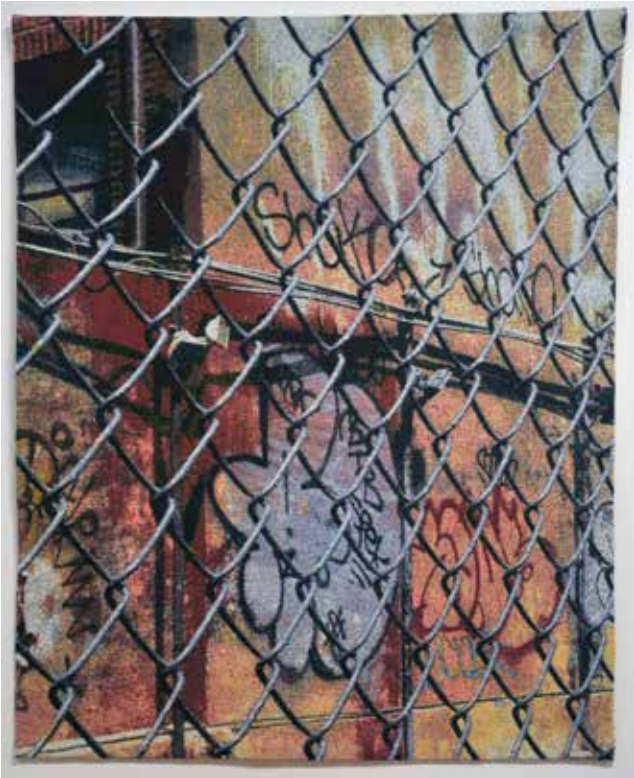
North Adams, Massachusetts, US | bettyvera.com

My Jacquard tapestries are a natural development of long-term explorations in hand weaving. I interlace colored threads to render images derived from my photographs, sketches and paintings. Weaving is a digital medium based on a binary system that dates back to prehistory. Whether industrial or hand operated, a loom is part of a technological continuum, not a divide.

Much of my recent work focuses on the urban environment. We leave traces of ourselves wherever we go—sometimes

unintentionally—and at other times make marks deliberately with the intent to communicate.

Security raises questions about social divides. Who is "in" and who is "out," and why? When is a barrier not a barrier? A fence can be so permeable that it is easily breached by those meant to be kept out.



Betty Vera *Security* 2017, cotton, jacquard tapestry, 56½" x 46". Photo: Carin Quirke de Jong. Right: detail.

Nancy Koenigsberg

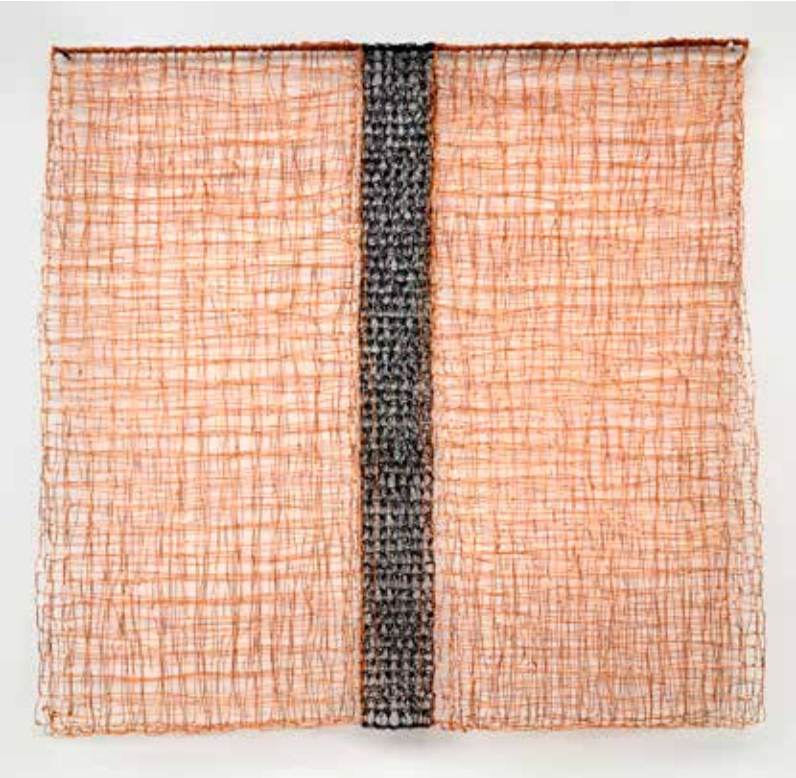
New York, New York, US | nancykoenigsberg.com

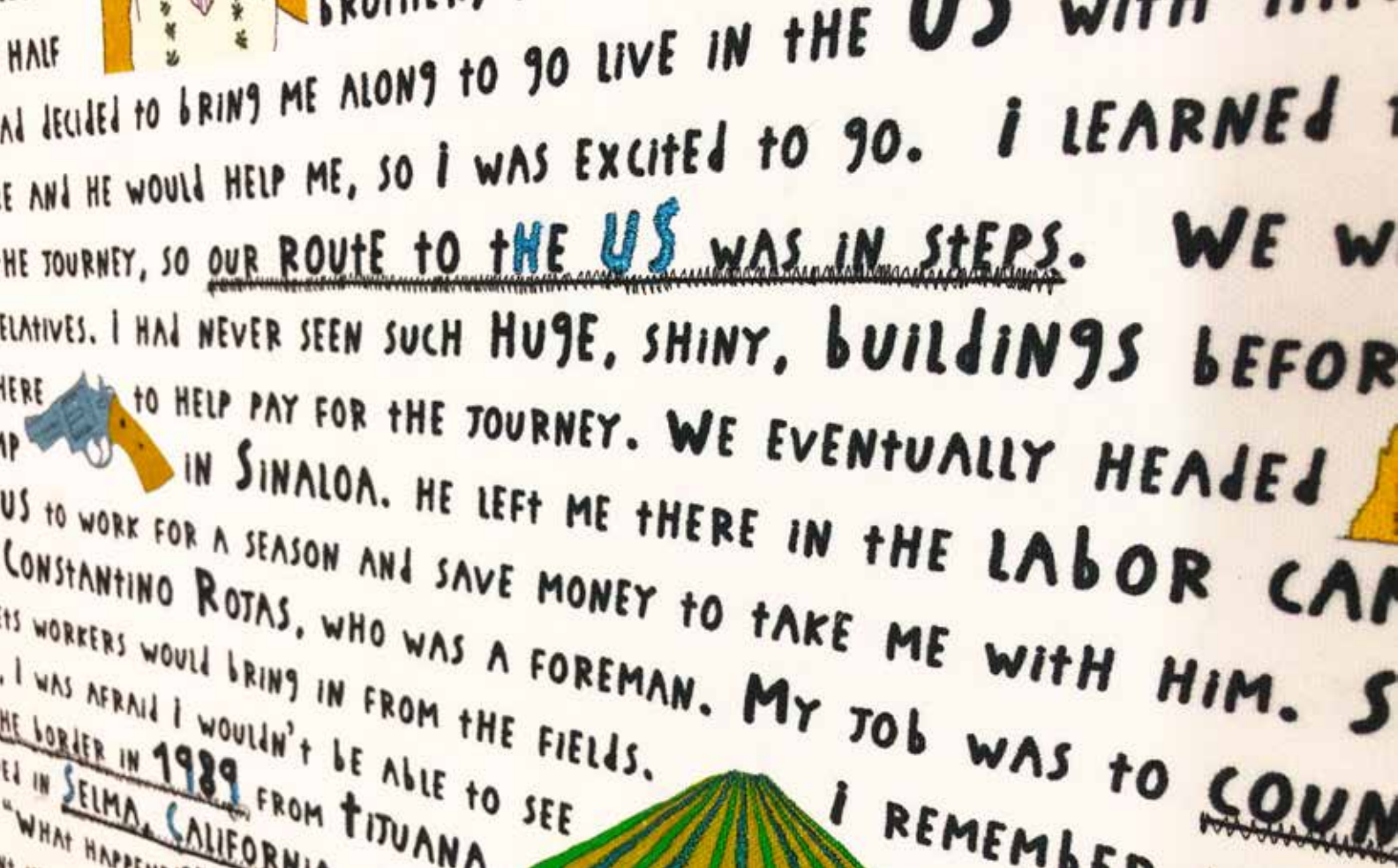
In *Solitary Path*, knotted black wire creates a defined path through woven fields of copper. Bound at the top, the layers separate and rise toward the bottom adding depth and dimension. The path allows entry at the same time as it creates division. In the midst of joy and light, one can feel blue and alone.

I use copper and steel narrow gauge wire and traditional forms of weaving and knotting to create two and three-

dimensional structures and textiles. I am fascinated with interlocking lines and spaces. In some works, lace-like layers allow for transparency, passage of light and formation of shadows. In other works, multiple layers become almost opaque. The flexibility of the wire allows for a great variety of forms and techniques.

Nancy Koenigsberg *Solitary Path* 2018, coated copper wire, knotted, woven, 28" x 28" x 5". Right: detail.





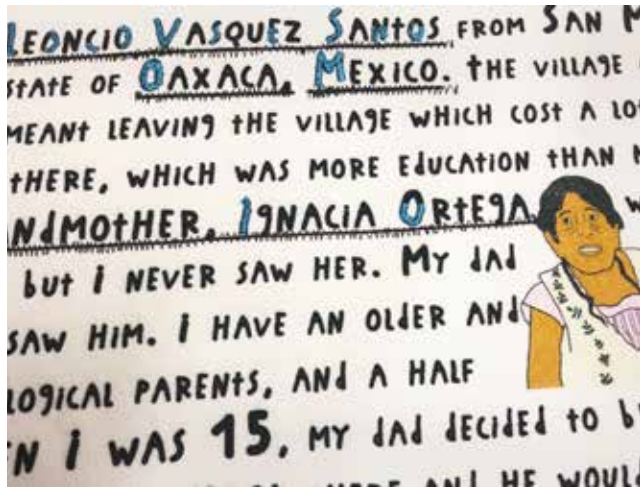
Alicia Decker
Davis, California, US

Crossing Paths is part of a creative series and research project called Cut From the Same Cloth. This project utilizes printed and embroidered woven cloth to express and visually document the physical and emotional journey, and personal triumphs of many indigenous people from Oaxaca, Mexico who have migrated to California in their youth. The creative output of this research—which culminated in “story cloths”—tells the story of cultural displacement, instability, identity politics, personal tragedy and transformation. The project was a collaborative effort with members of the Oaxacano community who bravely and eloquently shared their stories.

Crossing Paths expresses the idea that visual communication through textiles is an important means for human connection and explores how textiles positively contribute to community and cultural identity. While in Oaxaca, I spent significant time visiting many diverse regional textile-making villages learning the various textile techniques that define each community. Through ethnographic research and a blend of experimental and

Right page: Alicia Decker *Crossing Paths* 2018, cotton canvas, fiber reactive dye, hand-drawn illustration, digital-printed, hand and machine-embroidered, 54" x 42". Top: detail.



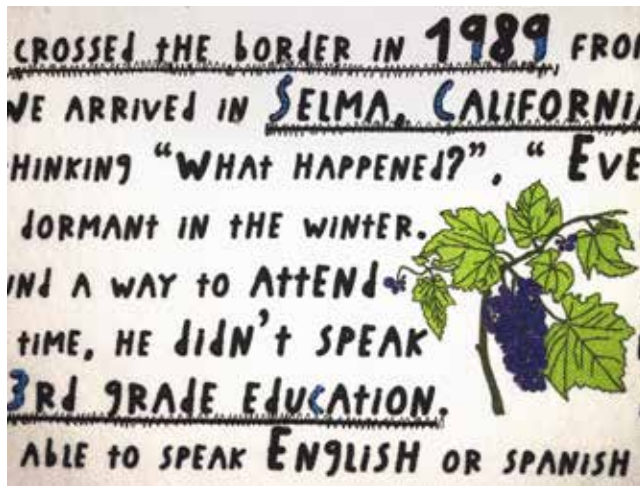


traditional making, my body of work embodies these ideas while focusing on the indigenous artisan communities of Oaxaca.

Mass production due to the demands of tourism have threatened to simultaneously undercut both cultural and market values in the past, endangering the future of these remarkable crafts and the communities they support. However, my experiences and research show that despite great challenges, textiles continue to be the epicenters of many Oaxacano indigenous communities; their textile practices remain crucial to their cultural and personal identities.

I believe much can be learned from the cultural and artisanal practices of Oaxacano communities to help form and strengthen other communities in the US and abroad. It was this belief, along with curiosity, that lead me to wonder—What cultural implications might be felt by Oaxacano people who choose to migrate to the United States? As an attempt to satisfy this curiosity, I reached out to indigenous Oaxacanos living in California’s central valley region, set out to explore the breadth of community and sense of cultural identity felt by Oaxacanos upon assimilation into American life. The output of my investigation takes the form of a textile-based collection of “stories” about impressions of indigenous Oaxacan culture and visual recordings of my in-person interviews with members of the Oaxacano community in California’s central valley. Also, I created a Oaxaca-style marketplace to house these “story cloths”, aimed to celebrate the sense of culture and community experienced in this special place.

This ethnographic process—involving indepth interviews and visual documentation of pictorial artifacts—made these story cloths extremely meaningful, both to the research and each



participant whose stories were told. As such, every word printed reflects their story as told in their own words. The pictorial elements of each story were equally important to illuminate vivid parts of each story, to serve as visual cues about the details in each story. Hand drawings serve as motifs and symbols, representing elements and experiences within each story. The pictorial elements include cultural iconography, meaningful objects representing past experiences, symbols of their home village, and symbols that represent their life now.

During the interview process, I heard powerful and compelling stories, detailing such experiences as midnight border crossings, learning Spanish and English for the first time while in a US school, the loss and reclamation of personal and cultural identity, and even the process of overcoming rape. The finished series became a compilation of written word and representational images that help facilitate memories and feelings, and that illuminate and document transformative experiences.

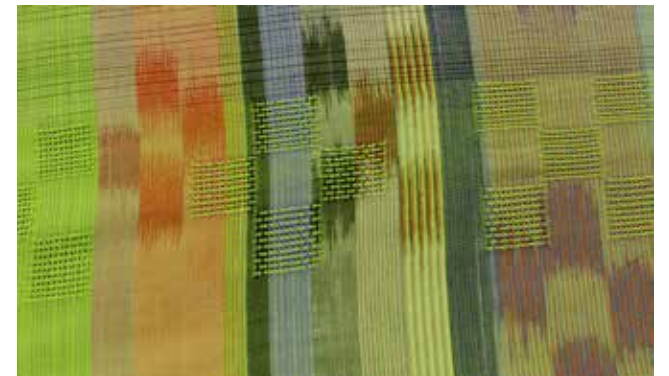
I am grateful for the opportunity to bring these amazing stories to life visually through the medium of textiles and through the techniques of illustration, digital printing, and hand embroidery. All story cloths were given to their respective story teller upon completion, and all handmade textile-based items in the marketplace were for sale to benefit the wonderful non-profit organization—**Binational Center for the Development of Oaxacan Indigenous Communities** (centrobinacional.org).

Alicia Decker *Crossing Paths* (details) 2018, cotton canvas, fiber reactive dye, hand-drawn illustration, digital-printed, hand and machine-embroidered, 54" x 42".

Hannah Mitsu Shimabukuro

Asheville, North Carolina, US | hmshimabukuro.com

Minsā in Huck Lace is my interpretation of a marital ritual from the Yaeyama Islands in Okinawa. The women are said to weave a minsā or sash for the man they wish to marry. An act of commitment is displayed if the man wears the sash in public. This story is, however, a ploy to bring tourism to the islands. I use the story and various weaving techniques to relate my experience of being biracial and queer. Instead of traditional kasuri dyeing my warp is discharge dyed, removing color. The blocks formed from resist dyeing are woven in Huck lace, a pattern originating from Scandinavia. The pattern is further manipulated by using open Leno technique. This repetitive pattern staggers, skips and overlays on the colored fabric, just as I relate to the various aspects of my identity.



Hannah Mitsu Shimabukuro *Minsā in Huck Lace* 2019, installation, cotton fabric, monofilament, stainless steel, wooden platforms, hand-woven, kasuri discharge-dyed, double-woven, 90" x 84" x 32". Photo: Mariah Nehus, models: Nandita Vyas, Hannah Mitsu Shimabukuro. Top: detail. Photo by the artist.

Gretchen Morrissey

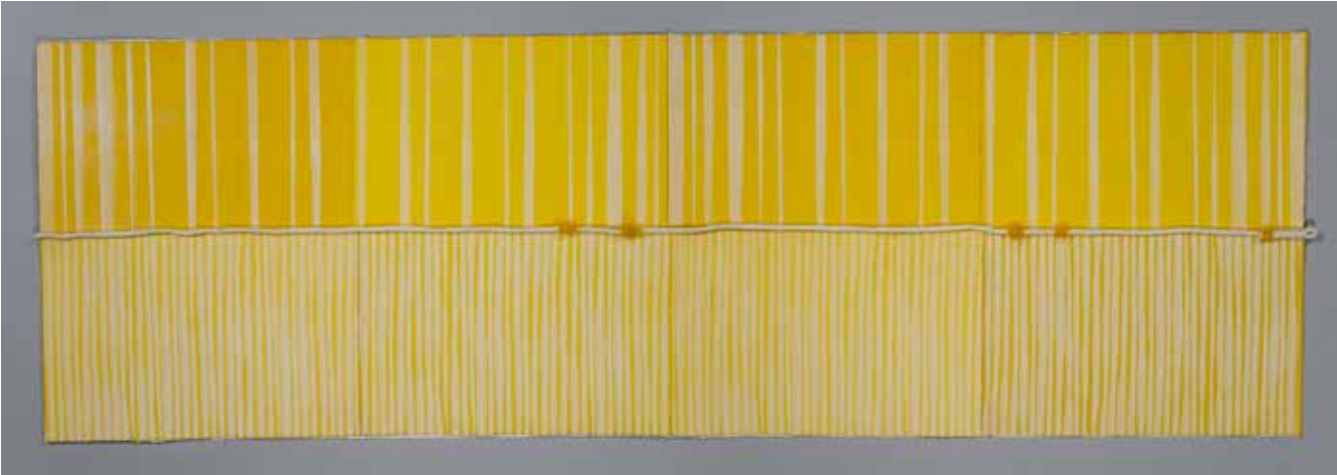
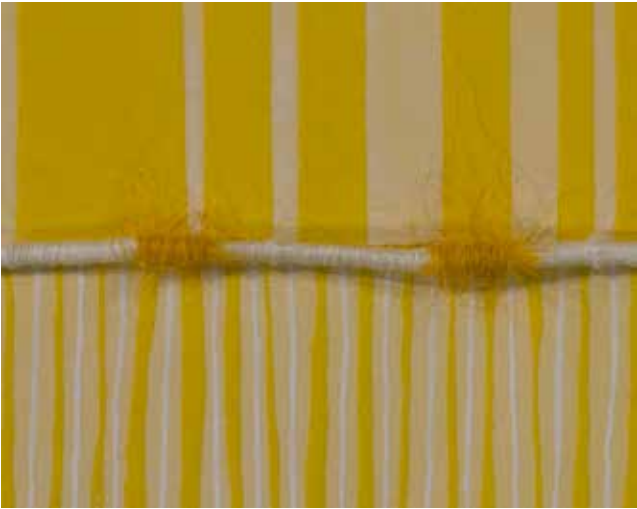
Durham, North Carolina, US | gretchenmorrissey.com

The *Chihuahuan Desert Series* is a collection of mixed media installations referring to the border desert region that stretches through southwest Texas, Arizona and the Mexican Plateau.

Monochromatic fine lines, embossed ridges and striations are enhanced by natural dyes to represent the high plateaus, washes and mesas of the Chihuahuan Desert. Each stratified panel of markings is divided by a hand-braided linen rope forming a distinct line of demarcation.

The design process is slow and meditative, like a slow walk through sand surrounded by the scree, boulders and cactus of the high desert. Hand-pulled patterns are printed over hues of Osage orange on piece-dyed paper. These elements are combined with finely painted lines of gypsum pigment and hand-braided linen rope.

Gretchen Morrissey *High Noon* 2019, linen, osage orange, hand-dyed paper, stria solarplate relief prints, hand-braided, yak, handmade gypsum pigment, 19¾" x 63½". Top left and right: details.



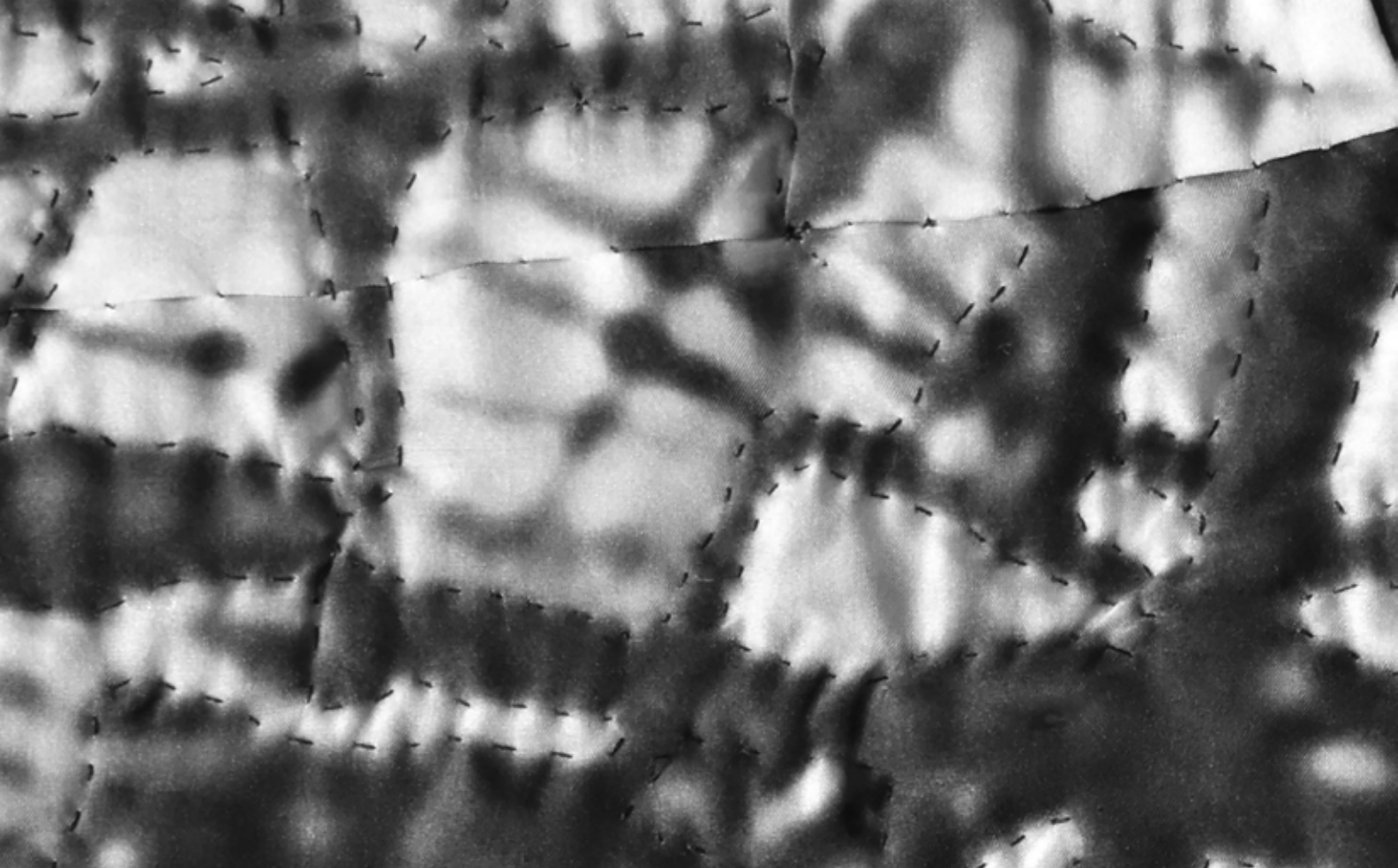
Anna Chupa

Allentown, Pennsylvania, US | annachupadesigns.com

White Quilt is an original, digitally designed pattern of a *girih*-tiled center medallion with floral borders derived from photographs of botanical gardens. *Girih* is an Arabic word for knot and is often found in Medieval Islamic Architecture. The *girih* tile set consists of five tiles: a decagon, a pentagon, a rhombus, a hexagon and a bow tie. Using digital technology I extract flowers and foliage from their backgrounds and rearrange them while incorporating this ancient technique.

Anna Chupa *White Quilt* 2015, cotton, sateen, free-motion longarm-quilted, 53"x 53". Top: detail.





INNOVATION AWARD

Anne-Cluade Cotty
Briarcliff Manor, New York, US

Way back in 1998, the **Maine Arts Commission** awarded me an Individual Artist Fellowship while noting that my artist books were “very inventive” and adding a kind note, “yet carefully made.” What they were commenting on were structural aspects of works made of paper and bookcloth. But I’ve been an irrepressible experimenter all along in a studio equipped with an etching press, letterpress and photo darkroom, woodworking and metalsmith tools and drawers filled with scavenged treasures. I’ve made pop-ups, monoprints, photoimages, assemblages, jewelry. And finally, joining SDA and Connecticut’s vibrant chapter, I began to work with silk.

It’s with appliqué that I’ve taken a leap this year into new territory: enlarging pinhole photographs to mural size and printing them on silk; depicting the human form; and, addressing issues of a world in crisis.

My lensless cameras are ordinary cardboard boxes with pin-prick holes for apertures and strips of tape for shutters. What these primitive cameras see, however, is anything but ordinary. As light shoots into the box, it *draws* an image onto photopaper imbued with poetry and mystery, beyond a physical reality. The process has an uncanny way of rendering

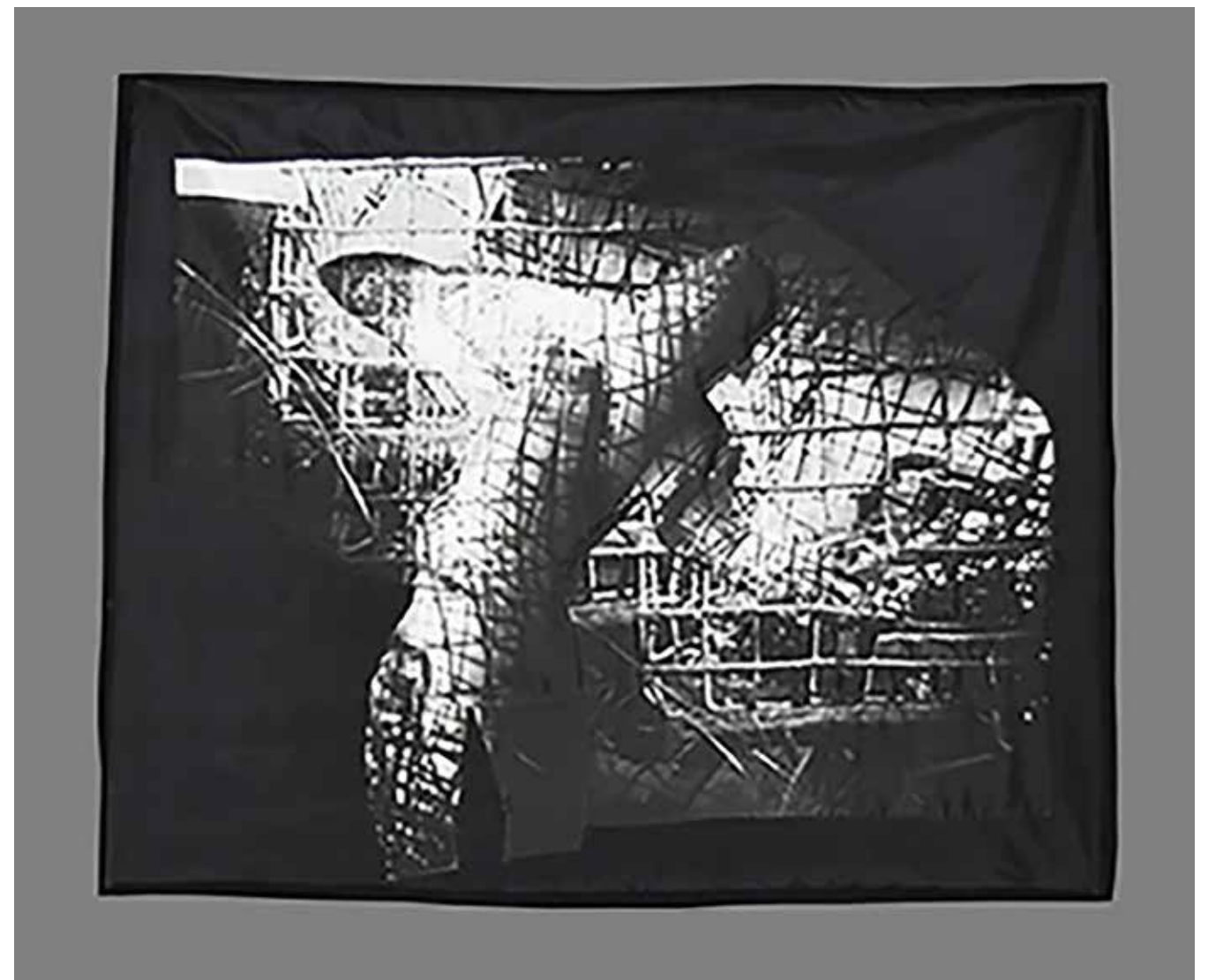
the invisible. These images are the size of the cameras, none wider than a hand print. But recently, I’ve needed the space of a wall to work on and have blown them up to fit one. (Some of the pieces in this series measure over 70 inches).

I print and sew the silk (thin 8 mm Habotai) in pieces and sometimes add batting and quilting for texture and depth, as in *Without Within / Caged*. In this piece, background and figure are fused from a single photograph: the background still, stark and secretive; the figure, in motion. In other pieces in this series, the figures are filled with color photographs taken with a digital camera in nature to contrast with the black and white pinhole backgrounds.

For decades I’ve been comfortable working within the margins of abstraction, with a language of quiet tones. But recently, guided by a moral imperative—an awareness that what matters in our world is about how to be human in it—I’ve felt compelled to include a human figure.

This all began after viewing a documentary by the Chilean filmmaker and poet, **Patricio Guzmán** titled, *The Pearl Button*. The film focuses on the ancient culture of nomadic,

Anne-Claude Cotty *Without Within / Caged* 2019, silk, cotton, batting, pinhole-photograph, appliquéd, quilted, 34" x 32". Left page: detail





Borders? The word has become irrevocably linked to the perils of migration, the inhumane treatment of legions of people.

aboriginal tribes in the harsh climate of **Tierra del Fuego** and the genocide of these people by the **Pinochet** regime. The photographs, taken by an ethnographer in the 1920s who witnessed their ceremonies, are haunting, beautiful, disturbing. The Selknam painted their bodies in bold designs of dots, blotches and bands of red, white and black as a means of transferring the identity of the spiritual beings whom they praised or feared. From prehistory to the present, decorating the body has been driven by rituals, artistic expression, a need for camouflage or fertility or political protest. So I began to explore how I might treat the human form with a similar emotional force.

Borders? The word has become irrevocably linked to the perils of migration, the inhumane treatment of legions of people. It is daily in our consciousness and in our art, whether we are conscious of it or not, whether we accept a political role with our art or not. I am feeling that I can't escape it. The best I can do with my appliqué is to rely on a metaphorical process which sets up questions and suggests plural meanings. The goal of an open work is to unfix the viewer who is asked to continue the image with his or her experience and imagination. The work remains incomplete, clearing a trail to a fresh, new way of seeing. Another way of saying this, I think, is **Jacques Bousquet**, a French author's remark that "an image costs as much labor to humanity as a new characteristic to a plant..." There's work to be done by artist and viewer alike.

Perhaps what is sensed in this piece lies somewhere between disorder and order, uncertainty and clarity, emotional boundaries and physical constraints, or, more importantly, confinement and the possibility of escape, transcendence and change.

anneclaudecotty.com

Anne-Claude Cotty *Without Within / Caged* (detail) 2019, silk, cotton, batting, pinhole-photograph, appliqué, quilted, 34" x 32".

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MATERIAL EXPLORATION AWARD

Ruth Tabancay
Berkeley, California, US

Microscopy and magnification are the concepts underlying my work. Years spent studying bacteriology in college, working in a hospital laboratory, and studying human cells and tissues in medical school led me to appreciate the esthetics of a world invisible to the naked eye. At the time, I could not have imagined that I would eventually become an artist, let alone use these ideas on which to build my main body of artwork.

I spent a significant part of my education and early employment years looking through a light microscope. I would spend

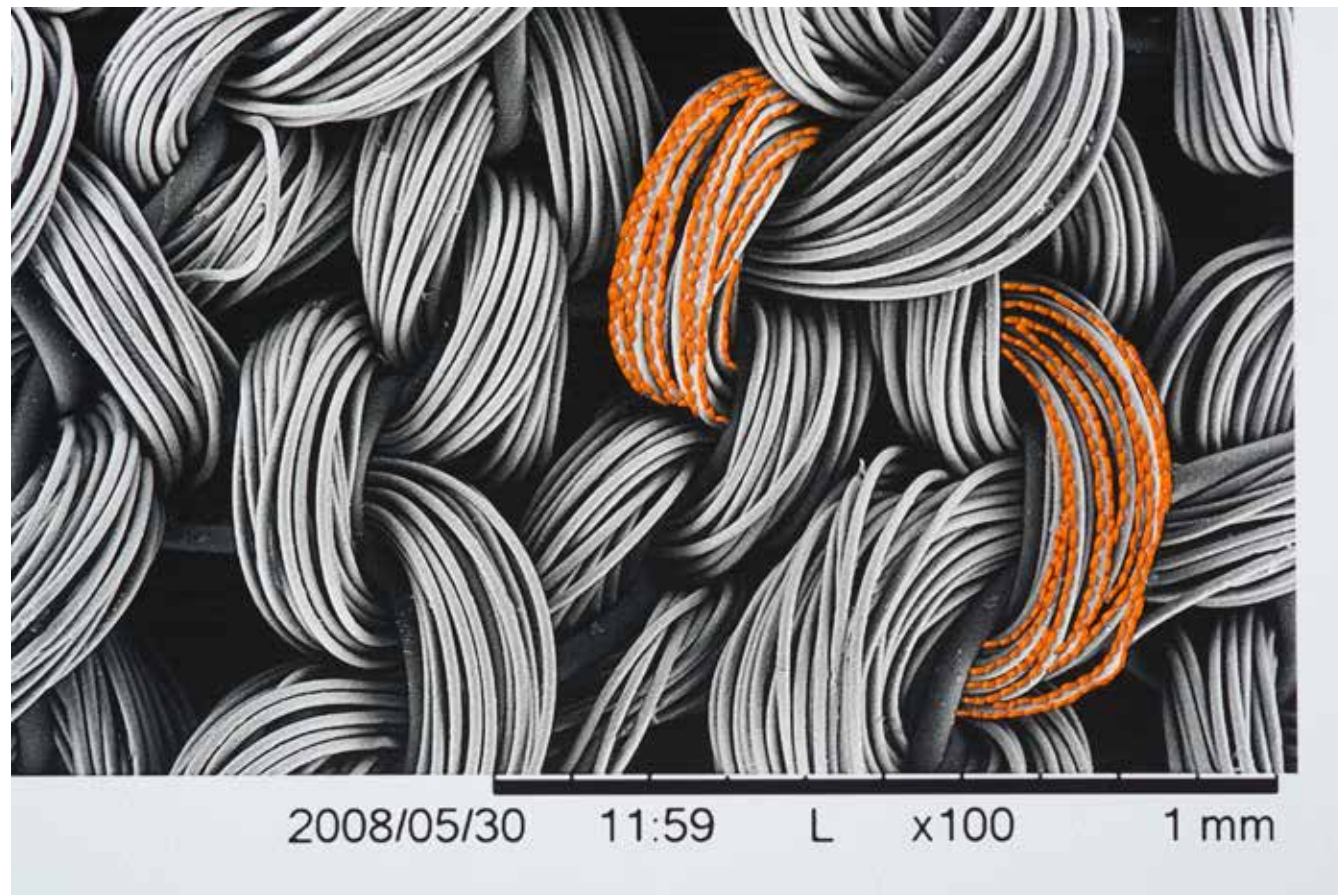
much more time than necessary exploring slides of bacteria, blood smears, urine sediment, other body fluids, and every category of human cells and tissues. It was no surprise that when I started art school, I began to see microscopic imagery in my work. Stitched tea bags resembled fields of squamous epithelium; ikat weaving, striated muscle; random weave basket reed, collagen fibers. With the computerized Jacquard loom, I wove images from old text books and atlases of bacteria, fungi, and human tissues. Though I was thrilled to work with that imagery again, it made me eager to create my own source material for Jacquard weaving.

Once I conceived the idea of magnified textile images, I looked for a laboratory that would allow me to use their equipment. I was fortunate to receive training to use the scanning electron microscope at the **University of California, Berkeley**. I've made dozens of micrographs of commercial fabrics that became my image sources for my computerized Jacquard weavings. My first efforts were the exact images I photographed. As a concept, a weaving of a magnified weave structure, was satisfying but for me, the spirit of artistry was missing. Except for hand weaving on the computerized Jacquard loom, they were created entirely using manufacturing and computerized processes—commercial fabric, computer software, computerized loom. As an artist, I felt my hand was not in the work.

Making things by hand has always been part of my life. Since the first apron I hand-stitched in second grade, I have worked in a variety of textile techniques—crochet, needle point, knitting, sewing clothing, and quilting. I thrived on the making, but before art school, everything I made was from a pattern with traditional techniques. In theory, anyone could make one. The urge to create something original, something only I could do, was the main drive that lead me to study art.

Ruth Tabancay *Nylon Knee Highs 156X* 2018, watercolor paper, embroidery floss, scanned electron micrograph digital print, hand-embroidered, 13"x 16". Left page: detail.





In 2016, I was awarded the **Lia Cook Jacquard Residency** at **California College of the Arts**. Again, I used my scanning electron micrographs as my image sources for the computerized Jacquard weavings. But with this series, to leave evidence of my hand on the work, I embroidered areas of each weaving with stitches that resembled the weave structure or, in a nod to my former college major, microbiology forms.

For these latest works, *Nylon Knee Highs 156X* and *Purl 194X*, I embroidered directly on the printed micrographs to interact with the scanning electron microscope images. I feel I've come full circle from my first relationship with the laboratory light microscope—then, examining microorganisms and human tissue—to now using the scanning electron microscope to examine the materials with which I now work, textiles.

ruthtabancay.com

Ruth Tabancay *Purl 194X* 2019, watercolor paper, embroidery floss, scanned electron micrograph digital print, hand-embroidered, 13" x 16". Top: detail.



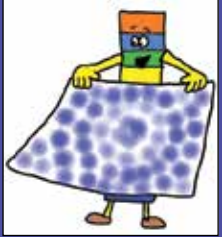
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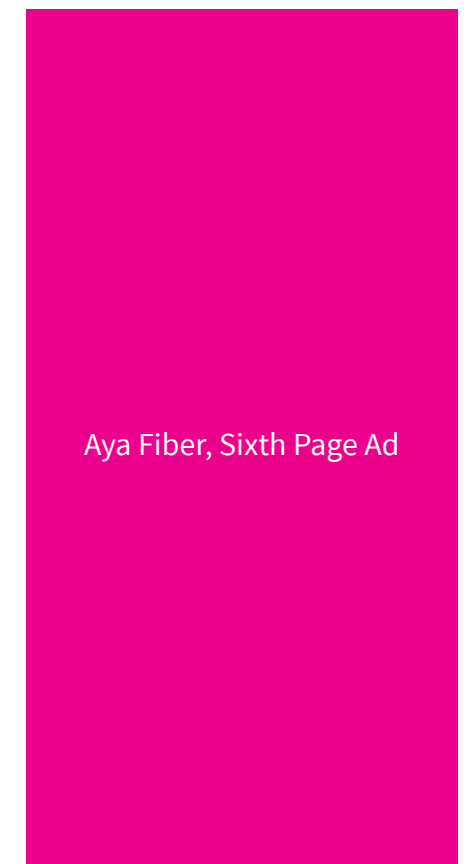
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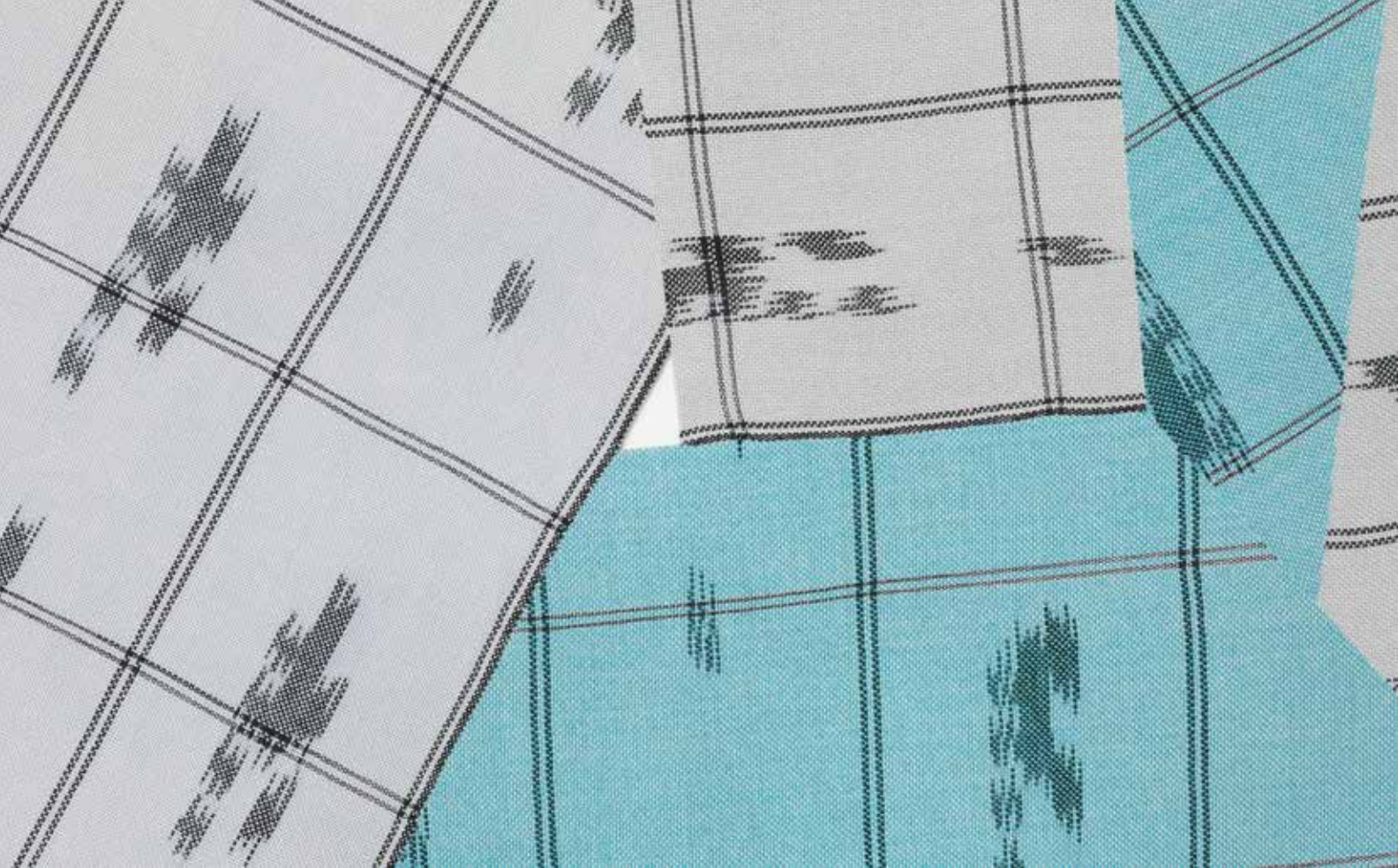
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For more info on Innovations in Textiles St. Louis 2019:

innovationsintextilesstl@gmail.com

www.innovationsintextilesstl.org



FIBER REINTERPRETED AWARD

Andrea Donnelly
Richmond, Virginia, US

Threads are conductors: of language, of pattern, of structure. The loom is the ground from which I build these conductors into stories, lovely flawed experiments, unanswerable questions, and intimate bonds. In the studio, these kinds of human experience are pondered and explored through the filter of both traditional and non-traditional textile-making processes and informed by such diverse concerns as quantum physics, poetry, literature, and psychology. They are also shaped by my personal relationship with the world: meandering walks through my neighborhood,

the weight of a poem in my body, the texture of air around people gathered close.

Fifteen years ago my fingers first traced the texture of threads held under tension on a loom. I discovered a field of white lines vibrating with potential energy: a living, breathing, blank canvas. What we humbly call “cloth” can be an incredibly powerful conduit for the subtleties of human experience, and my brain and body felt something click into place as I sat down at that first loom. Weaving would

become the language through which I create a sacred space for connection and meaning in our beautiful, bewildering world. This language has evolved as I have grown as an artist, yet beneath the conceptual threads of my various bodies of work, the structure of that visual and tactile language, and the basic impulse of my creative practice remain constant: a quietly insistent message to *come closer, closer, closer. Stay for a while with this moment.*

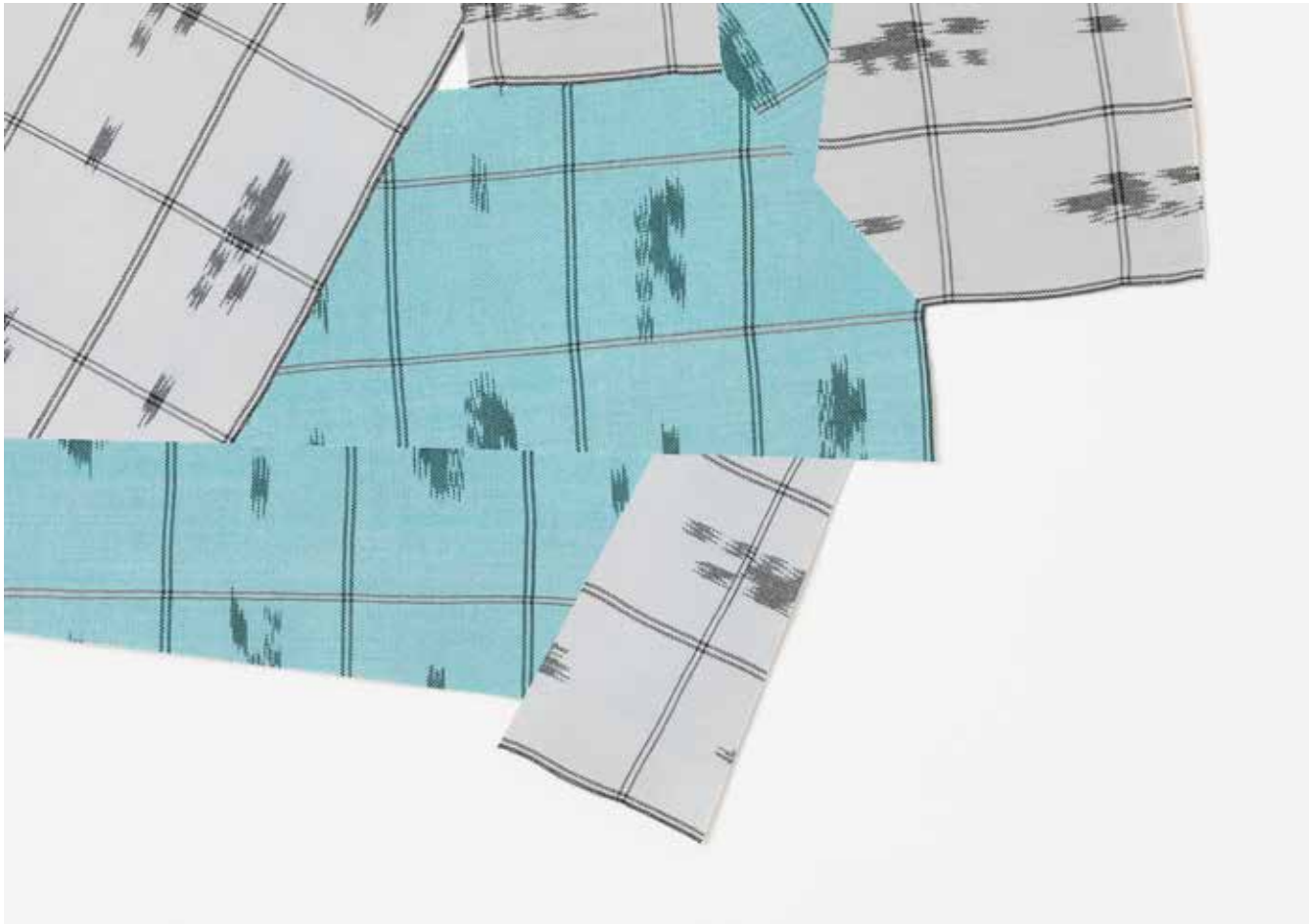
I weave cloth by hand and paint it, only to unravel the threads from each other and weave them again. I weave patterned cloth and cut it to pieces, which become their own altered hieroglyphs, building blocks for a new kind of discernible text. These constructive / destructive / constructive processes allow my original envisioned images and patterns to grow into a collaboration between intention, tools, materials, and the movements of my body through the physical, exacting process of weaving. *Portrait of a Recent Storm Cloud* is a

My weavings are deeply layered with information, rewarding the viewer who is willing to stay and investigate.

collage made from structurally-reinforced and cut-up pieces of my handwoven cloth. Though I have made over twelve works using the collage process so far, *Portrait* is the largest. I find this method of working, in which the predictable structure of a weaving becomes chaotic, and warp and weft

Andrea Donnelly *Portrait of a Recent Storm Cloud* 2019, cotton thread, dye, PVA, canvas, hand-woven, ikat-dyed thread, immersion-dyed cloth, cut, reassembled, 56" x 80". Left page: detail.





are no longer required to meet each other at right angles, an extremely fertile and challenging way to interact with handwoven material.

Like eyes adjusting to low light, or the careful study of a poem, the details and connections of my work reveal themselves slowly. My weavings are deeply layered with information, rewarding the viewer who is willing to stay and investigate. Counterbalancing the hurried speed at which our world rushes along, my artwork speaks in the underestimated language of the weaver. I use metaphors of process and material to filter that world, turn its volume down, bring disparate parts into a harmonious whole. Making a textile by hand is a complex

and meditative process, and alone in my studio I am the only witness to the choreographic beauties and chance happenings that occur on the pathway to a finished work. Yet I rest in the knowledge that the final woven object contains and embodies those culminating moments. They are artifacts built with the layers of their own history, and ours.

andreadonnelly.com

Andrea Donnelly *Portrait of a Recent Storm Cloud* (detail) 2019, cotton thread, dye, PVA, canvas, hand-woven, ikat-dyed thread, immersion-dyed cloth, cut, reassembled, 56" x 80".

Susan Hensel

Minneapolis, Minnesota, US | susanhenselprojects.com

Jane McKeating says "Color drips off the needle every bit as richly as that from a brush." I am researching ways that color and placement can make us slow down. *Horizon* is hung well above eye level, forcing the viewer to look up. This opens the throat and encourages a deep breath while stimulating relaxation. I work at the computer designing modular elements that are combined with luscious embroidery threads. The stitching is executed on a computer-aided embroidery machine. I leave room for chance, human error, flawed thread, broken needles, run out bobbins and a panicked phone call from a friend. Repair savviness, canny attention and a spirit of wabi-sabi are essential to my process.

Susan Hensel *Horizon* 2019, Sunbrella outdoor fabric, polyester thread, felt, Velcro, wood, foam pipe wrap, hardware, digital-embroidered, 28" x 78" x 3". To be hung above eye level.



Meredith Grimsley

Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, US | meredithregimsley.com

Textiles represent a physical and lifelong relationship in our lives. I am inspired by the metaphorical capabilities of fiber as an artistic medium and as a conduit to the subconscious. In *Breathe: Blooms and Grow*, I reveal the construction of a childhood coping mechanism. As a child I created fairy tales to camouflage difficult experiences. As an adult I had to learn how to breathe through difficult truths. The work visualizes the

ways I am able to reconnect with the mysteries of life which have all ushered me into a process of radical acceptance and the mending of self worth.

Meredith Grimsley *Breathe: Blooms and Growth* 2018, muslin, silk charmeuse, silk organza, thread, batting, MX fiber reactive dye, textile pigment, fusible web, digital-printed, silk-screened, appliquéd, machine-quilted, hand-dyed, hand-painted, 56" x 64". Right: details.



Kei'Anna Anderson

Muncie, Indiana, US

My work addresses the boundaries that are often crossed by the structure of society in an attempt towards conformity. The conflict between individualism and conformity creates tension amongst various identity markers, such as gender, race, and social class. The heavy coarse fabric which I use in my work reflects the unpleasant bearing of imposed behaviors and ideas. Humans, with their inevitable resilience, are becoming increasingly expressive and determined to untether societal restrictions: to live organically and freely. The muted tone of the garment, *Untethered*, symbolizes the extraction of life and

vibrancy caused by restrictions and demands of society. Metal components woven throughout the garment create erupting organic forms. They represent our ability to persevere and the strength to emerge from constricting structures and the impossibility to remain buried beneath a porous structure.

Kei'Anna Anderson *Untethered* (front and back) 2019, fabric, copper, cut, hammered, patinaed, painted, sewn, 42" x 22" x 4". Photo: Ellie Tison. Courtesy of Serena Nancarrow.



Kristi Swee Kuder

Battle Lake, Minnesota, US | kskuder.com

Cold Fusion expresses a space where presence and absence intertwine. My creative passion is fueled by the examination and expression of the contradictory and ambiguous aspects of life. As a sculptor and installation artist, I explore diametric conditions by applying fiber and textile processes to wire mesh. My aim is to create ethereal forms that appear fragile even though they are physically strong. The veiled membranes of stainless steel challenge the viewer to look beyond the surface. My recent work involves marking the mesh by fire-treating it. This creates imagery that floats along diaphanous boundaries.

Kristi Swee Kuder *Cold Fusion* 2016, stainless steel wire mesh, acrylic rods, deconstructed wire mesh, hand-stitched, fire-treated, 20" x 23" x 20". Right top and bottom: details.



Barbara Osborne

Seattle, Washington, US | pineneedlerock.com

My work is based upon a deep respect for natural materials and their histories. Some pine trees are 100 feet tall, some rocks are 50 or more million years old. All of them have stories: how they were formed, how they got their color and shape. I work at the intersection of art and engineering, exploring what these materials can do. My process is a combination of lapidary and sculptural work. I also use both traditional and invented coiling techniques.

Like a Space Needle Pagoda is a five-tiered vessel with a two-tiered lid made of Florida Longleaf and Michoacan pine needles treated with glycerin, dye and beeswax. The body of the vessel is laced onto a slice of jasper rock and the lid onto a cut half of a Septarian Nodule, a type of rock with a series of radiating cracks.

Barbara Osborne *Like a Space Needle Pagoda* 2018, coiled pine needles, Jasper slice, cut Septarian Nodule, waxed linen, 16½" x 7". Photo: Paul deRoos.





NEXT GENERATION AWARD

Kirsteen Buchanan
Columbia, Missouri, US

AS a fashion and textile print designer, I am endlessly intrigued by beauty: by the flow of fabric, color interplay, pattern engineering and the opportunity that we have as fashion designers to engage, intrigue and challenge through clothing. We are creating art that moves.

Through my own designs I seek to escape our chaotic world through the merging of photography, drawing and painting to create new worlds in which the pursuit of beauty is the principle ethos.

As a fashion and textile print designer and fashion design educator, I work predominantly at the intersection of fashion,

visual communication and language, using layering and mixed-media collage to create beautiful clothing with an inherent story.

Melting Maps is part of my mini-collection, *Borders That Unite*. It's a collection based on visions of maps which are bounded by border prints constructed of motifs common to many cultures, as well as by those commonly used in mapmaking.

Kirsteen Buchanan *Borders That Unite: Melting Maps* (front) 2019, silk chiffon caftan, velvet bra, silk habotai pant, digital-printed, indigo-dyed, 45" x 65". Photo: Aaron Ottis, model: Sydney Bias. Left page: back detail.





In our divided and fractious world, it feels like we often lose sight of a fundamental truth: we are all the same. Borders that divide us are arbitrary, lines in the earth that were drawn by man, many times for political ends. When I designed this collection I looked at the earth's topography via NOAA satellite maps and thought about not only how borders move over time, but how the earth's surface itself is perpetually in flux. As a maker, I visualize the people of the world as having the potential to be united by a common love of craft. What opportunities of fusion exist to create new cultural hybrids? Where is the border between borrowing and appropriation? And if we remove these artificial borders do we risk losing our distinct cultural craft identities?

The *Melting Maps* garment shapes recall basic pieces common to many cultures throughout time, with a nod to modern fashion in the indigo velvet bra. The wide-leg pant was digitally printed with a large-scale satellite map which I captured from NOAA's website and shows the western hemisphere. For the caftan print, I thought about patterns of world migration in the past few years and imagined the world map melting and countries morphing as people bled from one country to another and coastlines changed via climate change. This map print was an intense Photoshop effort merging a scanned map with painted splotches and sky imagery, all contained within an Illustrator border. I shifted pieces of the map around, mirrored and tweaked. The caftan itself was constructed of two huge ovals, each folded in half and seamed in the center back.

I have been a fashion designer for many years, designing knitwear for sportswear companies in Chicago and Dallas, before moving into the role of fashion educator at **Stephens College** in Columbia, Missouri. Moving into education was a liberating move, affording me the opportunity to create one-off pieces that are not subject to market forces.

Working with students seeking to pursue their own careers in fashion has offered me constant renewal and an intriguing window into myriad mindsets, fashion sensibilities and creative processes. Similarly, the development of digital textile printing has been an incredible game-changer for designers—and students of fashion design—who can now not only design garments, but create their own original fabrics.

As a designer, my driving force is to find ways to fuse beautiful product design with meaning, exploring design concepts and a range of questions that center on transformation, connection, communication and storytelling.

Kirsteen Buchanan *Borders That Unite: Melting Maps* (back view) 2019, silk chiffon caftan, velvet bra, silk habotai pant, digital-printed, indigo-dyed, 45" x 65". Photo: Aaron Ottis, model: Sydney Bias. Bottom: back detail.

FOR CALL ENTRY

American Tapestry Biennial 13

ATA invites submissions from artists around the world to the American Tapestry Biennial 13, a juried tapestry exhibit showcasing the best in contemporary tapestry. Large tapestries accepted. Details online.

Juror: Nick DeFord Awards and Catalog
Deadline: October 15, 2019

Gabriela Cristu "Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun" ATB11

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Raija Jokinen

Helsinki, Finland | raijajokinen.fi

With my work I am researching the interface of spirit and materials: Do we know precisely what forms the physical world and what is spiritual? Visually my works are often based on body-related details such as skin, blood vessels, and nerve tracks. They are also reminiscent of roots or branches without fully representing either. I am intrigued by the apparent similarity, infinite rich variations and the life-support functions they represent. They are allegories, and can be found in almost all living organisms.

Raija Jokinen *Tangles 2* 2018, flax, sewing yarn, starch, fiber drawing, machine-embroidered, 22" x 39". Top: detail.



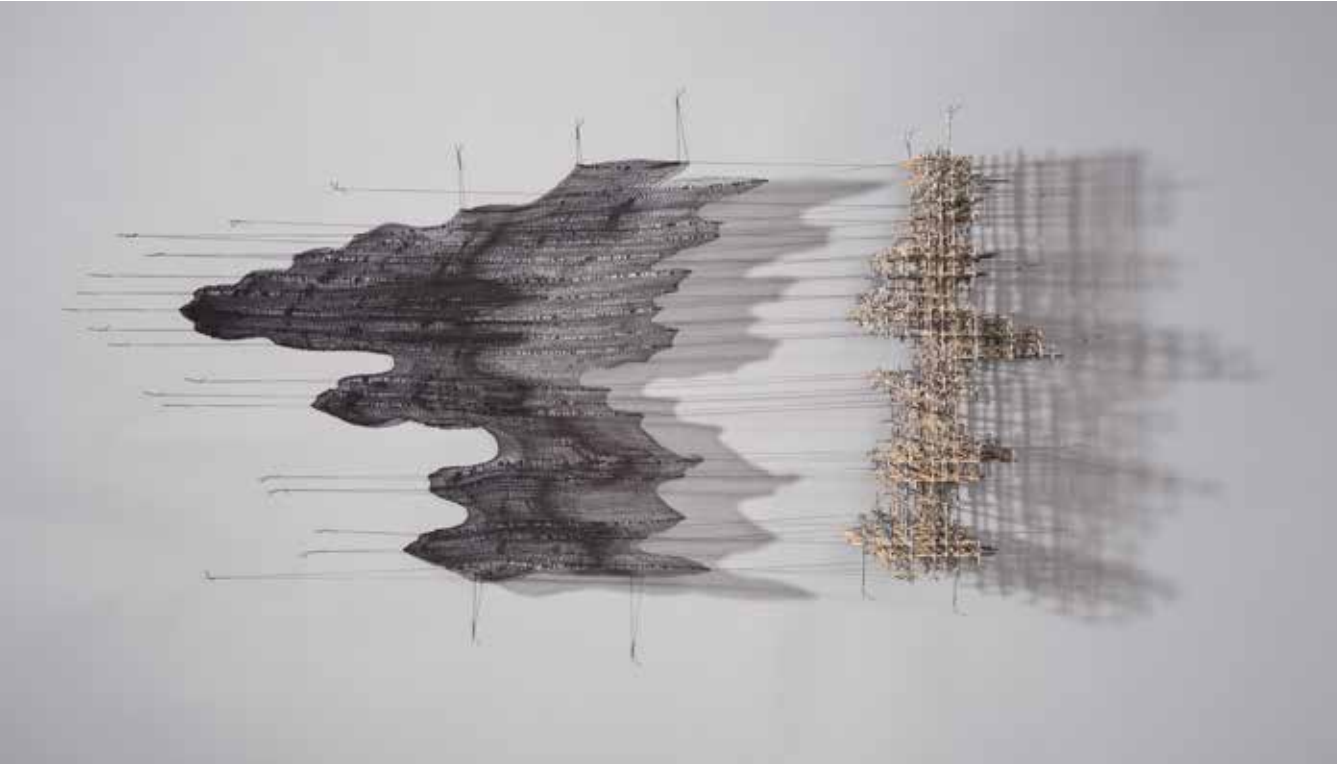
Mo Kelman

Providence, Rhode Island, US | mokelman.com

The borders between clouds and the blue sky they inhabit are constantly changing. All is ephemeral, the milky vapors and the shifting blue frames among them. We only need to tilt back our heads to take in the sky-scape that cloaks us day and night. This is a persistent reminder that everything we think we know of form and semblance is fleeting. In my current work, inspired by clouds, I enjoy the irony of anchoring these fluid forms in place.

As a maker, I look to the field of tensile architecture for inspiration. I use lashing methods to build rigid frameworks. To these, I tether membranes, produced with mokume shibori techniques.

Mo Kelman *Cloud and the Space Between* 2018, shibori-dyed, shaped silk, wood, steel wire, cordage, nails, 81" x 44" x 15½". Top: detail.



Michelle Browne

Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, US | michellebrowne.info

I do not create landscapes but rather prefer to explore plants, shrubs and trees at the crossing of reality, invention and expression. My work is an exploration of the nature of trees or plants using adapted printmaking techniques, specifically the monotype.

Monotype is a technique that shows the artist's hand. I manipulate the ink by vigorously rubbing in order to transfer the image to my favorite surface: natural quilt batting. Each print, each log, represents a cathartic black-and-white record of a day. The ledger of logs represents one month and the physical presence of a daily recurring studio ritual. *Daily Logs* is a metaphor for a barrier, a repository, a place for reflection.



Michelle Browne *Daily Logs* 2018, natural quilt batting, acrylic paint, wire, recycled towels, Misty-fuse, monotype, wrapped, dimensions vary. Top: detail.

George-Ann Bowers

Berkeley, California, US | gabowers.com

My work is a celebration of the beauty and infinite intricacy of the natural world. I am enthralled by the structure of tree bark and seed pods. I see weaving patterns in water-eroded canyon walls and delight at the pattern of insect tracks on desert sand. Drawing on imagery from natural processes I construct detailed portraits of nature's continuing cycle of creation, destruction and change. The work *Rock Frock* highlights the rich textures and subtle coloration of the dramatic rock formations along Maine's wild and beautiful coastline. It was made following an artist residency in **Acadia National Park** using double-weave pickup, tapestry, warp painting, and differential warp tensioning to create this multi-layered, dimensional piece.



George-Ann Bowers *Rock Frock* 2017, cotton, wool, rayon, silk, textile paint, polyfil stuffing, double-woven, hand-stitched, 40" x 44" x 1½". Top: detail.

Mary Babcock

Honolulu, Hawaii, US | marybabcock.com

78° 3' 0" N is part of *Hydrophilia*, a 12-year series of tapestries woven from refuse: abandoned fishing nets and lines gathered across the Pacific. Named after the latitude that traverses Greenland’s largest glacier and inspired by **Sveinung Råheim’s** photo of two reindeer amid a frozen landscape, horn-locked in a haunting entanglement of abandoned marine net, this work is a meditation on the interconnection between our warming Pacific

waters and the melting glaciers thousands of miles north. The small stone, placed there by my daughter, is to remind us of our terrestrial insignificance.

Mary Babcock *78° 3' 0" N* 2018, salvaged nets, deep sea leader line, found stone, hand-woven, 48" x 124" x 3". Bottom: detail.



Alison Muir

Cremorne, New South Wales, Australia | muirandmuir.com.au

Water is the driving force in my world. My work delivers messages—sometimes political and always passionate—about our water environment. The designs are generated using scientific research, various fiber techniques, bright colors, and hand stitching. I connect traditions such as dyeing with political comment; scientific details with text embedded in textile land and seascapes. I have also experimented with natural dyes and mordants, using indigo, and Australian flora as source materials.

Indigenous Australians have managed the resources of coastal and inland waters for millennia with care to nurture stocks, feed the people and provide custodial techniques for future generations. When will immigrant Australians adopt the same values and let the indigenous people fix the broken water systems for all Australians?

Alison Muir *Custodial Water* 2019, cotton, silk organza, dye, Pentel pen, pencil, block-printed, drawn, hand and machine-stitched, 38" x 29". Photo: Andy Payne. Right top and bottom: details.



IN PRINT

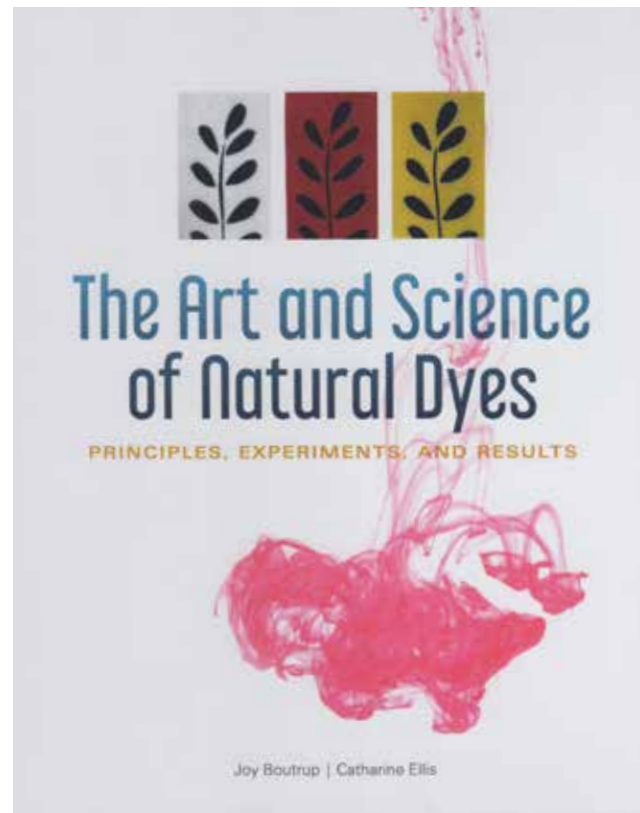
Reviewed by Barbara Shapiro

The Art and Science of Natural Dyes: Principles, Experiments, and Results

by Joy Boutrup and Catharine Ellis | Schiffer Publishing, Ltd.
176 pages (January 2019)
ISBN: 9780764356339
schifferbooks.com

This important book encourages and facilitates the use of safe sustainable dyeing and printing with natural dyes. Abundant recipes make up a third of the book, but are relegated to the last chapter so the reader learns how and why natural dyes work before experimenting. In **Yoshiko Wada's** Foreword, Ellis' "love of testing and ...empirical work" hints at the exactitude of what follows. Ellis' Introduction pays homage to her co-author Dutch textile engineer Joy Boutrup and to French dye expert **Michel Garcia**, whose extensive investigation into natural dyes informs much of her own research. Early 20th century industrial dye-trade handbooks were important resources for Garcia because natural dyes were still in use, and knowledge of chemistry was applied to the process before even more polluting synthetic dyes supplanted this practice.

The book is organized with technical information and the principles of natural dyeing presented in 10 chapters with photos of dye samples resulting from actual dye tests. *Dyeing Textiles* defines textiles on a chemical level, the difference between dyes, pigments and dye lakes, and conditions that can vary the color output. The role of mordants in soluble dyes is explained. *Fibers* chapter shows why protein is easier to dye than cellulose. Wool, silk, cotton, linen, hemp, ramie and regenerated cellulose fibers are all considered. Properly preparing textiles for dyeing and printing avoids disappointment later on. The *Dyes* chapter covers chemical groups and classes. Extraction of specific dyes is explained. While not an exhaustive list, the dyes covered are chosen for availability, and light and wash fastness. The chapter on *Mordants* is devoted to metal salts that fix the dyes to the fiber. The *Immersion Dyeing* chapter explains how various pre-mordant and post-mordant processes differ. A one-bath acid dye procedure for protein is presented. The *Indigo* chapter deals



Catharine Ellis and Joy Boutrup at Penland Dye Studio, 2016. Photo: Robin Dreyer.

with a variety of organic vats and the iron mineral vat. *Mixing and Shading Colors* expands the color pallet. *Printing* with natural dyes explains mordant printing, lakes, pigments and also printing with indigo. The important issues of *Finishing of Dyed and Printed Textiles* and of *Dye Fastness* prepare the reader at last for the *Recipes* that have been thoroughly tested and updated for modern studio dyers.



Catharine's lab notebook of samples and tests, 2017. Photo by Nick Falduto.

Complex concepts of plant biology and dye chemistry are presented in understandable layman's language, and clarity is cast on Michel Garcia's extensive research into contemporary applications of traditional practices. We learn why no one formula is suited to every circumstance. By following advice on scouring, cleaning and wetting specific to the fiber, troublesome spotting and uneven dyeing can be avoided. Additional information beyond mere recipes extends our knowledge into the science of dyeing.

Ellis and Boutrup have written a practical guide to natural dyeing with the initial sampling done for you, although they strongly suggest sampling in your own studio since dyes sourced from different suppliers can vary greatly. The sturdy hardback spiral construction makes this a functional studio reference. This book is a must for all dye practitioners and teachers. I expect my copy will get lots of use!

—Barbara Shapiro has created textile art for decades. She combines a rich knowledge of historical and ethnic textiles with technical expertise in weaving, dyeing and basketry. Her recent baskets often include indigo elements. Her artwork has been widely exhibited and published and she is a frequent writer for textile publications.

Right, top: Middle mordant on silk fabric with cochineal dye, 2017. Photo: Catharine Ellis.

Right, middle: Values of indigo dye on cotton, using multiple dips in the vat, 2017. Photo: Catharine Ellis.

Right, bottom: Weld dye on cotton with iron post-mordant, 2017. Photo: Catharine Ellis.



IN REVIEW

Reviewed by Vicky Clark

Fiberart International 2019

Contemporary Craft
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, US | fiberartinternational.org

Fiberart International 2019 is of the moment—grounded in the political, social and environmental issues that impact today's world, yet it resonates with traces and echoes from the past. The work also speaks to and about fiber. Jurors **Sonya Clark**, Professor of Art at **Amherst College** in Massachusetts, and

Jane Sauer, Gallery Owner and Arts Consultant in St. Louis, chose 56 works (from 1441 submissions) that speak loudly and clearly about what matters today. Whether large or small, made with innovative or traditional techniques, each has a point of view and something to say. These artists are facing issues in an honest way. There are references to the #metoo movement, non-gender specific bathrooms, consumerism and recycling, the environment, labor, the body and identity. There is outrage and concern expressed with intelligence, humor and/or ambiguity through the quiet gesture and the outlandish statement. Kudos to the artists for making us think and look in new ways and for doing it with fiber.

Over the year this exhibition, organized by volunteers from the Fiberarts Guild of Pittsburgh, has been consistently excellent, serving as a model for other shows by presenting

Carolina Oneto Tapia *IGUALDAD*, cotton fabric, batting, thread, machine-pieced, walking foot-quilted, 40" x 40". Photo by the artist.

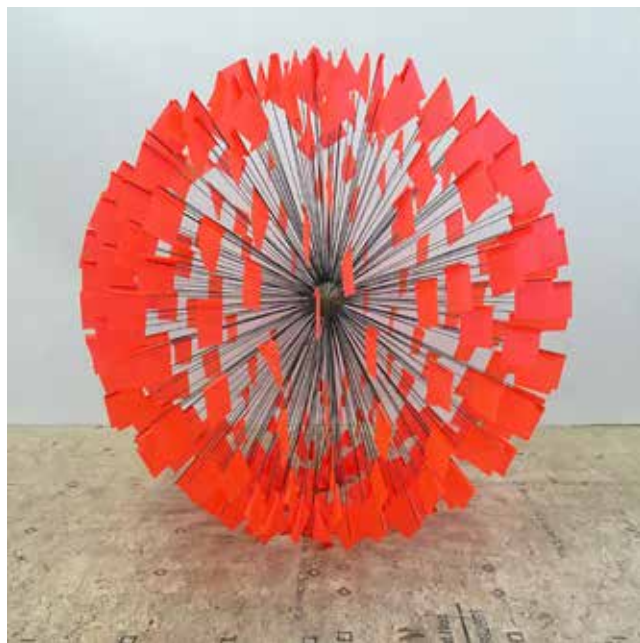


the multiplicity of fiber. Within this variety, this year's show has a surprising commonality, a shared sensibility that can be characterized as an engagement with language, the vocabulary of fiber and the shifting meanings of words. Many of the works also ask how art can address the confusion, complexity and contentiousness of our current political situation. **Michael Rohde**, in *Interrogative*, makes up his own language with abstracted pictographs or alphabets waiting to be decoded, hinting at ideas not yet understood. **Carolina Oneto Tapia** converts the word *IGUALDAD* into binary code with zeroes and ones residing in squares of colors taken from national flags. Expressed in a language

that not all can understand on an abstracted visual field referencing geography and politics, the word and idea of equality remain elusive.

A related concept in the show is labor, ranging from the labor of language and writing to blue-collar labor and the labor of making the pieces. In *American Portraits: Loss in the Heartland*,

Patricia Kennedy-Zafred *American Portraits: Loss in the Heartland*, original vintage feed sacks, textile inks, image transfer materials, batting, cotton threads, silkscreened, image transferred; machine-pieced, quilted, 58" x 66". Photo: Larry Berman.



copper mesh. The armor is delicate yet strong, mirroring the act of simultaneously protecting and hiding one's identity. And while the figure is static, it seems posed a la **Martha Graham**, ready to move across a stage. Her enigmatic figure speaks about the body and is akin to **Do Ho Suh's** warrior's robe made from military dog tags, **Magdalena Abakanowicz's** hollow figure, and **Mrinalini Mukherjee's** ritual figures, all monumental pieces rooted in the language of politics and identity.

The large scale of this piece as well as **Meg Arsenovic's** circular flag sculpture and **Max Adrian's** inflatable snowman demonstrate how work made with fiber can exert a powerful presence. Moving beyond the specificity of materials to the knowledge that art is about ideas, these artists are taking the oft-marginalized fiber art into the mainstream. But just in case anyone forgets these works also are part of the fiber art world, there is the wonderful work by **Melinda K. P. Stees**, *The Start of It All*, an image of hands casting on stitches made

on a knitting machine. When all is said and done, *Fiberart International* continues to break through art historical boundaries and bring a vibrancy and excitement to viewers.

—Vicky Clark, PhD is an independent Curator, Critic, Lecturer, based in Pittsburgh.

Left: **Max Adrian** *Act II, Scene IV: Snowman*, pleather, satin, faux fur, nylon ripstop, chains, hardware, fan, timer, sewn, 95" x 26" x 26". Photo by the artist.

Right: **Melinda KP Stees** *THE START OF IT ALL*, perle cotton yarn, machine-knitted, mounted, 33" x 24". Photo by the artist.



Patty Kennedy-Zafred presents a portrait of farm labor with statistics and facts (one form of language) as well as photo-transfers of farmers, another language altogether on a quilt pieced together with vintage feed bags. Her techniques tell a story that updates the power of **James Agee's** *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* with photographs by **Walker Evans** (1941). **Jim Arendt's** hovering, two-dimensional, life-size male workers *Cat: Free Will Ain't Cheap*, also addresses the concept of labor. He uses reclaimed denim, originally worn because of its durability to reference the "making do" culture among many blue-collar workers and as a counterpoint to our throw-away, consumer-driven society.

Both of these works exhibit a gravitas that fits their subjects, as does **Nicole Benner's** *Comfort/Confine II*, though she deals with identity and the body. An anonymous, life-size figure covered from head to toe in a mesh gown that flows onto the floor, it asserts both a presence and an absence. The faceless, and generalized silhouette stands quietly like a sentinel charged with protection, wearing an armor made of

Top left: **Nicole Benner** *Comfort/Confine II*, metallic yarn, crocheted, 70" x 84" x 84". Photo by Drew Stauss, Departure Studio.

Bottom left: **Jim Arendt** *Cat: Free Will Ain't Cheap*, reclaimed denim, thread, appliqué, embroidered, hand and machine-sewn, 84" x 56". Photo by the artist.

Top right: **Meg Arsenovic** *Tell Tales*, vinyl marking flags, wood, drilled, assembled, 36" x 36" x 36". Photo by the artist.



Reviewed by Patricia Malarcher

Transformed: Paper in Dimension

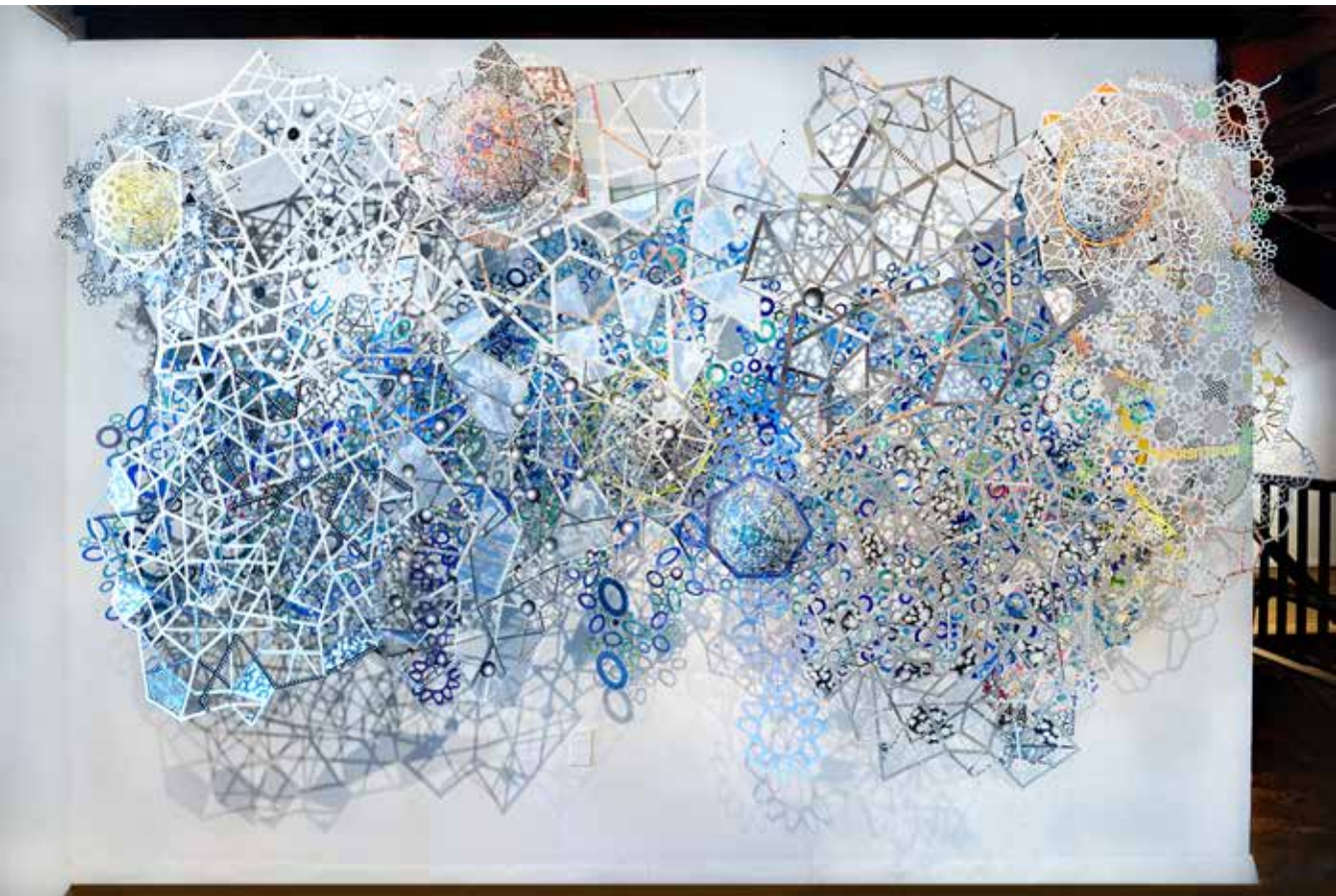
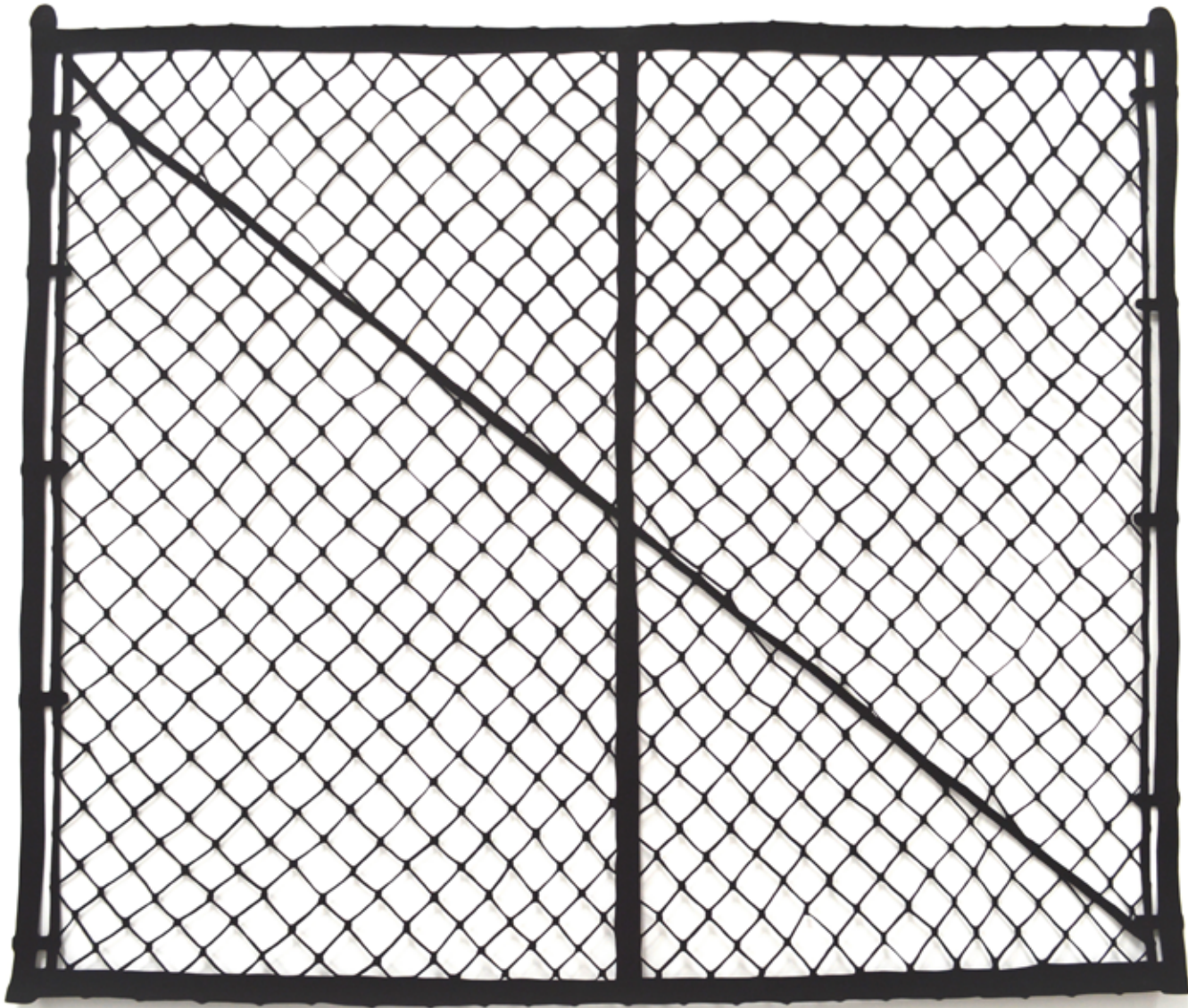
Hunterdon Art Museum
Clinton, New Jersey, US | hunterdonartmuseum.org

The premise of this elegantly succinct exhibition is that paper is a medium in its own right as well as a surface supporting other mediums. Each of eight artists curator Carol Eckert chose to exemplify “the porous and dissolving boundaries

between drawing, textiles, painting, architecture, and sculpture” contributes a nuance to the organizing concept. At the same time, works intersect with and reinforce each other in provocative ways. Although one might expect a show based on paper to include the handmade variety, everything on view was created from existing, in many cases repurposed, materials.

Paper remains its unembellished self in **Margaret Griffith’s** stark silhouettes of gates cut from multiple layers of oversize

Margaret Griffith *H.P. 1* 2012, hand-cut paper, 64” x 76”. Photo by the artist.



sheets. Executed in actual size but devoid of context, familiar patterns become enigmatic. *H.P.1*, for example, references a chain link structure that might provide access to an industrial site. The diagonal line from upper left to lower right, in real life inconspicuous as supporting structure, here evokes the ubiquitous slanted stroke forbidding entry.

Contrasting with Griffith’s bare-bones images, a magically complex wall installation by **Nancy Baker** reconfigures junk mail into intricate constellations blending organic and geometric forms. Presented as overlapping planes, these convey a sense of inexhaustible visual phenomena, a segment of infinity.

Jaimie Crimmins, also using junk mail, shreds it into strips that she rolls into beads resembling porcupine quills or left as thread-like elements. From these, she builds dome-shaped forms, their obsessively symmetrical structures resulting in mandala-like patterns. A wall-mounted composition of different-sized domes, *Field Guide to Getting Lost*, seems ironically titled considering the loss of the material’s original identity.



Top: **Nancy Baker** *Blue Amendment* 2019, paper, 12’ x 8’ x 12’. Photo by the artist.

Bottom: **Jaynie Crimmins** *Field Guide to Getting Lost* (detail) 2019, recycled papers, 60” x 84” x 8”. Photo: Lisa Hewett Heilman.



In **Nnenne Okore's** *Simple Material*, magazine pages are clearly discernible despite being tightly crumpled into creases, bark-like in texture. Bundled into a pair of dissimilar forms, they become a pas de deux on a wall. More overtly woodsy in appearance—a reminder that paper comes from plant materials—*The Obstacle* consists of deconstructed newspapers reconstructed as slender elements casually bound together like a natural thicket or improvised fence.

Optical illusions tease the eye in cut paper works by **Laura Vandenburg** and **Wendy Leven**. Spanning almost twelve feet across, Vandenburg's *For Now Clouds* is a network of undulating grids; apertures that gradually increase and decrease in size create the impression of a surface billowing in and out. A mysterious glow emanating from the piece is a reflection of pink paint on the wall behind it.



The lighting of **Letven's** *Time Flies*, a medley of open forms floating in space, projects distorted shadows that serve as a backdrop, continually changing when viewed from different angles. Most of the forms are black or white, but occasionally gray to match the shadows, adding to the visual play.

Another approach to cut paper is the labyrinthine positive/negative incising in **Stephanie Back's** lace-like layers that conflate images of urban maps and circuit boards.

Joell Baxter screenprints geometric designs on paper, cuts it into strips, and weaves it into wall hangings or floor sculptures. *Magic Carpet* is a shallow basketry form, diagonally plaited with bulging rolled-over edges and corners lifting from the floor. Of all the exhibitors, Baxter most clearly dissolves the boundaries between paper, sculpture, and textiles.



—Patricia Malarcher is a studio artist and writer, as well as a former editor of the *Surface Design Journal*. As a Renwick Fellow, she researched writing on crafts at the Smithsonian Institution.

Top: **Nnenna Okore** *The Obstacle* 2013, newspapers, acrylic, 65" x 115" x 12". Photo: Lisa Hewett Heilman.
 Middle: **Wendy Letven** *Time Flies* 2019, cut paper, 12' x 8' x 2'. Photo: Lisa Hewett Heilman.
 Bottom: **Joell Baxter** *Magic Carpet* 2014, screen-printed paper, hand-cut, woven, 3" x 46" x 46". Photo: Lisa Hewett Heilman.

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