SURFACE DESIGN

SOFT BORDERS:
SDA INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION IN PRINT

0 74470 89282 3 03>

CREATIVE EXPLORATION OF FIBER AND FABRIC

Fall 2019 / $20.00

Exotic Silks

The Silk Source for Fiber Artists

DESIGNER: CATHERINE BACON, PHOTO BY SUSAN SCHELLING

Choose From Over 1,400 Silks

- *Yardage*
- *Scarves*
- *Garment Blanks*

Exotic Silks!

1-800-845-7455

silks@exoticsilks.com

www.exoticsilks.com

Supplying Fine Silks to Fiber Artists and Designers for over 40 years

Silk Habotai Silk Charmeuse Chiffons
Satins Crepe Georgette Cupro Rayons
Cotton Velvets Crepe de Chine Stretch Silks
Pongee Jacquard Devore Satins Tencel Linens

Thai Silks!

Thai Silks offers discounted prices to artists.

1-800-722-7455

silks@thaisilks.com

www.thaisilks.com

Mention this ad to request a Free Brochure and Artist Quality Silk Samples!

1959-B Leghorn Street, Mountain View, CA 94043

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

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.

FALL 2019 / VOLUME 43 NUMBER 3

AWARD WINNERS

06 **Guest Editor Statement: Soft Borders**
by Monika Auch

12 **Surface Design Award**
Amy Usdin

18 **Guest Juror Award**
Susan Smith

24 **Craft and Community Award**
Alicia Decker

30 **Innovation Award**
Anne-Claude Cotty

34 **Material Exploration Award**
Ruth Tabancay

38 **Fiber Reinterpreted Award**
Andrea Donnelley

46 **Next Generation Award**
Kristeen Buchanan

DEPARTMENTS

56 **In Print**
The Art and Science of Natural Dyes: Principles, Experiments, and Results
reviewed by Barbara Shapiro

58 **In Review**
Fiber Art International
reviewed by Vicky Clark
Transformed: Paper in Dimension
reviewed by Patricia Malarcher

FEATURED ARTISTS

15 **Heather Schulte** Boulder, Colorado, US
16 **Janice Lessman-Moss** Kent, Ohio, US
17 **Eva Camacho-Sanchez** Florence, Massachusetts, US
21 **Jessica Wildman Katz** Highland Park, Michigan, US
22 **Betty Vera** North Adams, Massachusetts, US
23 **Nancy Koenigsberg** New York, New York, US
27 **Hannah Shimabukuro** Asheville, North Carolina, US
28 **Gretchen Morrissey** Durham, North Carolina, US
29 **Anna Chupa** Allentown, Pennsylvania, US
41 **Susan Hensel** Minneapolis, Minnesota, US
42 **Meredith Grimsley** Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, US
43 **Kei'Anna Anderson** Muncie, Indiana, US
44 **Kristi Swee Kuder** Battle Lake, Minnesota, US
45 **Barbar Osborne** Seattle, Washington, US
50 **Raija Jokinen** Helsinki, Finland
51 **Mo Kelman** Providence, Rhode Island, US
52 **Michelle Browne** Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, US
53 **George-Ann Bowers** Berkeley, California, US
54 **Mary Babcock** Honolulu, Hawaii, US
55 **Alison Muir** Cremorne, New South Whales, Australia

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.

WHO'S WHO

Surface Design Association
3900 Paseo Del Sol, Santa Fe, NM 87507
info@surfacedesign.org | surfacedesign.org
707.829.3110

Executive Director
Karena Bennett | executivedirector@surfacedesign.org

Surface Design Journal Editor
Elizabeth Kozlowski | journaleditor@surfacedesign.org

Surface Design Journal Managing Editor
Lauren Sinner | managingeditor@surfacedesign.org

Surface Design Journal Art Director
Michelle Silver | artdirector@surfacedesign.org

Membership & Outreach Manager
Carolyn Hopkins | 707.829.3110
members@surfacedesign.org | advertising@surfacedesign.org

Website Manager
Crystal Van Dee | websitemanager@surfacedesign.org

Social Media Manager
Sean Misday | socialmedia@surfacedesign.org

Database Manager
Trevi Fountain | database@surfacedesign.org

Printed in Hanover, Pennsylvania, US
The Sheridan Press | sheridan.com

Executive Board:
President Astrid Bennett
Vice President Jorie Emory
Secretary Chris Motley
Treasurer Betsy Konop

Board:
Director Andréa Banks
Director April Dauscha
Director Alicia Decker
Director Tamryn McDermott
Director Jenn McNamara
Director Teddy Milder
Director Michelle Lee
Director Andrea Vail

President Emeritus: Jason Pollen

Surface Design Journal is a quarterly publication of the **Surface Design Association**, a nonprofit educational organization.

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

SUBSCRIPTION / MEMBERSHIP
The Surface Design Association membership: $100/digital + print; $75 digital per year, ($85 and $60 for student with ID); $40 ($20 student) of each member's dues shall be for a year subscription to Surface Design Journal. Subscriptions are available only to members. Outside USA: add $12 for Canada and $20 for all other countries. US funds only.

Send Subscription/Membership correspondence to:
Surface Design Association, 3900 Paseo Del Sol, Santa Fe, NM 87507. Visa/Mastercard accepted. To subscribe online, visit: surfacedesign.org/members/member-benefits/.

©2018 Surface Design Association, Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is strictly prohibited. Surface Design Journal (ISSN: 0197-4483) is published quarterly by the Surface Design Association, Inc., a non-profit educational organization. Publications Office: 3900 Paseo Del Sol, Santa Fe, NM 87507. Periodicals postage paid at Santa Fe, New Mexico, and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Surface Design Journal: Subscriptions, 3900 Paseo Del Sol, Santa Fe, NM 87507.

Selvedge Mag, Quarter Page Ad

Penland, Quarter Page Ad

National Basketry Org, Quarter Page Ad

Arrowmont, Quarter Page Ad

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″.

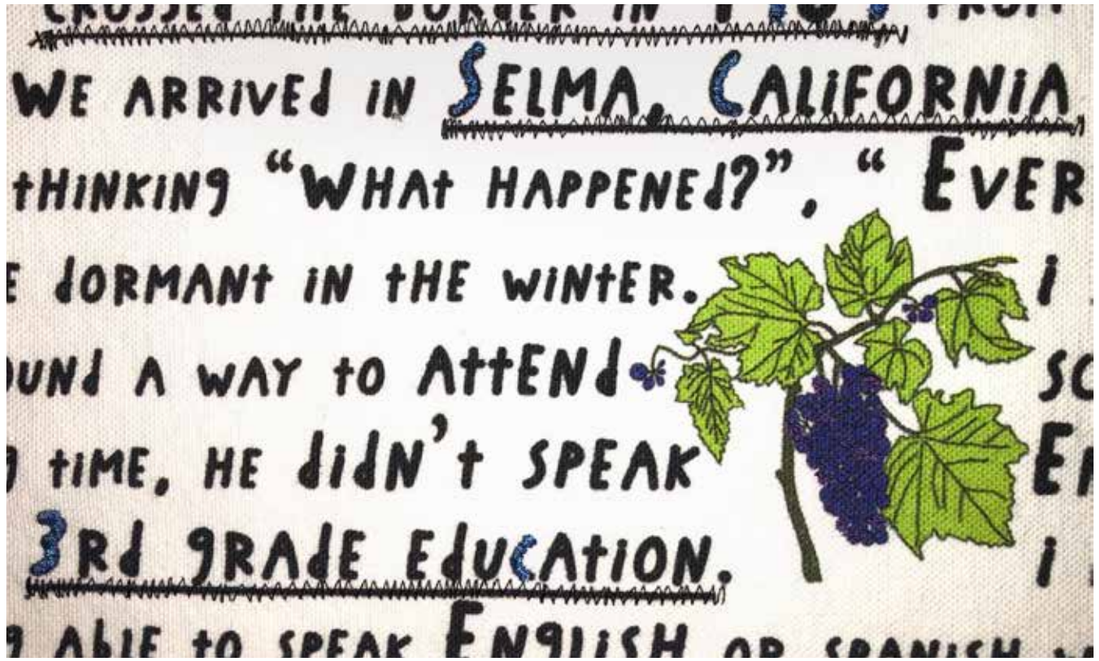
a mine field in no-man's land, much like the Iron curtain which divided Eastern and Western Europe after WWII. The headlines of news are dominated on a daily basis with stories around borders in the America's and continental Europe including the exclusion of certain groups of people based on race or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

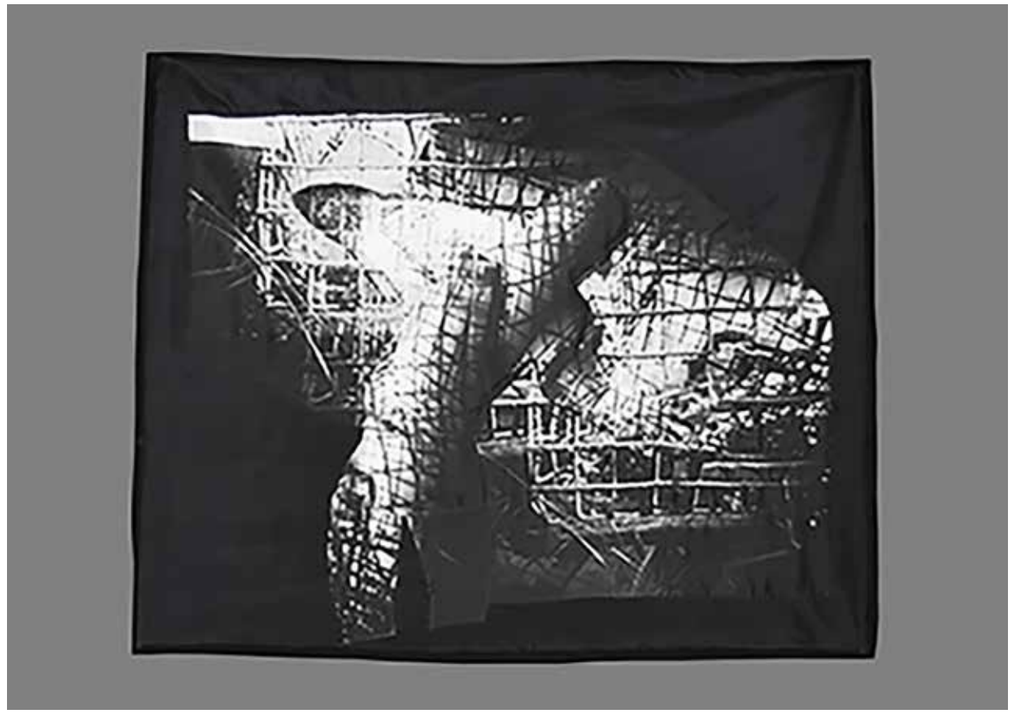
Anne-Claude Cotty uses a pin-hole camera to show the viewer a different world. This technique, dating back to Italian painter **Caravaggio** (1571-1610), was used by painters to project a realistically proportioned image onto canvas. Cotty's image resembles continents being torn apart to reveal the slightest 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.

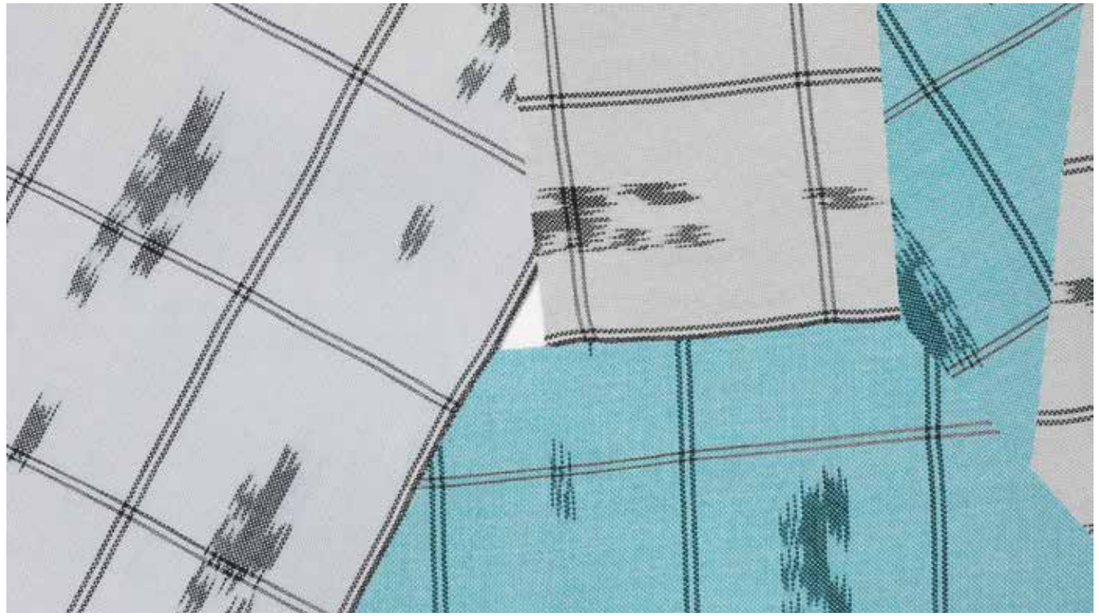
Ruth Tabancay plays with our perception by pushing beyond the limits of what the naked eye can see. Her prints of images taken with a scanning electron microscope reveal the hidden beauty of fibers. Dangerously close to get lost in a virtual world, mediated by aesthetically appealing software, she returns 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, appliquéd, 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 Donelly 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 Donelly'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.

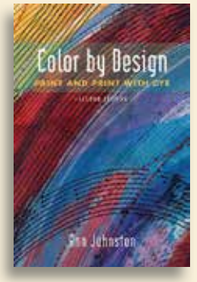
Conclusion
As humans we can cross many borders effortlessly, and even fly to the moon. While we are able to look at the intricacies and see the minutest details of our brains, we are still bound to materiality and our physical limitations. As an antidote to a complicated world and a mesh of virtual reality, 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

NEW FROM ANN JOHNSTON



Second Edition includes all new chapters about dye-ing blacks and using versatile dextrin resists.

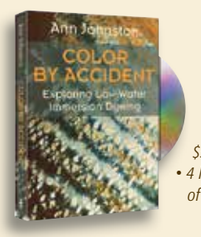
Color by Design: Paint and Print with Dye
Second Edition
$35.00 • 166 pages full color

A show-case of new quilts, with 62 pages of inspiration and process.

The Contact: Sierra Nevada, Dyed & Stitched
$35.00 • 146 pages full color

Also by Ann Johnston

A complete dye workshop on DVD!



Color by Accident: Exploring Low-Water Immersion Dyeing
$58.00 • two discs • 4 hours 19 minutes of information and demonstration

And the indispensable quilt design book.

Quilter's Book of Design
Expanded Second Edition
$29.95 • 176 pages • over 375 color images

Order on Ann's new website:
www.AnnJohnston.net

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 | heatherdschulte.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 spurned 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.

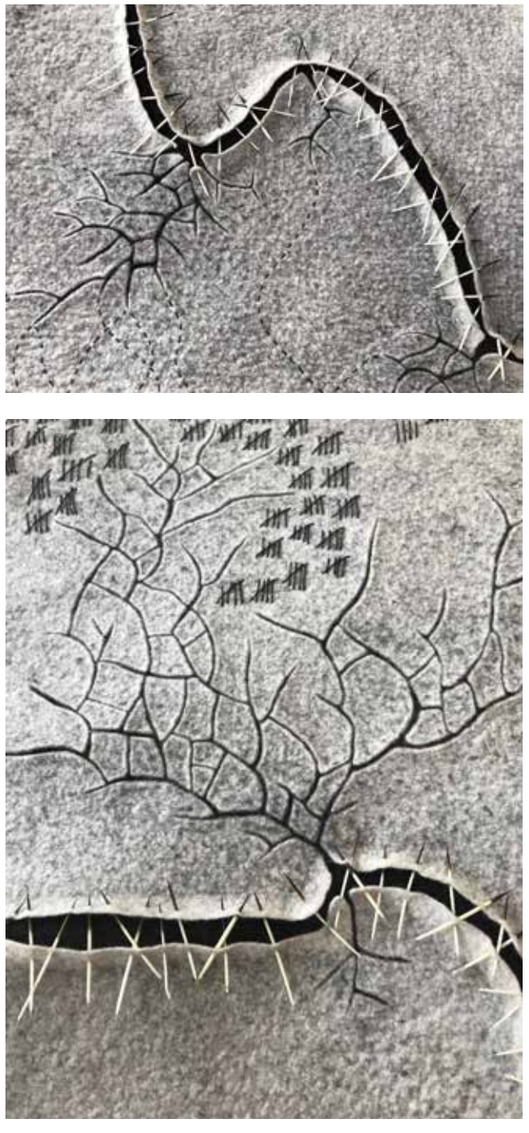
Janice Lessman-Moss *#471&473A* (diptych) 2018, digital jacquard, hand-woven TC2, painted warp, painted weft, 26″ x 11″. Left: detail.

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.