Woven Narratives

By

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A Thesis Essay Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the
Degree of Master of Applied Arts Resident Program
In

Fine Arts
Emily Carr University of Art + Design
2015

Abstract

My body of work for my thesis brings together a strong aesthetic and material based practice into the realm of social justice. Through cultural context, artistic and theoretical references, my driving motivations in art practice are discussed.

I use weaving, ceramics, performativity and process as manifestations to expand the discourses of textile and political art. Organic shapes, texture, and a plethora of details in the work allow meandering investigations by the viewer and create art that continually changes. Touch, texture and the handmade are explored in relationship to the maker and the performativity of making. Local, industrial, and indigenous materials are explored in relationship to their places of origin and the connotations they carry.

The textile-orientated works of contemporary artists such as Sascha Reichstein, Sara Rahbar and Lisa Anne Auerbach, which are politically radical, influence my practice.

Through the lens of social justice and intersectionality, my work investigates borders, refugees, globalism and colonization in relation to textiles and makers. I use the relationship of textiles to social justice and activism to create a working method in which to start my material explorations. The act of making alone can provide a powerful statement that has the ability to reframe the way we view and act within our world.

The body is used to forefront the human element around issues of injustices. Females are picked both for the relationship to textiles and because of their marginal position within intersections of race, gender, class, citizenship and culture.

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Introduction

Acknowledgement

I would like to acknowledge that this text and the artsworks were created on the unceded Coast Salish territories of the xʷməθkwəy̓əm [Musqueam], Sḵwx̱wú7mesh [Squamish] and Səl̓ílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh [Tsleil-Waututh] peoples. The term Indigenous is used in this work in accordance with terminology I have been taught by Indigenous people to refer to First Nations or First People and it is intended to be used with respect.

My thesis work deals with racialized people in marginalized situations. Being a middle-class white female, the implications of this can be more than problematic[1]. I am looking at some international issues, there is no situation in which I am not implicated. I am trying to understand and speak beside these issues from my own perspective[2].

[1] The fields of decolonization and intersectional feminism speak to this. I also took a course From "The Work" to Exhibitions: The Framing of Aboriginal Art with Raymond Boisjoly that delved deeply into the politics of representation and misrepresentation of Indigenous artwork within Western institutions.
[2] North American First Nations people are intentionally not represented in my work as they have the ability to speak for themselves within the same art context.

Speaking to the Text

This text is an introduction both to my self and my practice. In my predominantly woven work: my art works are listed under their full titles, which are both the title for the piece and the title for the warp. They are separated by a colon, but in other work such as the installation Awana: Loom: Telar , colons are part of the title. Artworks are referred to by either the piece name or, if only the warp is referenced, the warp title will be used.

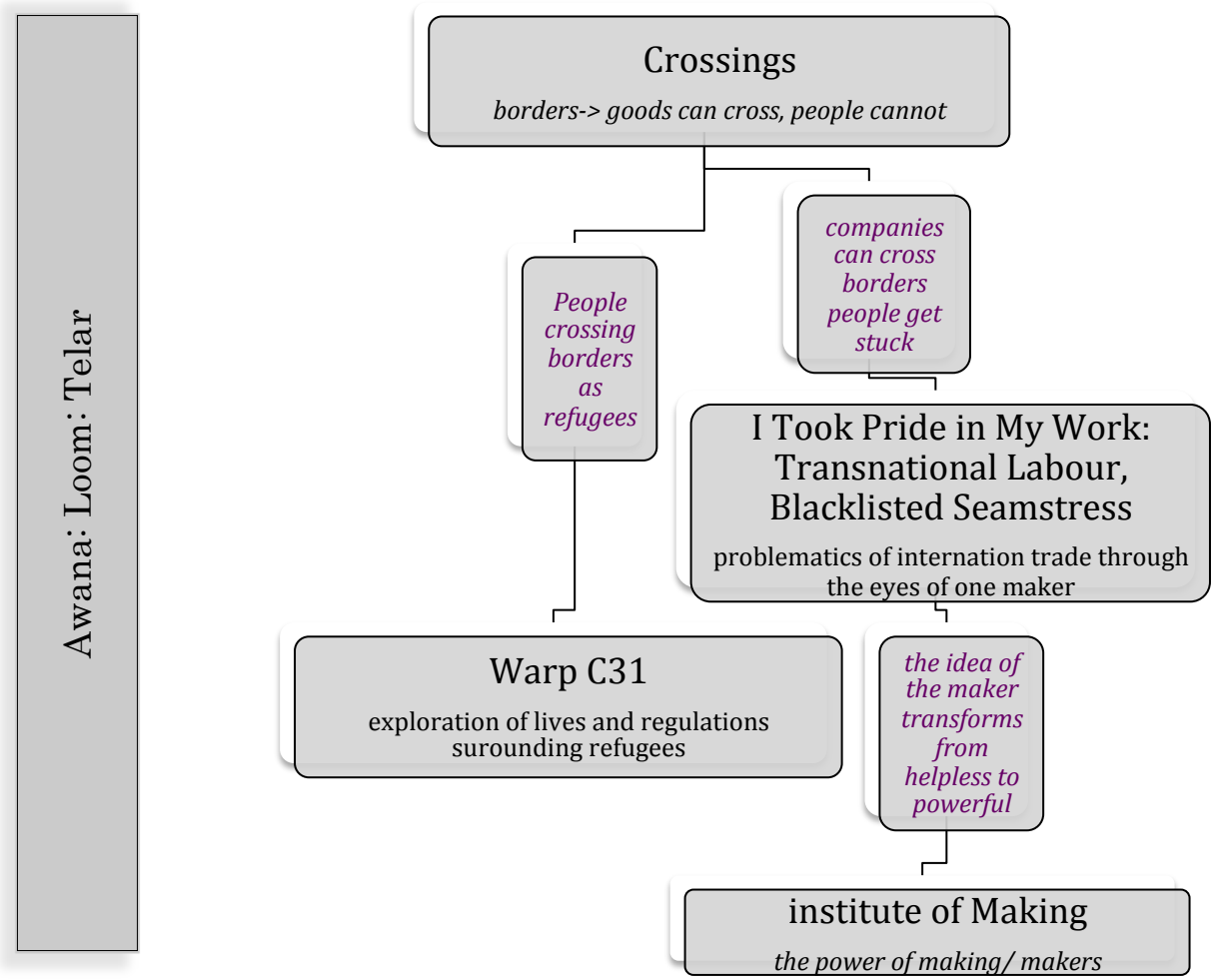
The list of terms in the appendix will be referenced within the text. These will be superscripted page numbers in brackets. The majority of these terms are technical words within weaving that are defined for those who are not familiar with them.

The text starts out with an introduction to my past practice; an overview of my connection to weaving; a look at how the body is used in the thesis work; and the sensory experience that is apart of my practice.

After the introduction, my thesis works are discussed. I start with *Awana: Loom: Telar*, the piece created in relation to my summer internship; it can be seen as sitting beside the other works, speaking to them, but not in directly leading into them. My piece *Crossings* was my first thesis work created and deals with the theme of borders, where goods can cross boarders, but people cannot. This theme of borders directly links two pieces: with the issue of refugees in *Warp C31* and into the issue of international labour in the other piece, *I Took Pride in My Work: Transnational Labour, Blacklisted Seamstress.* The most recent piece, *Warp C31* is addressed after *Crossings*, as the theme of international labour/ labourers used in *I Took Price in my Work: Transnational Labour, Blacklisted Seamstress* further stems into the idea of the power belonging to makers addressed in *institute of Making*. Due to the recent nature of *Warp C31*, there are no pieces stemming from it yet. Other contemporary artists will be discussed in relation to individual pieces within the sections. The last thing addressed in this section is the idea of process, which is important in my work, but is most prominent in *institute of Making* and therefore I felt was best discussed concretely in relation to that piece.

The ideas of craft history, social justice and intersectionality that are strong components of my

practice are addressed after discussing my thesis works. The conclusion looks to pull these components all together from what to me feels like an artificial order, where naturally they should all be woven together, everything interwoven everywhere with a three dimensional relational component to it.



My Art Prior to Graduate School

My undergraduate education was at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design University. I studied ceramics under Walter Ostrom and Neil Forrest; sculpture under Thierry Delva; and weaving (an introductory course) under Sandra Brownlee.

Upon graduation, I travelled in Africa for leisure. In a small village in Ghana, I became acquainted with local people, which spurred to me establishing a ceramics centre there. I taught locals how to make ceramics that allowed them to gain income from tourists that visited the nature reserve, which previously had been used to provide food and income for residents. For me this was an act of social justice.

I returned to Vancouver and rented an art studio in the heart of the Downtown Eastside[3]. With limited resources, I was able to continue a huge school endeavor and hand-weave a large 3D life-sized loom entitled *Loom* [Figure 1]. Weaving has strict conventions and rigid rules; my personality naturally led me to break these rules. Through the process of weaving *Loom*, the slow time, the ability to break conventions and the struggle that the material and loom possess, I became invested in textiles. Weaving drove me crazy and I loved it.

In the process of finding my voice as a weaver, I was also finding my voice as an activist in the Downtown Eastside. During the Olympics, I lived in the protest Olympic Tent village along with my loom. The site was in the downtown eastside on land owned by a major developer leased to the Vancouver Olympics for the games. The protest, led by Indigenous women elders, was set up to speak to the hypocrisy of the Olympics, which tried to claim there would be no displacement, but leaves legacies of gentrification. I was weaving a piece while living on the site; collecting and inserting metal and other detritus that I found into the piece. I managed to be proactive by weaving, while also dissenting and protesting, which increased the value to both.

[3] The Downtown Eastside is one of the poorest neighborhoods in North America. Drug use in the area is high and my studio was on the same block as the safe injection site.

For me art and activism go hand in hand; my history of growth in each has been interrelated and they continue to mutually inform each other. While some of my activism has included an art component[4], most of my practice is focused on making aesthetic objects with a social justice[5] theme. Aesthetically focused fine art has the ability to reach larger audiences and speak to viewers in ways that direct action cannot.

My decision to go to graduate school was to gain exposure and engage with more people about issues of social justice through my art.

[4] This has included such things as street theatre, paint-ins, and banners.
[5] I define social justice in my Social Justice section within the context section of the thesis on page 49.

Figure 1 Britta Fluevog, *Loom*, 2004-2009. Wool, cotton, jute, sisal, linen, acrylic, metal, 8' x 6' x 8'. Studio installation. Photo: Britta Fluevog

Weaving in My Practice

Fluff, fold, fondle.

Weaving[64] is a process whereby linear materials are interlocked. It requires tension,[64] a warp,[64] a weft[65] and a loom.

The warp and weft entangle into a stronger fabric. In out, in out, in out. Layers and knots, layers and knots. Thread after thread, yarn after yarn the fabric toughens. Pressing treadles[64], lifting harnesses[63] passing the shuttle[64], Beating[62].

Steps to Weaving on a Floor Loom[63]

Choose the yarn, fibre or material. Using the same material the whole way through will yield the most uniform weave. Different weights, materials and spinning style will create different tensions. Off kilter tensions refuse to behave, requiring discipline, coaxing and adaptations.

Wind the warp. Endless crosses. Repetition, my arms ache. Yarns traverse long paths but travel very little. Tense tension, trying not to cleave apart the warping board[64] with my thread. Grouped yarn has enormous strength. Winding and winding until piled threads ensue chaos; the yarns jump off my warping board driving me crazy. I am impatient. And wind again. Methodical and boring, but it is a new beginning, I am winding thread to allow a new art creature to emerge.

Winding the warp is a long tactile contact with the yarn; remember to listen during the process: the yarn speaks for a reason, its qualities will need to be known during warping[64] and weaving. The yarn divulges personal information during warping: it stretches, it is soft, it breaks easily, it pulls apart, it refuses to be warp, it can also do what you want it to do. You will uncover its ability to be strong, to bend wood, to callous and cut hands. Cotton is the most obedient; it has a moderate stretch and stays where it

is put. Mohair is apt to slide, jump, but mostly to stick. Materials with challenging quirks tend to be the most interesting: the softest like unspun yak spills through warp; or the shiniest like silk slides everywhere; the most textured that has catching loops, slubs[64] or other grabby elements; or diverse crazy non-textile materials that fight being woven in but add so much excitement into work.

Warping the loom must be done prior to weaving. Count threads by half inch, to achieve the correct spacing. String yarn through heddles[63] based on patterns, using numbers and math. This process requires much leaning and pushing yarn through holes in metal or fabric heddles[63]. Slide the yarn through the slots on the reed[64]; it is what will keep the width consistent during weaving and will also push the weft into the weave to achieve the tight and straight weave structure. Now knots, lots of knots, re-knotting, getting even tension. The whole process is endless repetition.

Embrace the loom in order to warp it. The mechanical machine requires embraces; levers, beams and gears need fluid touch, sensual motions and straining muscles. The body hovers over the treadles to tie them; flows through the loom to thread it; and around the loom to advance the warp[62].

Now weave. Lift parts of the warp using the treadles[64], then slide the weft through. Use the beater to push the weft to desired tightness or looseness. Repeat. Use different treadles and different weft materials. Hand manipulate, play.

As Sheila Hicks says of herself, I also strive to "Weave without prejudice, without preconception, without rules, without ideas of how things should or must be done." (Zanartu 0:22)

Weaving is squares, symmetry and precision; therefore, I rebel and weave abstract circular forms, chaos, and havoc. Weaving has rules, form, mathematics and boundaries. Ridged regulations allow the potential to deviate, to jump out of the loom, to do things weavings and looms do not want to do. Forcing the warp, kicking and screaming, to be greater than it believes it can be. A protrusion

***or a self-supporting supplementary[6] warp pushes to a perpendicular plane, announcing its freedom from the constraints of the* loomular plane[7].**

Almost all of my warps have crazy[8] tensions. Regular weaving requires uniform tension, both for the completed aesthetic, as well as to be able to weave easily. Some of my warps are created intentionally uneven like my *Tensions Warp [*Figure 2*],* which is one warp material, but spaced from tight to loose, which created varying tensions and precarious weaving. Using different materials will also create tension variations. An example of this is my *Occupy Warp [*Figure 3*]*: The tension started unequally then increased dramatically through the interaction of the rigid metal and the stretching wools, as well as through the way the finished weaving unevenly wound onto the cloth beam[62] and forced the rest of the warp into more dramatic tension.

Figure 2 Britta Fluevog, *Conversation: Tensions Warp*, 2010. Wool, metal, plastic, toothbrush, pliers, bubble wrap, Bristol pad, 6' x 3' x 6". Basic Inquiry. Photo: Britta Fluevog

Figure 3 Britta Fluevog, *Occupy Warp*, 2012. Wool, mohair, silk, chain, cable, nuts, bolts, bungee cord, variable dimensions. In Studio during weaving process. Photo: Britta Fluevog

[6] Seen in my piece *Crossings [*Figure 11*]*
[7] *Loomular plane* as in the mathematical plane the weaving of the loom is in
[8] Without designing a different loom, the chain and wool warp in figure 3 is the most extreme that a loom can (sort of) handle.

I name my warps[9]. The warps thread through my pieces[10] telling of lineage, making family connections. Some of these connections are strong elements in the work. I once found a twin for one of my loom in an alleyway. The twins embraced in an installation: *2 looms: Life cycle & Rebirth Entangled into Industrial Detritus*. The warp on the old loom went into pieces about death, marriage and birth, which created the warp title *Life Cycle*. *Life Cycle* was mimicked on the new loom's warp titled *Rebirth*. Colonization was focused on in *Rebirth* warp used within the installation *Awana: Loom: Telar [*Figure 9*].*

Figure 4 Britta Fluevog, *2 Looms, Rebirth and Lifecycle Entangled into Industrial Detritus,* 2013. Looms, metal, wool, variable dimensions. Photo: Britta Fluevog

Looms are important in my work; there are six different types of looms used in my thesis project. Not only are types of looms important, but the looms themselves have significance. One of my floor looms has wear, slight rust and stains from being left in the alley in the rain before being adopted by me. Its twin bears a "No Olympics on Stolen Native Land" sticker, presented[11] by a fellow protester, from when the loom was located at the Vancouver Olympic tent village, an oppositional protest site.

[9] When I first learned to weave I was told that naming your warp was a tradition, but I am uncertain of the veracity of this. Nevertheless, it is a practice I have adopted.
[10] One warp often makes several different pieces.
[11] The sticker was presented to me by a fellow tent village resident who was is?? indigenous.

Old looms. Non-western looms. Looms that vibrate with non-capitalist traditions. The centuries of sisters who used these looms echo in them.

My warps affix to the loom, cleaving tightly. Not only are they wound into the loom, but frequently they refuse to relegate the loom to the mere position of a tool as seen in *Crossings [*Figure 11*]*. The weft, no longer centre stage, races across the warp and is bound into this loom. Both the aesthetics and the conceptual idea of making are fore fronted.

I am grateful to my weaving grandmothers taught me through their work. Weavers, largely women, have been creating spectacular works throughout the ages all over the world.

The Body in My Art: Presence and Absence

Contemporary art history inspires my consideration of the use of the female body in my thesis work. The body as an active space for political commentary is used by feminists, particularly the second wave essentialist feminist performance artists[12] who were influenced by Carol Hanisch's phrase, "*The Personal is Political"[Hanisch 2009]*. The use of the physical body in talking about issues facing women is also displayed in the later post-modernist work.[13] The presence of the artist's body is a vital element to the conversation around feminism and women's issues. [14]

I strive to create women's bodies that hold the personal and the political. Strong, beautiful, full of complexity, lives with deep meaning. The feminist performance artists created art that displayed authoritative women's bodies. Can I, do I as well: are the women I depict as politically powerful in institute of Making [Figure 17***]? Raw, honest political message in I Took Pride in My Work: Transnational Labour, Blacklisted Seamstress [***Figure 6***], does it, could it, should it live up to them?***

[12] Examples of work I am speaking of can be seen in Hannah Wilke's *Intercourse with…* 1973-75 where the artist strips down and erases names written on her body as a part of the performance; and also in *In Morning and In Rage*, 1977 by Suzanne Lacy, Leslie Labowitz and Bia Lowe, a performance about violence against women that included a motorcycle brigade of women mourning, that was enacted at LA's city hall in protest of serial killings and the lack of conversation around violence against women.

[13] An example would be *Gnaw*, 1992 by Janine Antoni. In this piece, Antoni dismantles two 300 kg cubes, one chocolate and one lard, with her teeth and reassembles boxes of chocolates as lipsticks for sale in a store.

[14] Lucy Lippard discusses the idea of obtaining "female imagery" in *The Pains and Pleasres of Rebirth: Women's Body Art*. She states that on the west coast of North America this was influcend by Judy Chicago and Miriam Schapiro and took the form of bodily forms in panting and sculpture. On the west coast this same desire took the form of performance body art.

While also using the body as a stage for political commentary, Theresa Margolles[15]' use of the body is quite different than these feminist performance artists. Margolles is a Mexican artist who uses remnants from body cleansing at the Mexico City morgue in her artwork. She uses bodies that are not her own, as I do myself[16]. This is an important difference because it has strong implications as well as possibilities for misuse[17]. The body in the feminists performance artist's work were inherently middle-class white educated women as they were the artists themselves. Margolles uses racialized and marginalized people: those affected most by the violence of gang warfare are the poor. While the feminists use the physicality of the body, Margolles uses the strength of the absence, where only traces of the body are used. This concrete absence is the strength.

Figure 5, image of installation by Theresa Margolles removed due to copyright restrictions.

Figure 5 Theresa Margolles, *¿De qué otra cosa podríamos hablar?* (Which other issue we could talk about?), 2009. Performance, Mud, blood, fabric, variable dimensions. Venice Biennale. Photo: Universes-in-universes.org

Similar to Margolles, I use the absence of the body. Extremities are used to suggest the entirety of the body. This absence is important because racialized women have born the brunt of being reduced to sexualized beings in patriarchal society. The intersection of being female and a woman of colour complicates their participation in both spheres. The women depicted in my work are represented through hands or feet that are active rather than passive parts of the body. The Hands in *Crossings [*Figure 11*]* are similar to the hands in *institute of Making*

[15] Margolles' work addresses the dire situation caused by the drug cartels in Mexico [Mellado 58]. While my work does not deal with this at all, the international laws of the United States and Canada can be said to exacerbate the problem; it is also international laws that allowed the textile companies to mistreat their workers [Goria 31] like Ana Juarez, who inspired my piece *I took Pride in My Work: Transnational Labour; Blacklisted Seamstress [page 25]*.

[16] My body is in the work through creation, but the figurative bodies that are immediately apparent are depicting others rather than myself.

[17] There is a fine line between respectfully representing people of different race and class than myself and exploiting them. This line is not fixed, it fluctuates and lacks definitive middle ground.

[Figure 17] where they are a very activated part of the work. In *I Took Pride in My Work: Transnational Labour, Blacklisted Seamstress [*Figure 6*]*, the conflicting active and passive feet, where feet, which are meant to move, are sewn down creates tension in the work. In my view, this depiction with only the active body parts, allows the women to gain power, partly due to their complete lack of sexuality. They are portrayed as active agents, movers, makers, and doers, which allows positions of power independent of the viewer.

Figure 6 Britta Fluevog,*I Took Pride in My Work: Transnational Labour, Blacklisted Seamstress,* 2014. Hemp, thread, wood, acrylic, 2' x 2' x 1'6". Detail from installation at Mitchell Press Gallery. Photo: Amanda Arcuri. Used with Permission.

Not only is the body largely an absence, but is depicted as hollow. The hands and feet exist as hands and feet, as well as gloves or slippers. The glove or slipper quality allows the viewer to insert themselves into the scene. There is tension in the fact that while they seem like clothing to wear, the construction is such as to make this impossible. The intent with the glove-like aspect in the hands is to both allow the viewer to envision themselves in the situation, while

also ensuring that it is impossible for them to fully enter. They are not allowed to enter into the position of the women of colour, but the idea of trying to is invited.

Margolles uses the intimacy of the body and individual experience to interrogate social justice issues. This approach is increasingly prevalent in cultural theory; Corrine Goria's *Invisible hands: Voices from the Global Economy* and Betsy Greer's *Craftisim: The Art of Craft and Activism* are examples of this. From Margolles' practice I learn about passion for social justice; the importance of the individual in dealing with injustice and the power of the absent body.

Rich White girl steals our culture—I hope this isn't me. Stand beside, stand with. LISTEN. Your culture defines you. You are not your culture. Learn to be lost, learn to not succeed. Make art that matters. Make art about people. Make art about people. Issues do not equal people. People can be lost in issues.

My Body

Aside from literal representations of the body, traces of my own body can be found in the work. From direct fingerprints in my ceramics to imperfect weave structures, my process leaves traces of myself as the maker in it. The idea of process will be discussed in relation to my piece *institute of Making,* which will address my body within the creation of that work in the section titled the Importance of Process [page 42].

So much of me is stenciled in the work. But I don't want to confront Me. Can't I be hidden in plain sight—can't I pretend I am not there?

Sensory Experience

I learn through touch. The solidity and reality of touch makes problems more real, but it also makes the ability to navigate alternative routes possible for me. This can be seen in *institute of Making [*Figure 17*]*, where the form and possible ways of arranging the clay hands with the woven aspect were completely altered as soon as the finished clay hands found their way into my weaving studio where I had my wool picked out.

Perfection is not a friend of mine[18]. It confounds me. Possibility, challenge, change invigorate me and allow me to dig deeper. I plan with yarn in my hand, constantly changing and improvising.

My work conjures the power of touch. You want to run your hand along the textures, putting your hand to mine. Like art historian Sarah Wilson says of Hick's work: "You Want to Live with it [the artwork], to touch it and to be with it." (Wilson 4:16) The connection of touch is almost radical in our visually driven society. Touch enables a connection which is much more immediate than visual knowledge.

The seduction climbs from the pit of the belly, texture is a primal, guttural instinct for me. I create texture therefore I am; I breathe therefore I create texture. Decoration and pattern are merely masks for texture, scars scraped in, thickness encased in warp. Language is so utterly impoverished describing touch and texture. Art forbids touch, galleries prevent it and status inhibits it, but is my instinct for texture touch-related or does the eye play its part? Where does my seduction lie?

[18] Recreating work in order to achieve some idea of perfection or completed idea does not feature in my practice.

Figure 7 Britta Fluevog, *Crossings: Transcending the Border*, 2014. Mixed Media, 6' x 6' x 1'. Detail of hand at the Concourse Gallery. Photo: Britta Fluevog.

Figure 8 Britta Fluevog, *Crossings: Transcending the Border*, 2014. Mixed Media, 6' x 6' x 1'. Detail of rug and barbed wire at the Concourse Gallery. Photo: Britta Fluevog.

Thesis Work

Awana: Loom: Telar

Figure 9 ***Britta Fluevog, Awana: Loom: Telar*****, 2014. Backstrap loom, floor loom, clothing, variable dimensions. Installed at Kitsilano Beach. Photo: Britta Fluevog.**

The Awana: Loom: Telar (three words meaning loom in Quechua[19], English, and Spanish respectively) installation was based on reflections from my independent study in Peru[20]. It

[19] The principal Indigenous language in Peru

[20] I spent a month in Peru learning indigenous weaving and dying as an independent study period for credits in my master of applied arts program. In The Cusco region I was in Amaru and through the Center for Traditional Textiles Cusco was in Chinchero and Pitumarca. Around Lake Titicaca I studied on Amaranti island. While in Peru, I was gifted traditional outfits, traditional foods and traditional modes of living and taught traditional weaving and natural dyes.

invites the viewer to re-envision colonization[62] as a fluid process that can flow in multiple directions.

The installation was in a park. In the piece, there were two looms: a Canadian floor loom and a Peruvian backstrap loom, both in the process of being woven. There was also an Indigenous Peruvian outfit[21] hanging in a tree. There was text posted about the work with an invitation for the viewers to envision themselves weaving.

For the average viewer, both looms stand out as an "other", something not of them and their culture. The floor loom is a western[65] loom, but foreign, belonging to another era. It does not relate to the viewer or the present culture. The Peruvian loom is completely an "other" in our culture; the process of decolonization[22] has made this loom no longer simply an object of primitiveness, but has given us no concrete replacement to relate to it[23]. In some ways there are no longer western looms[24]. Cloth is largely made in foreign countries[25], and while looms can be produced and owned by western companies; Ethnic workers in foreign countries operate the looms (Goria 377).

Two looms embraced. The larger lends a beam for the smaller to function. Sisters that just met. They refuse to submit to the scrutiny, power dynamics and rules of the institution or gallery.

There is an aspect in this work of two stories: the life of the founder of the Center for Traditional textile Cusco, Nilda Alvarez and my own trip to Peru. Alvarez grew up as an

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[21] The weaving outfit was a mixture from different villages near Cusco that I wore most of my time in Peru. The skirt was very practical as the belt was used as part of the loom in the thin weavings. While weaving in Amaru, my instructor insisted on placing another skirt of hers over mine along with a manta, or shawl and hat, in order to have me dressed properly in order to weave.

[22] Decolonization is a loaded term. In this instance I am talking about how western culture viewed itself as innately superior. Shifting away from language such as the word primitive is an example of decolonization—if, in fact, the shift bears a relationship to the internal beliefs and not simply different language.

[23] While superior world view of imperialism is no longer (is understood to be) politically correct, mainstream culture lacks a way of relating to non-Western cultures.

[24] When I say western looms here, I am referring to culturally western looms, which in my mind requires technologically savvy machines that interface with computers and require little manual labour. The Jacquard loom is an example of this, but they are few and far between.

[25] While this information can be researched, simply reading the labels on various textiles will also yield this kind of information.

exceptional Indigenous weaver, which allowed her to study art in the United States after university. She transitioned back to Peru, where she straddles Indigenous and western lifestyles. I am inspired by how western education led her back to her Indigenous roots.

One of my first contacts in the Cuzco region was a family that practiced Indigenous Incan religion. They told me how every year they travel to the mountain with the glacier which feeds the river to give thanks to it as their water source. There is an indigenous tribe that lives near this mountain. This tribe that used to also go on this pilgrimage has been converted to Christianity and have built a church on a site that was considered sacred to the religious Incans. I was told that now these indigenous Christians throw rocks at the Incan pilgrims when they come to give thanks. The messiness of colonization permeated my thinking while in Peru and also resides in this installation.

Textiles as a Means of Shifting the Dominance of Western Culture: Through the lens of artist Sheila Hicks

As explored in *Awana: Loom: Telar*, textiles have the ability to subvert the pervasive dominance of western culture[65]. It has a universal language that can be comprehended worldwide as suggested at the 2013-2014 exhibition *Art & Textiles: Fabric as Material and Concept in Modern Art from Klimt to the Present* at the Wolfsburg Kunstmuseum in Germany:

> The question of universal paradigms, of anthropological constants as a basis for cultural dialogue needs to be addressed. Here, textiles with their multifaceted functions and meanings, craft techniques, folkloric traditions, and sociocultural backgrounds play a central role as a mediator 'the universality of textiles makes them particularly potent messengers in a global context. Everyone, in every culture, uses and understands cloth' (Ruhkamp and Brüderlin 197)

Not only are textiles universal, but they also have a strong history that displays better craftsmanship and techniques[26] in periods and places with no western influence[27]. Western

[26] This includes things such as weaving with finer threads, using more difficult patterns and dying techniques.

cultural hegemony is a form of power dominance. Hence, the use of non-Western[63] techniques and traditions can shift some of the power of Western culture. [28]

Non-western technique was pivotal to Sheila Hick's work. Prior to the fibre art movement[29], almost all weaving was created on a floor loom in western countries (Auther xxi). Non-western techniques allowed her to work sculpturally, it also gave her small works like *M'hamid* [Figure 24] intricacy and power.

Figure 10, image of textiles by Sheila Hicks removed due to copyright restrictions.

Figure 10 Sheila Hicks, *The Principal Wife*, 1968. Linen, rayon, acrylic yarn, variable dimensions. RISDI Museum. Photo: risdimuseum.org.

Sheila Hick's *The Principal Wife* and *the Principal Wife Goes On* speaks to non-western ideas. Cynthia Fowler describes of Hicks' work as follows:

> The titles of the two works [The Principal Wife (1968) and The Principal Wife Goes On (1969)] connect them to women's roles within cultures practicing polygamy... Hicks's interest in this cultural practice, a practice outside of her own cultural experience as a Westerner, was based on meeting and working in rug workshops with Moroccan women who were in polygamous marriages. Polygamy ...is still presumed to be associated with cultures more backward than those of the West. (Fowler 40)

As in my artwork *Awana: Loom: Telar*, Fowler describes Hicks interest in non-western practice from direct relationship with people who practiced it; in both our cases they were other textile

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[27] Incan textiles would be an example of this. Some of the craftsmanship in museum pieces are awe inspiring.

[28] I firmly believe that using non-western techniques can shift power, whether or not it will is entirely different.
Gramsci's ideas of cultural hegemony being integral to the ability to maintain domination opened up language to describe a practice that had already been in place, particularly within resisting imperialism. The idea withstanding imperialism through breaking down cultural hegemony is a strategy that Sanjay Ramesh details about Fijian Indigenous people in the last three centuries in his work: *Hegemony, Anti-Hegemony and Counter-Hegemony: Control, Resistance and Coups in Fiji.* Khalid Sayeed explains how cultural resistance has been the basis of Middle Eastern resistance to Western Domination within Islamic countries in *Western Dominance and Political Islam: Challenge and Response.* I see my use of the non-western to combat cultural hegemony as extending from these already existing ideas around resisting cultural domination.

[29] See A Short History of Textiles and My Context Within It page 47

workers, which led to a commonality and stronger bond across a divide. Hicks is also asking the viewer to reassess a practice westerners associate with backwardness: "Her strong interest in cultures outside of the Western tradition connects her more broadly to countercultural trends that defined the 1960s in which alternatives to the lifestyles of white, middle-class Westerners were actively being sought" (Fowler 42).

A strong point of contrast in Hicks' work and *Awana:Loom: Telar* is that I am suggesting active participation of westerners in nonwestern practices as a way to mitigate the influence of western capitalism. While Hicks wants to draw attention to the complexity of polygamy, she is not suggesting an active participation in what Westerners consider to be a backwards and an anti-feminist practice. Hick's interest in non-western practices came out of her era including ideas such as affirmative action (Fowler) and interests in African and Latin American cultures. My active engagement in non-western practices can be attributed in part to the current ideas around decolonization.[30]

[30] The theory of decolonization is a ripening discourse. Authors such as Peter Keith Kulchyski, Shelagh Rogers and Harsha Walia speak to it. In Canada, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is a manifestation of the decolonization process cultural trend as well as the Indigenous activist Idle No More movement.

Crossings: Transcending the Border

Figure 11 Britta Fluevog, *Crossings: Transcending the Border*, 2014. Mixed Media, 6' x 6' x 1'. Concourse Gallery. Photo: Britta Fluevog.

Crossings investigates a system where increasingly commodities are legal to cross borders and people are illegal; that made goods are permissible to cross borders, but the people who made the goods are not.

I sing, dance, struggle and break rules when I create. Using gesture and improvisation, I want to seek improvised creative energy, to unleash the art monster within. Map-less, I meander. With my

materials in my hand I traverse my work. It is a conversation. I listen and rebel. Leading and being led. Destination is some far-flung fantasy. My materials and I negotiate the work, deciding what to make.

In my piece Crossings, I tangled, twined and wove fibers from specific countries[31] where immigration to Occidental countries, specifically Canada is extremely difficult. The traditional loom in the work is juxtaposed with industrial textile materials that are then re-spun with raw natural fibres. Each material was chosen with care[32]. Attention was paid to sourcing indigenous plant and animal fibres. The traditional materials were entwined with labels from industrial textiles. These labels bore country names and displayed the ubiquitous materials. The colour of the fibres, white and beige, reflects the nature of racism that is inherent in Occidental[63] immigration[33]. Woven into the natural fibers is barbed wire.

It contains handspun cashmere from Mongolia, which is a luxurious pleasure, a soft, silky and exotic piece of brilliance from a harsh mountain existence; Industrial ubiquitous knit cotton fabric from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Macau, and Taiwan; cotton, the quintessential colonial material co-opted into staking its territory in successive countries; Indigenous dromedary of South America yields llama fibre from

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[31] Angelina from India; Angora from China; bamboo: Taiwan; barbed wire: Canada; camel: Mongolia; cashmere: Mongolia; cotton: Bangladesh, Cambodia, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Macau, Taiwan; driftwood: the beach; linen: Argentina; llama: Argentina; merino: Peru; metal: unknown origin mink: China; mohair: India, Romania; nylon: China, Taiwan; polyester: Madagascar, Vietnam; spandex: Cambodia, Guatemala; silk: Argentina, Romania, Taiwan; stoneware: Canada; thistle: Nepal; viscose: Argentina; wool: China, India, Romania, Turkey; yak: Mongolia

[32] Does the memory of the materials matter? While a relatively new exploration in fine art, memory and history in material has a rich history in textiles: "Universally, the act of praying over textiles is done to infuse them with energy and bestow blessings on others. In Turkey, those who make the hats worn by Sufi whirling dervishes often chant through the felting process so as to increase the power of the garments." (Beverly Gordon 64) The universality would suggest that the history in the materials and textiles does in fact have some marked impact upon the finished work; textiles would not be prayed over if the prayer did not expect there to be some marked difference to the cloth. At least some histories, such as prayer will in fact transform the textile garment. My own use of history or memory in textiles can be seen in the materials I picked for the piece *Crossings*, where the country of origin and its international travel over borders is integral to the work.

[33] People from predominately Caucasian countries have easier access to working visas and immigration in many occidental countries (Walia 5).

Argentina; Cut up knit angora from China is simply a joy to work with, soft, supply and dense, it has its own way of moving, of speaking, of asserting individuality.

I wove Crossings on both sides, the "back side" and "front side" changing in my mind during creation; this comes out of a desire to eschew the dynamic of good and bad, where nothing is hidden and all sides have equal value.

The frame in this piece is also loom; the ceramic hands act as tension and weigh the warp down at the bottom, allowing the weft to crisscross it. As an old technology, warp weighted looms carry power: they have the ability to reframe Occidentalism. This type of loom is non-western, which is both a misnomer and accurate. Frame looms are non-western in that occidental culture does not recognize its more "primitive", particularly feminine, historical practices[34]. Frame looms with warp weights were common across Europe and the Middle East[35]. In my piece, Crossings, the frame is constructed with driftwood, which knows no borders and may have come from almost anywhere.

Framed, captured, motion, still, my work attempts to break free of the frame. It is over-framed. I am told the frame is a problem, but I think I want it this way. Borders do not float free, they are too much, much too much.

[34] This can be seen in traditional European religions, traditional women's medicine and of course textile practices.
[35] Warp Weighted frame looms used weights to keep tension on the looms and the weights allow them to weave warps longer than the frame.

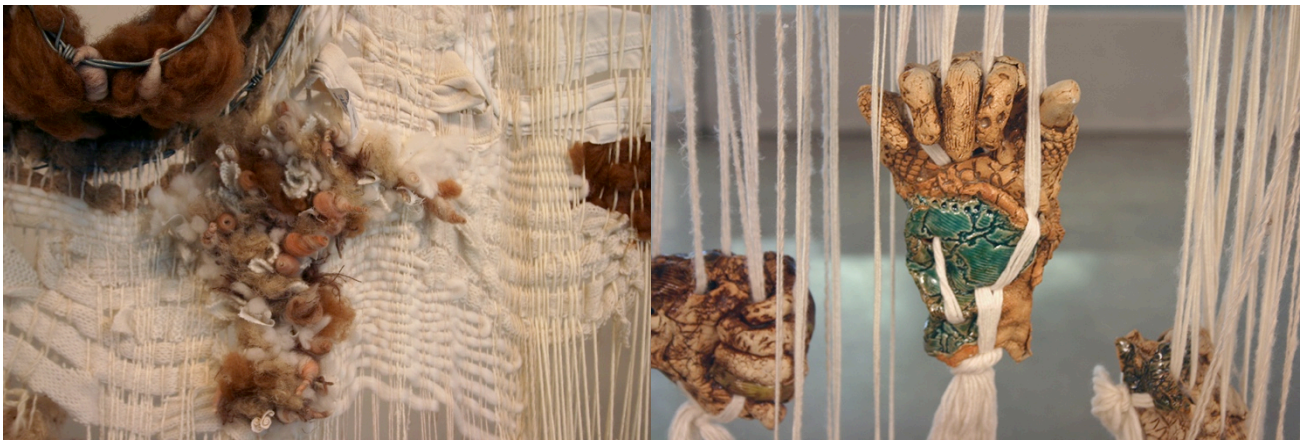

Figure 12 Britta Fluevog, *Crossings: Transcending the Border*, 2014. Mixed Media, 6' x 6' x 1'. Detail of rug weave at the Concourse Gallery. Photo: Britta Fluevog.

Figure 13 Britta Fluevog, *Crossings: Transcending the Border*, 2014. Mixed Media, 6' x 6' x 1'. Detail of a hand at the Concourse Gallery. Photo: Britta Fluevog.

The ceramic hands are makerly[63] made hands: quilted slabs of clay folded into beautiful active hands of the maker. The coloured hands try to reflect the diverse bodies of worldwide makers. The hands are depicted as both weaving the piece and being woven into it. The viewer is left with the question whether these hands are forced to weave this unjust border system, or whether this handmade structure is in fact a reclamation this system by the makers.

The weave structure is varied; meandering, with gentle curves and swirls. The size, details and textures hinder a meditative slow gaze. One is attracted to movement or details within the work to follow or search for them in other areas. The weft forms labyrinths, paths and patterns into the warp. The piece is gentle, soft and inviting. The protrusion or extrusion is bodily and fluffy; it gives an invitation of physical exploration, but also speaks of danger due to the barbed wire warp.

I seek to create difference, originality and work that has its own life-force, with its own personality. Deviations, curves, nooks and crannies. My work is active, and it does not sit still. It is on a journey of exploration and asks you to join it. You may meander, but still eyes are not permissible. It wants to be explored. New details and ideas are scattered, waiting to be discovered. It is in a constant flux with discovery. It requests an audience of explorers, to follow

This piece was made while reflecting upon Harsha Walia's *Undoing Border Imperialism*. As Walia states:

> Capital, and the transnationalization of its production and consumption, is freely mobile across borders, while the people displaced as a consequence of the ravages of neoliberalism and imperialism are constructed as demographic threats and experience limited mobility.(Walia 4)

The writing was rooted in Walia's participation in a group named *No One Is Illegal.* Their main premise as a group is that people should be allowed to remain, move or return as they see fit, in other words, unrestricted global mobility for all people. I have been a part of hosting and participating in many events with the group on themes including: migrant justice, the Sanctuary city movement, and Indigenous solidarity.

This statement was made more powerful and concrete by the announcement of the suicide of soon-to-be-deported Lucia Vega Jimenez at the Vancouver International Airport holding cells. Her death was announced to her family and the public, a month after she committed suicide. It coincided with and influenced my thought process on the piece.

The monster that is the border swallowed Lucia whole. Lucia reminded me that our borders are barbed wire. In Canada we see the wood and wool, we see the block. We usually do not see the barbed wire that rips apart the flesh. She did not die politely in Mexico from our border. She died here, in silence and alone, but her death started a rumble. I tried to weave some of that rumble.

Crossings tells the tale of global trade. The industrial textiles have a dearth of local materials: largely cotton and polyester. There is erasure of the maker and their culture. Textiles arrive here, to us, across countless borders and checkpoints designed to let products in and to keep the producers out.

Arbitrary lines that change fates and create fatalities.

Untitled: Warp *C31*

Figure 14 Britta Fluevog, *untitled: Warp C31,* 2015. Found clothing, wool, silk, angora, Variable dimensions. Mitchell Press Gallery. Photo: Britta Fluevog

A constructed narrative of related but separate events inspired the creation of *Untitled (Warp C31)*[36]. Debris from the 2004 tsunami is integrated into the Tamil asylums seekers of the MV

[36] This piece is currently being made. The final piece will resemble most of a large canoe, 2-3 m, with the warp training out the end. The piece will be partially hung and contain a bundle of clothing.

Sun Sea that were jailed under the anti-smuggling act[37]. The piece looks at the political and emotional situation refugees face and attempting to complicate this relationship in the viewers mind.

Dreamy, ghostly, haunting of a green boat. Flowing into ocean, flowing into dreams. Undone— opened, loosened— is it freedom or illusion? Green: spring, new growth, money, envy, the grass is always greener on the other side, folds into the ocean. Emotional bundles bind up unbearable pain—tsunami scattered clothes. Hiding political commentary in beauty, emotion and comforting, warm textiles—a ploy for deaf ears. Droops, flows and unwinds. Heavy, light, unearthly.

Sara Rahbar: Flag Series

Sara Rahbar (an American-Iranian artist) uses her dual identities as inspiration for her politically charged work. This theme of problematic dual identities, seen in Rahbar's Flag series, is also an exploration that can be seen in my work *Untitled (Warp C31)*.

The important role aesthetics play in extremely political work inspired me. In *Flag #15: With These Eyes* [Figure 15] Rahbar uses layered textiles, rippling bottom edge, bunched tassels and gold coins to create a detail oriented, chaotic yet aesthetically pleasing artwork. This adds a layer of productive confusion to the politics by the presence of Middle Eastern fabrics, alongside the star section of an American flag: "her [Rahbar's] oeuvre perfectly balances the aesthetic appeal with making viewers contemplate the global sociopolitical context of our times." (Albertz 75) The aesthetics within her work bear an affinity to *Untitled (Warp C31)*.

In *Untitled (Warp C31)*, I tried to emulate in the evocative nature of Middle Eastern textiles in *Flag #15: With These Eyes [*Figure 15*]*. Rahbar manages to transform the Middle East (with

[37] The arrival of Tamil refugees on the MV Sun Sea in Vancouver caused the passing of bill C31, the anti smuggling act. The act was touted as a means to keep refugees safe from profiteering smugglers, but its effects was to imprison the refugees themselves.

connotations of Jihadist Islamic extremism in the West)[38] to include a domestic hand-made feminine Middle East through textiles.[39] Using emotionally charged textiles to complicate prejudice as in *Flag #15: With These Eyes* was an inspiration for *Untitled (Warp C31)*.[40]

Figure 15, image of textile by Sara Rahbar removed due to copyright restrictions.

Figure 15 Sara Rahbar, *Flag #15: With These Eyes*, 2008. Mixed Media,80' x 38". Photo: internationaltimes.it

[38] "Rahbar's work personifies contemporary political anxieties—the conflict between Western nations and numerous Islamic governments and extremist groups operating throughout West Asia." (Albertz 75)

[39] Shaheen Marali touches upon women's work, textiles and Rabar's strong relationship to Quilting in her essay *Beyond the Moral Crossroad of War, Atrocity and Surveillance the Exterminating Angel Looks On...* without addressing the implications of the domestic and feminine within that discourse; the feminine and domestic implications in works involving textiles is addressed at length by Elissa Auther in her book *String, Felt, Thread: The Hierarchy of Art and Craft in American Art*.

[40] Although Rahbar claims that the flag series was simply working through personal history, her subsequent work deals with much of the political nature that people read into her flag series.(Albertz 75). This aspect is something I see clearly in the work, including the flag series and that inspires me.

I Took Pride in My Work: Transnational Labour, Blacklisted Seamstress: Alive with Movement

Figure 16 Britta Fluevog, *I Took Pride in My Work: Transnational Labour, Blacklisted Seamstress: Alive with Movement,* 2014. Hemp, wire, wood, thread, 2' x2' x 1'6". Mitchell Press Gallery. Photo: Amanda Arcuri.

I Took Pride in My Work: Transnational Labour, Blacklisted Seamstress is intended to suggest loss, struggle and being trapped. It suggests unspecified violence by the stitching of the feet. This story is not singular, nor is it limited to one place.[41] This story is repeated in different languages, in different decades and by different people.

[41] Goria's book includes two first hand accounts, Ana Juárez in Mexico and Kalpona Akter in Bangladesh whose stories share a very similar narrative, both of them are blacklisted and mention others whom they worked/ organized with suffering the same fate.

From I draw inspiration for *this artwork* from the story of a Mexican textile worker, Ana Juárez, in *Tehuacán in Goria's Invisible hands: Voices from the Global* Economy. In the story, worker mobilization increased employee pay but was mitigated by factory closures and the eventual departure of the companies from the country. Juárez ended up blacklisted at factories due to her organizing for fair treatment at the Jeans factory. The companies' international movements are a result of various fair trade agreements and the search for the ever-cheaper production (Goria 311).

Unlike my other works, this piece is aesthetically simplified in form. The largest element is the flat black plinth. There are visual intricacies and patterns on the woven feet element, but this piece does not function as an endless exploration that most of my work does[42]. The less varied components and simpler relationship and forms are pared down to try to tease out meaning and provoke thought.

The feet are woven with hemp, a local, raw, beautiful and mundane material, reflecting the skin tone of a Mexican seamstress and the rough plainness of the working class. Though small women's feet, these feet elicit strength and endurance.

Sewed through the plinth, the feet are stuck. The feet are stitched in with heavy malice, each one requiring a concerted effort; the malice is hidden, not bursting the top of the foot, but lying just below the surface. Systemic malice.

Black plinth, black listed. Blacklisting: a repetition in stories of international worker mobilization. Black to confront white, not an innocuous colour. Caucasian plinths sit in Caucasian cubes believing they are neutral.

Sascha Reichstein: Dayli Production

[42] This journey of exploration is discussed within *Crossings* on page 21

Sascha Reichstein is an Austrian media artist who has shown works in places such as in the National Museum, Nigeria; Völkerkundemuseum, Vienna; kademie der Künste, Berlin; Berlin Biennale, Berlin; and the Austrian Cultural Forum, London. Though there are some marked contrasts, *I Took Pride in My Work: Transnational Labour, Blacklisted Seamstress* has strong overlaps with Sascha Reichstein's *Dayli Production* 2008-2009.

Reichstein's piece consists of thirty-five Chromogenic 47 x 31 cm photographs and two approximately one minute video loops. The left video depicts three very cropped parts of textile factory workers in Sri Lanka, where one hand can be seen acting upon textiles as apart of a textile assembly line. The video on the right is a close crop of an embroidery machine, that is mostly cropped out, shows green fabric moving up and down as the machine, creates a complex golden pattern into it. There is what appears to be an ambient sound from both the factory and embroidery machine.

The pink uniforms of the workers contrast with the dark skin of the workers. This contrast punctuates the idea of racialized workers. The fore fronting of complex racial issues is something in Reichstein's work I tried emulate in my piece, both in the material of the feet and in choosing to colour the otherwise standard white plinth. The Fordian assembly line, which is robotized in many western industries, is clearly depicted in Reichstein's depicted third world factory. Both of our artworks speak to the problems of global production and foreign consumption.

Despite her use of documentary, I am inspired by Reichstein's interest in aesthetics and craftsmanship. Attention to the aesthetic beauty in a woven textile is unsurprising, but in a politically motivated media piece the beautiful embroidered cloth is an unexpected pleasant element. Reichstein also calls attention to the handmade; ironically it is actually in the industrial assembly line where the workers are not using any machine that the idea arises. Both Reichstein and I call attention to the worker in an industry where "hand made" is a misnomer as most clothing is handmade in that a body is required to operate each machine. [43]

[43] I had the opportunity to visit a shoe factory in Peru, almost singular in the world, where machines are rarely used and almost every aspect is done completely by hand tools.

institute of Making: Handspun Warp

Figure 17 Britta Fluevog, *institute of Making: Handspun Warp*, 2014. Rocks, stoneware, wool, silk, mohair, variable dimensions. Photo: Britta Fluevog

The narrative of inspiration for *institute of Making* comes from Betsy Greer's book, *Craftisim: The Art of Craft and Activism.* It advances the idea of the power of collective acts of creation to enact change upon the world.

Hands woven in suspension. Few on top, many below. One to many or many to one. Dense, heavy tension pulls through the hands in the bottom, trying to tug them down, pulling down the warp. The higher hands struggle to pull their sisters up. Beautiful, tattooed, etched, imprinted handmade quilt-like hands. Abstracted figurative hands. Each hand connects the continuous warp, allowing it to grow and hold weight. Traditional styled warp, traditional styled yarns. I see myself reflected in them, conjoining to be us. Tension, chaos, beauty, uneasy stillness or cyclical movement.

In *institute of Making*, my hands are solid, active yet concrete; they sit as both the marginalized and the triumphant. Metaphorically both living and dead, the textile elements are no longer comforting but a means of active engagement with both negative and positive elements.

Figure 18 Britta Fluevog, *institute of Making: Handspun Warp*, 2014. Rocks, stoneware, wool, silk, mohair, variable dimensions. Installation detail. Photo: Britta Fluevog

In Greer's book there is one story that really impacted me; it is the story of the *Arpilleristas*[62] sewers from Chile who, through their appliqué works, managed to start the slow process

towards justice. What is so poignant about this story is that it took place in an environment of grave injustice. They were creating works to combat the repression of the Pinochet[63] regime.

I am investigating and portraying what the act of creating can mean. How it is possible to combat even the most repressive society through the collective act of creation, as these women did. Through their appliqué tapestries, the members of these collectives told their own stories. Through the process, they improved some of the unjustness of their situations. I am retelling the story; not the story they told in their work, but the story of them changing their situation. I question the power craft played in the situation; was it merely a place that provided conversation or is there power in creative practices?

Figure 17, image of sculpture by Sara Rahbar removed due to copyright restrictions.

Figure 19 Sara Rahbar, *Nothing Left to Win, Nothing Left to Lose*, 2014. White bronze, 69 x 51 x 61 cm. Carbon 12 Dubai. Photo: carbon12dubai.com

Sara Rahbar Nothing Left to Win, Nothing Left to Lose

Sara Rahbar is an Iranian-American artist working in sculpture, textile and performance work. There are clear connections between Rahbar's *Nothing Left to Win, Nothing Left to Lose* and *Institute of Making* that assist in the understanding of both pieces. Both Rahbar and my own artwork were created this year and feature women's hands connected in a strong vertical direction. They are made with rigid materials, mine clay hands, hers bronze, which extend into a full forearm.

Rahbar's piece is in an exhibition that is about "deconstructing ... the 21st century human condition" (Carbon 12). Both of our artworks speak strongly to me about revolution, while I know my own underpinnings, Rahbar's title *Nothing Left to Win, Nothing Left to Lose* could be seen as completely pessimistic, but the piece itself feels lighter on the top, which inclines me to lean towards the later part of the title, *Nothing Left to Lose*. Whether or not I am accurate in this assessment, it does lead me to readdress my reasons for creating *institute of Making*. While

I was thinking about the Chilean *Arpilleristas*, perhaps the political climate of mass protest in the last five years is in fact the defining idea. The recent wave of protests against largely authoritarian governments[44] including the Arab Spring, the Occupy Movement and police brutality protests[45] are loosely linked together and denote a change in political power. This political climate of fear and government control reflects some aspects of the Pinochet dictatorship. My interest in the *Arpilleristas* and the decision to use them as inspiration for *institute of Making* is related to the current protest movements.

Lisa Anne Auerbach: Body Count Mittens

Figure 18 , image of textiles by Lisa Anne Auerbach removed due to copyright restrictions.

Figure 20 Lisa Anne Auerbach, *Body Count Mittens,* 2005-. Wool, mohair, dimensions variable. Photo: Lisa Anne Auerbach.

In looking at my piece *Institute of Making* it is useful to look at Lisa Anne Auerbach's *Body Count Mittens*. Auerbach's mittens are created from wool mohair mix yarn. The pattern depicts a gun with a date and a number that is the accumulative amount of American solders killed in Iraq. There is a different date and count on each individual mitten for the day knitting started on each.

Both works use the hand to represent people in conflict, the *Arpilleristas* and the dead soldiers. The hand also comes in in multiply ways in the projects. The handmade aspect is important to both pieces, and both have handmade hands. The hands in my work are both figurative as well as glove-like; Auerbach's are gloves, meant to contain real hands, to provide warmth and comfort for a living hand while speaking of dead hands.

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[44] This wave of protests started in either Iceland in 2009 at the kitchenware revolution, or arguably starting with the Arab Spring, 2010, resulting in government changes in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Yemen, with protests throughout the Middle East and North Africa. The Arab Spring continued to January 25th Revolution in Egypt, followed by the 15M-Movement in Spain, the Occupy Movement (primarily in the USA) and the Greek Protests (reoccurring over several years). The idea of protest is ripe and spreading, where during this five year period there has been mass protests almost constantly in diverse parts of the world. –Personal reference

[45] Centred around deaths of Micheal Brown and Eric Garner.

Formally they are strikingly different; *institute of Making* is a stationary sculpture and Auerbach's *Body Count Mittens* become a performance as they are worn. While Auerbach's piece is shown in a gallery setting as a singular pair of mittens, they exist in the world as a democratic means of dissemination. The pattern for the mittens, along with a website for checking the daily American casualties, is listed publically on a knitter's forum, allowing the public to make their own pair.[46] The multiplicity is an important aspect in my work, where one hand with warp tension and rocks could portray much the same feeling, but the idea of the system of distribution, access and pervasiveness is lost.

Auerbach's Knitting Manifesto

Knitting for a New Millennium manifesto [Appendix 67] resonates strongly with me. In it, Auerbach advocates mastering skills; taking time to make thoughtful work; learning from the past; reducing consumption through better products; and using knitting as a political tool to revolutionize the present and future. These elements are also present in my work.

Like Auerbach, I also believe knitting, or textiles in general, takes time, thought, patience and attention. The importance of time is paramount in our culture, the expectation of instant replies to text messages to the idea of twitter where messages are sent out into the world, but in such short bundles as to speed up time. Textiles are in direct opposition to this speed, they require dedicated slow time. The requirement to work slowly enhances the connection to material and method, which changes the relationship between the maker, materials and product. This slowing of time is an essential component in my work. In a world where time seems too fast, slow time is necessary.

Slow time. Patience, thought, dedication. Is it revolutionary, anti-capitalist or simply connectedness?

[46] Some of the works people made with the pattern are shown on ravelry.com where the large machine gun was left out on a few pairs or replaced by a peace symbol on another, leading one to wonder if the irony of them was missed or caught all too well by the knitters.

The Importance of Process

Process is a very important aspect of my work. My process often involves being irrationally difficult. It is somewhat based on the principal of truth to material or truth to process. I insist on weaving almost everything into my work as it is created, rather than attaching anything afterwards. The idea to start a piece as an interpretation of a personal social justice narrative started in *I Took Pride in My Work: Transnational Labour, Blacklisted Seamstress*. This approach felt effective to me and I decided to pursue it again in *institute of Making*. I found my inspirational narrative while reading Betsy Greer's *Craftisim: The Art of Craft and Activism*. The book contains multiple accounts of craft making as social activist work, mostly from the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom. Each described how the use of craft transformed their communities or social interactions. The Chilean story, while it spoke to all the stories of using craft to make positive community changes, was more powerful because the forces they were working against were so extreme.

My irrational process can be seen in Figure 22 that depicts a ceramic flower-like swirl, which is woven into my piece. Placing the ceramic piece in while weaving is illogical because of the possibility of breaking the ceramic addition. As well as the creating terrible tension, which is so bad, I have to mitigate it by shoving things into the rolled up cloth to achieve a working tension. The industrial chain incorporated into *Impossible Combination* (Figure 21) was too thick to wind around the cloth beam, requiring me to try to hold the woven section next to my body to create tension to finish the piece.[47]

The most process-orientated piece of my thesis work is *institute of Making*. I will to go into some depth looking at it, both illuminate some of my thinking around that particular work, as well as to give insight to processes or choices I make while creating generally.

[47] When weaving, there is a section of about 20 cm that can be woven at a time before the warp must be loosened and the woven cloth rolled around the cloth beam before starting to weave again.

Figure 21 Britt Fluevog, *Impossible Combination: Rebirth Warp*, 2014. Wool, plastic, stoneware, chain, 5' x 14" x 3". Detail of bottom. Photo: Britta Fluevog

Figure 22 Britta Fluevog, *Marriage: Life Cycle Warp*, 2014. Wool, stoneware, metal, fringe, acrylic, tinsel, variable dimensions. Detail of end section. Photo: Britta Fluevog

The idea to start a piece interpreting a personal social justice narrative started in *I Took Pride in My Work: Transnational Labour, Blacklisted Seamstress.* This approach felt effective to me and I decided to try it again in *institute of Making*.

In my piece *Crossings* I used ceramic hands that appeared to be creating actively while conversely are woven into the work. I felt the hands in this piece were not resolved and the idea of both making and being caught needed to be pursued further. The hands seemed perfect for *institute of Making* where I wanted the hands to look like they were weaving or creating, while at the same time have an alternative force threaded through them pulling them down.

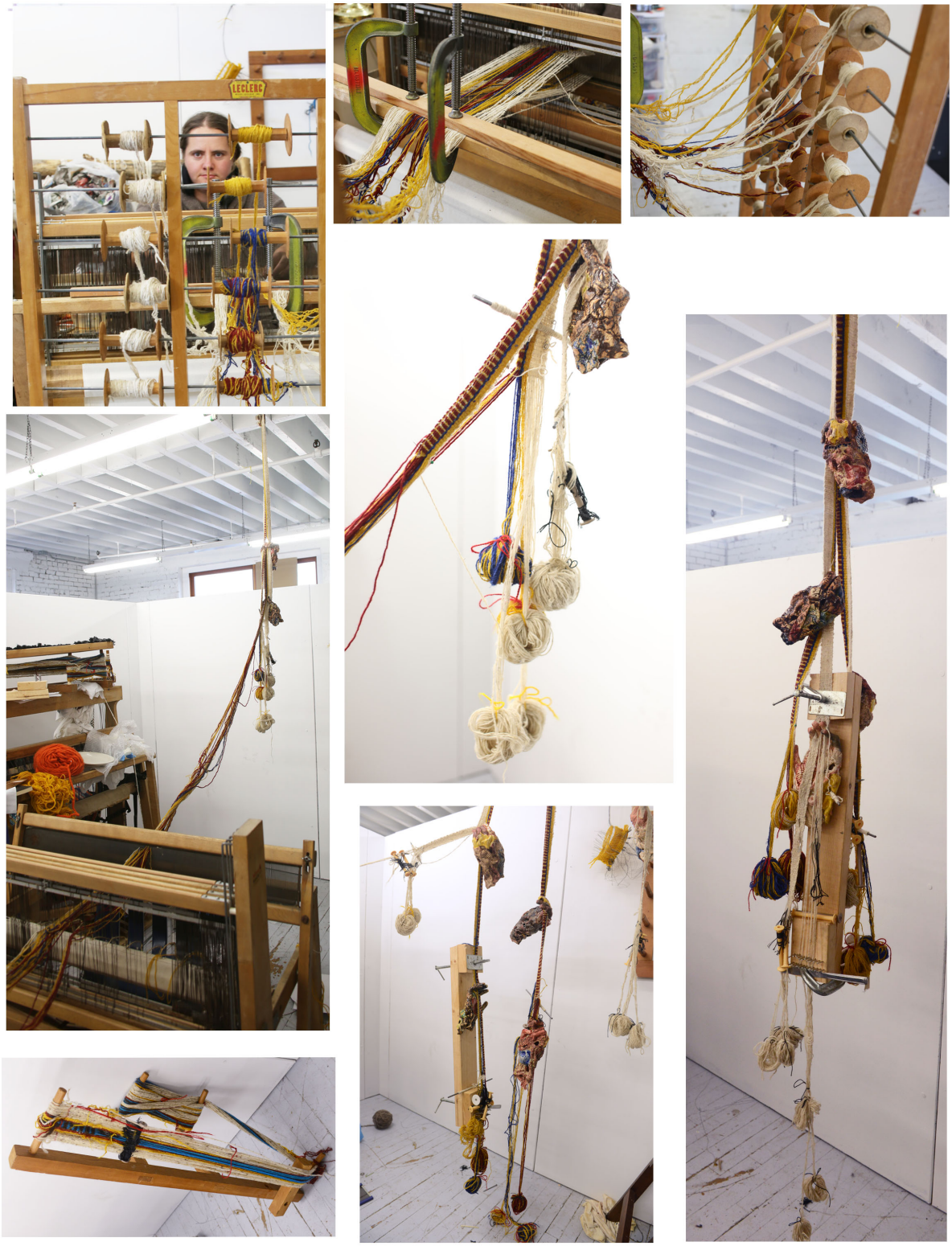

Figure 23 Photos taken during the process of making *institute of Making*

The use of a single long contiguous warp with the ceramic hands woven in during the creation was vitally important to me. This decision was definitive as it required the use of all the types of looms[48] I used, as seen in Figure 23, and exponentially increased the creation time.[49]

Inspired by the Greer's account of the story of the Arpilleristas, I chose to use Indigenous Chilean colours and weaving pattern in *institute of Making*. The warp included handspun yarn I bought in Cappadocia Turkey, as well other yarns chosen for their rustic look and colour. Strung on an inkle loom[63], this warp did not work; threads broke and yarns stuck. It required different yarns, better tension and a reed to keep the yarn apart, necessitating a modified floor loom.

My second warp had entirely different yarns than the first one, including handspun yarn from Peru[50]. This warp was strung through my floor loom, not attached to the warp beam, but rolled up on a spool rack behind in order to be unthreaded and re-threaded so that the the hands could be placed into the warp. The warp-faced[64] tightness was achieved manually. I wove by clamping, unclamping to move and re-clamping. The first three pictures of Figure 23 depict this. The first two hands were woven into the floor loom by unstringing and re-stringing the warp.

In ceramics, I normally work with stoneware glazes. As the initial stoneware glazing colours did not match my warp, I re-glazed them with earthenware glazes[51] to achieve the correct red colour and re-fired them several times to achieve a harmonious effect.

The woven end, along with the two clay hands, were attached to the ceiling, while still connected to the reed, to keep them from forming a huge knot. The rest of the hands and

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[48] It also made it impossible for me to use a Chilean loom, as its warp is one continuous length of yarn, which would not allow the ceramic hands to be woven into it.
[49] If my warp had not been continuous and pieces were sewn where the hands joined, actual time spent weaving could have been around two to four days on a floor loom. The time I spent actually weaving was at least two weeks, not to mention all of the time re-setting up my crazy hand made loom.
[50] Brought back from my independent study in Peru, the white and red yarn is from the small village of Amaru, while the yellow is from the traditional Centre for Textiles Cusco.
[51] The clay and first glaze firing was stoneware. This change in temperate required testing to develop a new testing and making a new set of glazes.

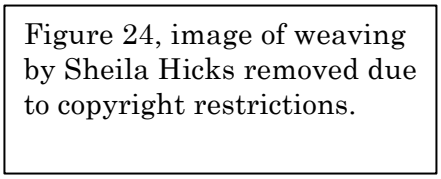
weaving were woven while the piece was suspended from the ceiling. I designed and made a simple handloom that would allow me to weave and hold tension with two sets of clamps. Not having to unthread and re-thread a floor loom saved time.

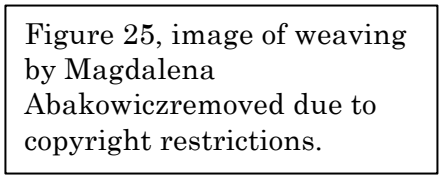
My process was completely ridiculous, tedious and counter intuitive. Clamped warp with spools— nonsensical! Impractical! The weaving floor loom configuration beautiful, a dynamic art piece I destroyed to finish the intended work. Slowly sliding the work off the loom, cautious, avoiding deadly knots. Do I court the exhilaration of almost falling off cliffs? Affixing yarn willy-nilly, cleaving apart delicate clay, requires me dancing, ducking— a circumnavigation body and work. Why do I cherish this performance no one sees?

Creating emotional and physical tension, the piece was finished by painting rocks black, looping them with yarn and then weaving this yarn through the holes of the bottom hands. Pragmatically, the rocks were used as weight, but metaphorically they also created heaviness and tension. Through the use of the rocks the piece functions to create the impression that the hands were both climbing and being held down.

Context

A Short History of Textiles and My Context Within It





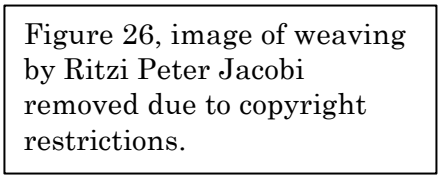


Figure 24 Sheila Hicks, *M'hamid,* 1970. silk, vicuna, razor-clam shell, 9.25" x 7". Institute of Contemporary Art Philadelphia. Photo: craftcounsel.org

Figure 25 Magdalena Abakanowicz, *Abakan Rouge II,*1970. Sisal, Dimensions variable. Installed at Kunsthalle. Photo: Jan Nordahl

Figure 26 Ritzi & Peter Jacobi, *Multicolored Exotica*, 1976. Goat hair, wool, 8'3" x 3'7". Photo: Robert Hausser- The Art Fabric: Mainstream.

My material practice is linked to the fibre artists of the 1960-1970's[52], such as Sheila Hicks, Ritzi & Peter Jacobi, and Magdalena Abakanowicz[53]. Their works, through size and sculptural elements, directly questioned the place of fibre as merely a craft material (Authers 7). The work of the previous generation of weavers, such as Gunta Stlözl and Ani Albers, work stayed within the confines of cloth. Through sociocultural movements of the time[54], along with the use of non-western techniques[55] brought on by these movements[56], these fibre artists were at the forefront of pushing the boundaries between the division of art and craft. Negative connotations of feminine and decorative mitigated their ability to be accepted as fine artists.

[52] They are associated with the American Fiber Movement, which also aligns with the French 'art Tapestry' project of the Centre International de la Tapisserie Ancienne at Moderne as detailed by Elissa Auther in String Felt Thread: The heirachy of Art and Craft in American Art. For further information of the term fibre art, see the appendix.
[53] These artists are associated with the 1969 MOMA exhibition *Wall Hangings*. Works from the show still exhibit at the MOMA, but not in the fine art section rather in the hectic the design area.
[54] Movements such as feminism, anti-war, civil rights, anti-establishment, liberation (Fowler) and a restructuring of universities with textiles moved out of home economics into the art department(Auther).
[55] Particularly large off loom sculptures.
[56] Hicks started weaving as part of Meso-American George Kubler's class on the alternate account of the history of object-making at Yale(Auther 13).

While the fibre artists of the 1960's-1970's's did not manage to achieve the standing of fibre art as a fine art[57] medium, the feminist artists of the 1980's/1990's did[58]. Feminist discourse brought fibre arts practice into fine art within the bounds of feminism as described by Elissa Auther in *String, Felt, Thread: The Hierarchy of Art and Craft in American Art:*

> The Feminist legitimization of fiber as an artistic medium went hand in hand with the legitimization of women's everyday experience as a subject for art, allowing feminist artists to draw openly from not only fiber's aesthetic properties but also its social and cultural meanings (Auther 165)

In discussing feminist fibre artists in relation to my own practice, Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party* (1979) should be addressed. Like much of my practice, she utilizes both ceramics and fibre in her work, which is a fairly rare combination. The previous generation of fibre artists' works work highly emphasized material, which in turn is how writers discuss their work.[59] Chicago's *The Dinner Party* is unabashedly overt in its political messages about feminism, the domestic and female representation[60]. It would be implausible to discuss Chicago's work without mentioning the political framework and statement contained in it. The concept of encompassing political messaging that the feminists, such as Chicago, practiced can also be unraveled in my work, *I Took Pride in My Work: Transnational Labour, Blacklisted Seamstress,* where the implications of the global workforce, alluded to in the title must be accounted for in the woven sculpture.

[57] The material was only legitimate if it was a non-art material: "Process or Postminimalist artists more successfully negotiated the boundaries between art and non-art, paradoxically using the low medium of fiber to create value of the highest order in the art world. Insofar as they understood fiber as an ordinary, industrial, non-art material rather than as an elevated material of high art, it could be uniquely marshaled to dismantle the Greenbergian modernist conception of pure, autonomous form." (Auther xxii)
[58] This is according to Elissa Auther, while there is some merit to this opinion, curator Janelle Porter in the Chicago Institute's exhibition catalogue of the 2014 show *Fiber* notes the art world's ambivalence to the material of fiber, denoted by a forty year gap between major museum exhibitions on the topic (Porter 20). The legitimization of fibre as a medium can be said to have been tenuous in the 1980's and 1990's.
[59] Organized by Mildred Constantine and Jack Larson, the Major exhibitions of fibre work exhibition catalogues discuss mostly form and material.
[60] The piece is a domestic scene. It is a dinner table; the table settings are laid out on hand made textile table cloths and the plates are ceramic dinner plates with vaginas glazed or sculptured into them. Every setting is represents a different female figure from history and mythology. The concept, materials and connotations are all feminine.

Figure 27, image of installation by Judy Chicago removed due to copyright restrictions.

Figure 27 Judy Chicago, *The Dinner Party*, 1974-79. Ceramic, porcelain, textile; triangular table, 576" x 576".Brooklyn Museum Photo: galleryhip.com

Examples of the current the current acceptance of fibre as a fine art medium in the mainstream art world is evidenced by two major exhibitions in the last two years at Boston's Institute of Contemporary Art and at Germany's Kunstmueum Wolfsburg Museum. These exhibitions among others, further solidify the medium of fibre's acceptance within the contemporary art world. The exhibition catalogue of the Institute of Contemporary Art states fibre's "recent reclamation by contemporary artists who have implicitly received 'the grand permission' to create fiber-based work with a 'post-fiber' sensibility" (Porter 9). This acceptance in the fine art world has allowed a broadening of the discipline that reflects different trends within contemporary art. This can be seen where weaving mimics minimalist paintings;[61] crosses over between traditional textiles and digital technologies[62]; and is undertaken as performance.[63]

My own work can be seen contributing to the conversation with many contemporary artists whose work is politically radical, deals with problematic international social issues; and thematically addresses textiles. This is not a cohesive group through medium, location or nationality, but address similar thematic concerns. While aesthetically much of my work resembles Sheila Hick's work, I would place myelf beside the younger artists Sascha Reichstein, Sara Rahbar and Lisa Anne Auerbach, who are working through ideas and embodying ways that I feel are after post-modernism[64] and reflect ways in which I create art.

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[61] Such as Ruth Laskey's wall pieces that use naturally dyed wool to from these "pseudo-paintings"
[62] Such as Faig Ahmed's traditional carpet designs that morph into patterns made from digitally squeezing, twisting and pulling the original pattern, all of which are then commercially made into a carpet in his family's generations old traditional carpet workshop.
[63] Such as Ruth Kelly
[64] Nicolas Bourriaud's positing of Altermodern as a movement after post-modernism shows that there id an end or transition away from Post-Modernism. In my undergraduate studies, I had a critical theory professor, Dr. Nick Webb who suggested post-modernism ended with 9/11. All of these artists are creating artworks that relate to society and issues post-9/11: Rahbar and Auerbach deal directly with the wars in the middle east; Riechstein's international focus also seems poignant within this time period; My own themes of borders, refugees and revolution directly speak to our society post-9/11.

Social Justice

My works starts from a place of striving for social justice. I aim to have my audience reflect on the work, with the hope of future change. Due to my years of activism, I am cynical about the ability of my art to affect any changes, but still feel obliged to try.

What is social justice? A lack of concrete definition or compelling critical theory is found on the term itself, which is noted by Philosopher Michael Novak[65]: "Whole books and treatises have been written about social justice without ever offering a definition of it." (Novak 11). Many do discuss the issues within the field[66]. I found a definition by a working group that I feel speaks to my understanding of social justice and how I am using this ideology in my work:

> Social justice was defined as full participation in society and the balancing of benefits and burdens by all citizens, resulting in equitable living and a just ordering of society. Its attributes included: (1) fairness; (2) equity in the distribution of power, resources, and processes ...(3) just institutions, systems, structures, policies, and processes; (4) equity in human development, rights, and sustainability (Buettner-Schmidt, Lobo 948)

Basically the ability to have social justice can be seen in having just economic and power distribution along with a system that ensures this. Equitable distribution of power and resources as well as just policies, systems, institutions and processes are important ideas when looking at my work.

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[65] The more complete quote is "whole books and treatises have been written about social justice without ever offering a definition of it. It is allowed to float in the air as if everyone will recognize an instance of it when it appears. This vagueness seems indispensable. The minute one begins to define social justice, one runs into embarrassing intellectual difficulties. It becomes, most often, a term of art whose operational meaning is. 'We need a law against that.' In other words, it becomes an instrument of ideological intimidation, for the purpose of gaining the power of legal coercion." (Novak 11) Novak goes on to define (undefined) the term to take any political context out of the term thus rending it powerless.

[66] Social Justice authors read for thesis work include: Bill Ashcroft, Corine Goria, Peter Keith Kulchyski, Walter Mignolo, Micheal Novak, Andy Opel& Donnalyn Pompper, Shelaugh Rogers, John Scott, Trinh T. Minh-Ha, Gil Valentine and Harsha Walia.

While this definition is a succinct vision that aligns with my own thinking, a straightforward definition does not completely cover my thinking on this term. For me social justice is a value that invokes a moral obligation on the part of a just society, which our democracy claims to be, to correct injustices. Taking an issue like refugees, explored in *Untitled (Warp C31)*, and calling it an instance of social justice takes it from the bureaucratic realm into one of morality.

My interest in social justice comes partly from the realization of my privilege—that for me the only responsible way to live in the world with privilege is to try to ensure that those with less privilege are lifted up. I am led in this stance through my Christianity.[67] Also, a family trip to Haiti when I was ten was very formative in how I viewed my place in the world. Haiti is, and was at the time an extremely poor country; we had gone to village with no running water to help build a room on the village's communal building church-school-community hall.

In my piece *I Took Pride in My Work: Transnational Labour, Blacklisted Seamstress,* these social justice elements are missing in the seminal narrative of Ana Juárez, the Mexican Textile worker who was blacklisted. I choose to portray the restriction of movement that Juárez faced, the physical lack of movement, that the industry can change countries and she cannot. The figurative movement restriction, where she is stuck in an unjust system that is propped up internationally and self-perpetuating through a very effective blacklisting system. This restriction is shown as passive; the violence is not overt. The feet are stuck to the plinth with the thread, which would be surprisingly strong enough to hold someone in place, but any sharp object could sever, like the system.

All of my thesis work starts with a social justice inspiration. It an overarching theme that can be addressed in systemic injustices in many different areas and in many different ways. I use materials in *Crossings* to discuss problems with borders. The injustice of borders is readdressed in *Untitled (Warp C31)* with my created narrative of refugees. The power of art to help overcome repressive dictatorship is addressed in *institute of Making*. These aspects of social justice will be addressed further in relation to each separate piece.

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[67] While there is real problems with this statement as the people with the most power are or come from Christian backgrounds, in the bible Jesus tells the rich to give up all of their worldly possessions and he also condemns money and the roman state. My personal Christian viewpoint is indirectly influenced by Liberation Theology.

The Thread That Binds: Intersectionality

For me feminism is an aspect of social justice. Intersectional feminism is a term that was coined in 1989 by black rights activist and lawyer Kimberlé Crenshaw. The theory of intersectional feminism looks at how oppression increases and interacts with multiple facets of marginalization. Some of these facets are wealth, gender, race, sexuality, able-bodied-ness, and conformity or not to western lifestyles. Intersectional feminism has been theorized about and influenced by many other academics such as bell hooks, Patricia Hill Collins and Gill Valentine.

While much can be gained by digging into the ideology of intersectionality, it is in the socio-political context in my activist social network where I encounter and am influenced by the term. For me intersectionality means alignment, solidarity, structural analysis and lived experience. In concrete terms I see environmentalist groups aligning with indigenous groups and discussing poverty as part of the same issue[68]. This solidarity is deepening the individual ideas into systems of oppression that connect and interact with each other.

Intersectionality is crucial to understanding my art practice and thesis work. Without the idea of intersectionality, my works and themes are diverse and scattered. For me, while all the pieces are separate, they are a unified narrative, meant to be thought of as a whole. This unified narrative is malleable, looking at connecting themes in *institute of Making* will tease apart some of this thinking.

Revolution is the theme addressed in *institute of Making.* The idea of colonization is in the piece through the traditional Chilean style cloth. The idea of borders is latent in the piece and theme of revolution, but is referenced in the ideas around national identity. Unequal international trade is a huge factor in modern war and government *coup d'état*, which creates

[68] The oil or tar sands in Northern Alberta are seen as an environmental issue of global warming and forest destruction that is causing health problems and economic hardship to indigenous communities that hunt and fish as a major food source. Indigenous peoples facing these problems are being invited as speakers augmenting or giving theory from their lived experience.

revolutions. These connections are not intended to be rational links, where colonization[69] led to international trade[70] to which lead to a *coup d'état* that then caused a textile worker's revolution I wove about in *institute of Making*. My intent is not to prove that they are connected or work together, but to bring them into a space where they might overlap in the minds of the viewers.

[69] Main theme in *Awana: Loom: Telar*
[70] Problematic international trade is the thematic concern of *I Took Pride in My Work: Transnational Labour, Blacklisted Seamstress*

Conclusion

Summation of Thesis

My practice embraces and adds to the sculptural elements that the 1960's fibre artists had in their work. Through the example of contemporary textile artists, I am broadening the depth of political commentary about the field; using the power that the combination of aesthetics and political messaging can bring to artworks.

The history in the materials and the process of making has a strong impact upon the finished artwork; this history leave traces like fingerprints and labels or is more hidden like re-stringing a loom. This history is complicated by socio-political contexts of international trade, Western hegemony and colonization. The act of making can subvert some negative influences resulting in positive change.

One of the ways my material explorations explores politics is through narrative. Narrative can be an effective tool in which to address injustice in an intersectional manner in order to pursue social justice. It provides a charged nature within a work, as well as connects disparate pieces and issues together within a wider framework. The combination of narrative and the body are able to speak to both issues as well as people: It provides the human element that is so vital within the arena of social justice.

My practice has been influenced by my graduate thesis work in many ways. Pragmatically, I managed to fuse ceramics and weaving together. Thematically, the use of narratives as a context is a new way of working within my practice. It has influenced the way I think about my work, which is something I will take forwards with me as I create artwork in the future.

Delving deeper into my practice has led to revelations about my work that I did not understand: My interest in decoration is actually an interest in texture that manifests itself in a decorative element; weaving is something I use as a subject metaphorically and literally. The prior elements of the art, histories, materials and making process are an important aspect in my work and one that I explored deeply for the first time in my thesis body of work.

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Appendix

Terms Used

Advancing the Warp: is the term used to refer to moving the woven cloth forwards and bringing forwards new warp to continue weaving.

Arpilleras: Are appliqué wall hanging sewn onto stiff fabric. The word means burlap, referring to the fabric they are sewn on. They were started as workshops by the Catholic church to support women in poverty and as a means of therapy. Works were sent internationally, despite censorship, to show the harsh realities of life under the Pinochet dictatorship. (Adams 535) Being able to cross the censorship and have the artworks reach international audiences was important, as the Pinochet dictatorship was established and supported by western powers. Further information on this can be read below under the term Pinochet.

Arpilleristas: Is the title of the women who make the *Arpilleras*.

Beater: Is a part of the loom that contains the reed. It moves freely along the shaft and is used to press the weft into the warp to achieve the weave structure.

Beating: is the process of using the beater to press the weft into the cloth. It is called beating because a dense weaving structure requires a fair bit of force with the beater.

Cloth Beam: Is on the front part of the loom where the woven cloth is wound around during the weaving process. The warp stretches and is stored on the back beam and the cloth beam.

Colonization: My use refers to European countries, particularly Britain, France, Spain and Portugal claiming and stealing land belonging to indigenous populations in other parts of the world. Cultural genocide and conformity to western culture was used as part of this process. It is the cultural assimilation that my work speaks to.

Continuous Warp: one uncut warp throughout a piece.

Decolonization: Decolonization can be seen as a process of regaining a distinct cultural identity related to but not the same as pre-colonization. Full decolonization would require regaining all territories that were taken.

Fibre Art: Ellisa Auther broke down the use of fibre into three categories in reference to the 1960's & 1970's based on how the material was used a received. The Post-minimalists and Process artists such as Robert Morris and Eva Hesse managed to legitimately use fibre by considering it a low or non-art material; the feminists such as Faith Ringgold and Judy Chicago "initiated a critique of the hierarchy of art and craft by elevating the denigrated pratcises and materials of woman's traditional fiber-craft to the level of high art in their own work" (Auther 97). Auther's definition is given here as it is the basis of my thinking of and using of the term Fibre art or fibre artist. "Various labels, including *woven forms, new tapestry, wall hangings, fiber art, fiber constructions, fiber sculpture, textile sculpture,* and *Art Fabric* were used to describe woven and off-loom work by these artists in the 1960s and 1970s. Throughout the period, the struggle to distinguish non-utilitarian work in fiber from the hand-woven items of the lay or professional weaver dominated writing about the genre. More than the names themselves, it is this preoccupation with naming

and distinguishing that is of interest here, for such naming is a primary component of artistic consecration...because the term *fiber art* has enjoyed the widest application throught the larger art world for the past thirty years, I used it in this study...I use the label *fiber artist* with trepidation, however, for it continually renders suspect the artistic identity of the maker by marking him or her with that aspect of the work (here, the medium) defined outside the norms of art...apt parallel is found in the label *woman artist*, which similarly particularizes the maker as outside the legitimate definition or art." (Auther 9)

Floor Loom: Is the traditional and standard western loom, that sits on a floor and is operated by foot peddles.

Harness: The harnesses, or shafts, move up and down on a floor loom and contain the warp in the heddles.

Heddle: are the individual separators of warp threads that allow the threads to lift and form shed. In floor looms there are either metal or thead with an eye hole in the middle for the warp to be threaded through.

Hegemony: "In this critical realist, transformational model of practice, there is more to hegemony than meets the eye, or than might be gleaned from an analysis of discourse. Hegemony has ontological depth; it includes the hegemonic projects that arise within specific conjunctures but also takes in the more deeply structured conditions of being for those projects. The point here is that hegemony has an objective basis in material conditions. It is more than just an intersubjective relation between groups or a field of discursive relations, even more than the construction of a ruling bloc, since it entails "the reproduction of the underlying social structures that create the material conditions for such a bloc" (Joseph 214-15).

Inkle Loom: is a type of handloom to create bands for belts. They are originally from south America and are meant to create intricate patterns.

Makerly: is a ubiquitous term used in crafts discourse as a for label finished objects that embody elements that speak strongly to the act of making in each of the crafts disciplines.

Non-western: the term is problematic as it sets up a system whereby western is the default and everything else is non-western. For my own work, the term is also useful as it can contain old western traditions that are not in the cannon of western society, like the loom used in my piece *Crossings*.

Occidental: meaning western or pertaining to western culture as described below.

Pinochet: "From 1973 to 1990, Augusto Pinochet's authoritarian regime disrupted civil society and halted open political life in Chile. Estimates of the number of people disappearing under this regime range from 1,500 to 3,000 and the government tortured thousands more in order to maintain a firm grasp on power. The regime's oppression and economic policies shattered the lives of many families. Because most of the disappeared were men and boys, women faced the daunting task of supporting their families". (Boldt & White 22-28) Pinochet came into power with a CIA backed coup, introduced neo-liberal politics that opened the country to foreign investors and interned 80,000.

Plain Weave: is the simplest weave structure whereby every other warp and weft thread interlock. The warp odds, then evens are raised in successive order in order to create this.

Reed: Is used on looms to keep yarn spaced. It is a part of the beater that allows warp threads to be straightened and tightened within the warp after each time the warp is passed through the loom.

Shaft: The shafts, or harnesses, move up and down on a floor loom and contain the warp in the heddles.

Shed: Is the risen warn threads during in weaving that allows the weft to pass through

Shuttle: or shuttle boat is an instrument used to hold the warp and pass through the warp to create the weave structure

Skein: wrapped loops of yarn, arm length or longer that is a form in which yarn is sold and stored. Yarn is also put into this form in order to dye it.

Slubs: are thick bead-like lumps intentionally spun into yarn

Tension: is required to weave. Tension will keep threads separate and allow threads to lift and create shed to weave with.

Treadles: or peddles are what control the raising of the harness and creation of the shed

Threading: Threading a loom is the process of putting yarn through the eyeholes of the heddles and into the slots of the reed.

Warp: is the yarn that is attached to the loom. On floor looms warps wrap around the beams allowing it to be longer on the loom. The length of warps vary and are often used to make multiple pieces.

Warp Faced: Is a weaving structure where the warp is so dense so as to render the weft invisible except at the ends. The patterning and colour is from the warp yarns alone.

Warping: In the process of placing warp on the loom including threading.

Warping Board: Is a wooden frame with pegs that is used to wind the warp.

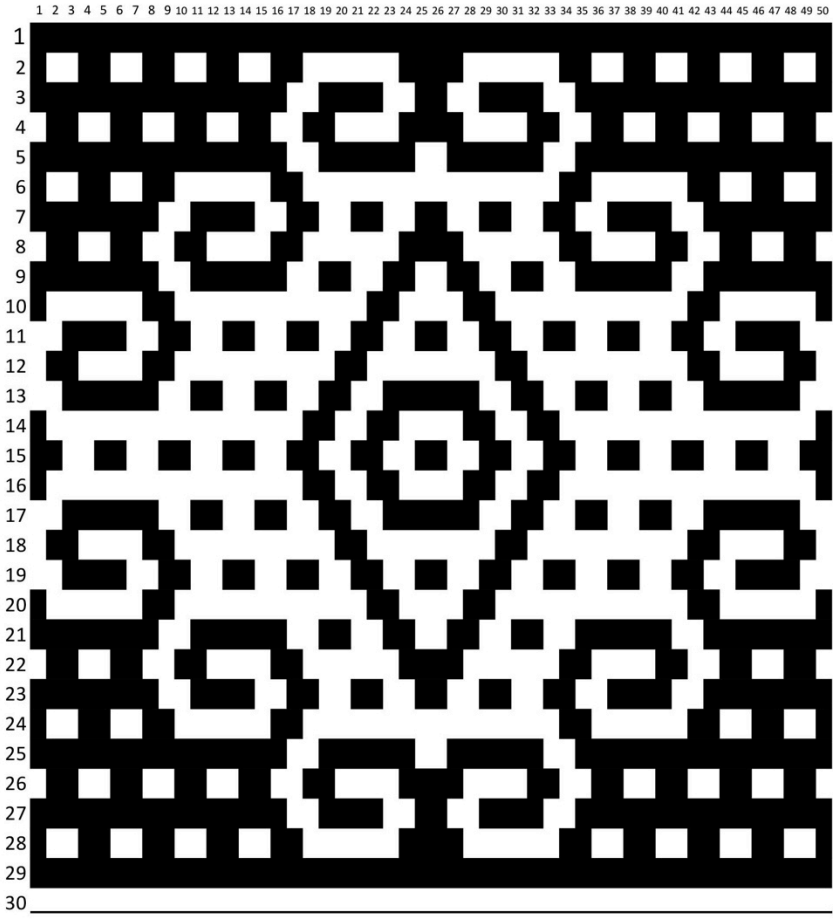
Weaving: Is a form of cloth production using a loom to interlock yarn. The warp threads are raised in an alternating pattern, with the weft pushed in between each raising. The weft interlocks the warp that enables a weave structure to form. Patterns can be formed using colour and yarn variation along with changing the way the warp is raised. In a floor loom, the warp is strung through shafts or a frame system that goes up and down by pressing floor pedals thus allowing the pattern to change. The most basic weaving requires warp and weft for basket weaving and for cloth requires the addition of tension, which entails a "loom" or something to provide tension to the warp.

Weft: Is the yard to is placed across the loom while in the process of weaving.

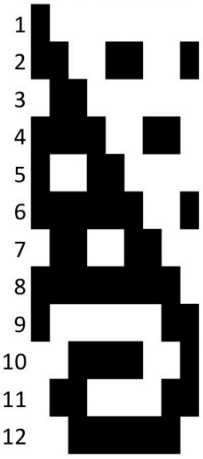
Western Culture: For my own use, western culture is inherently related to the ideals started in the enlightenment and is intrinsically linked to capitalism. One of my main critiques of western culture is its colonizing mentality that requires cultural assimilation; it imparts but does not learn from other cultures modes of being, and its self-claim to superiority.

Peruvian Patterns from *Awana: Loom: Telar*

Name: Los Garras del puma Macho o baron
Location: Amaru, Teacher: Lucia



Name: Medio Corizon
Location: Amaru
Teacher: Lucia



Auerbach's Kitting Manifesto

"Knitting for a New Millennium," a manifesto by Lisa Anne Auerbach
This is a call for a dynamic, new direction for knitting!

Lay down that eyelash yarn and giant needles and pick up a project that's thoughtful, elegant, and odd. Let each sweater be something completely new. Forego patterns in favor of making it up yourself.

Go beyond.

Go above.

Figure it out for yourself.

Do not by shy. The time is now; there will never be a better one. Use technology if you have to. Computers are your friends. Knitting machines are ungainly buy useful. Reclaim knitting! It is a noble craft; it is NOT the new yoga. Repetitive and unthinking motions will kill the soul. Knitting is creating. Custom sweaters are the new tattoos. Why make the same thing everyone else is making if you don't have to? You have choices: make use of them.

THEN: Knitters who have come before us are remembered for cabled guernseys, paper thin stockings, mittens and gloves adorned with sonnets or sobriquets, and undergarments fluttering with lace. Our forebears learned to knit at a young age. Small children were started on stockings, knitting in the round. Adolescents turned heels and decreased at the toes.

Look back at the history of knitting and you will see tiny stitches, fancy flourishes, and complex shaping. Aesthetically speaking, the knitters of yore had it going on. Totally badass, persnickety, and adorable. And, as if incredibly good-looking and fashionable weren't enough for these long ago knitters, old-time chicks with sticks transformed American culture, no joke. In the 1890's, when a bicycle craze swept the nation, ladies were still wearing duds that might get stuck in the spokes, or worse. Knitting came to the rescue, providing the fashionable a new and sporty choice. Hemlines started to rise, and jaunty knitted stockings became all the rage. It wasn't long before sweaters went from underwear to outerwear and the rest is history.

Thank our feminist ancestors with yarn and vision for getting us out of the corset and into the sweater. The early part of the 20th century plugged along just fine, and many a garment was stitched for soldiers, grandchildren, schoolmarms, bachelors, fishermen, and whores. Those who wanted to knit for the war effort used patters published by the Red Cross for sweaters, vests, gloves, and socks. Fashioning garments was a talent taken for granted. Knitters, it seemed, knew how to knit. And then what happened?

NOW: Like many other things, recent times saw the history of knitting take an unfortunate turn for the worse. Though the popularity of the craft has gone through the roof, we are now faced with an unprecedented epidemic of mediocrity characterized by ultra-bulky yarn and loosely knit skinny scarves. Yarn companies are laughing all the way to the bank as the introduce more yarns and patterns that will satisfy knitters with a "scarf in an hour" or a "sweater in a day."
If the current crop of madness does not cease, we in the here and now will be remembered by future knitters at the generation who collapsed the craft. We cannot and must not let this happen! Knitting is not supposed to be easy. Knitting takes time and thought and patience and attention. A well made sweater will last a lifetime or longer. There's no point in wasting time and money on ugliness.

Down with simple and boring!

Up with thoughtful and complex!

Chart your message and wear it proudly. Mix yarns and colors. Spice it up. Try the materials of today: Kevlar, retro-reflective, stainless steel, dynamite, yak. Resist fashion. Manufacture your own brand. Embrace tradition. Learn from history. Shatter the present. Create the future. Stitch by stitch, we can and will change the world. The revolution is at hand and knitting needles are the only weapons you'll need. Stop making scarves; start making trouble.

Consume less.

Create more.

Knitting is political.

BEGIN IMMEDIATELY.