

**UNRAVELING
TRADITION** •
RESTORATION

exhibition catalog

UNRAVELING TRADITION

Contemporary Artists Working with Fiber Media

Curated by 516 ARTS



RESTORATION

Creative Work by Textile Conservators & Restorers

Curated by Rufus Cohen

July 17 — September 11, 2010

In conjunction with *Convergence: Albuquerque 2010*
International Fiber Arts Conference



516 Central Avenue SW
Downtown Albuquerque, New Mexico
www.516arts.org

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516 ARTS is an independent, nonprofit arts venue offering programs that inspire curiosity, dialogue, risk-taking, and creative experimentation, showcasing a mix of established, emerging, local, national, and international artists from a variety of cultural backgrounds. Our mission is to forge connections between art and audiences, and our vision is to be an active partner in developing the cultural landscape of Albuquerque and New Mexico. Our values are inquiry, diversity, collaboration, and accessibility.

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Design by Suzanne Sbarge. Printed by Don Mickey Designs.

Front cover: Beili Liu, *Lure/Forest* (detail) from the *Red Thread Legend* series, 2010,
installation: thread, sewing needles, dimensions variable

Back cover: Kayla Paul, *Untitled 1* (detail), 2010, ikat warp and weft on patterned tencel
23 x 18 inches

The Location of Tradition

by Namita Gupta Wiggers

A boundary is not that at which something stops but, as the Greeks recognized, the boundary is that from which something begins its presencing.

— Martin Heidegger, *Building, Dwelling, Thinking*¹

The move away from the singularities of 'class' or 'gender' as primary conceptual and organizational categories, has resulted in an awareness of the subject positions—of race, gender, generation, institutional location, geopolitical locale, sexual orientation—that inhabit any claim to identity in the modern world. What is theoretically innovative, and politically crucial, is the need to think beyond narratives of originary and initial subjectivities and to focus on those moments or processes that are produced in the articulation of cultural differences. These 'in-between' spaces provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood—singular or communal—that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of society itself.

— Homi Bhabha, Introduction to *The Location of Culture*²

Tradition is a loaded word. A slippery and deceptively definable term, tradition can be used as a means of defining the limits of scripted behaviors or practices. It can function as a code that is acknowledged, employed, and invoked to reinforce boundaries when someone or something strays into the “realm of the beyond.”³ How, then, do we consider tradition in the work of the artists gathered in this exhibition?

As Elissa Auther notes in *String, Felt, Thread*, “Today, fiber seems to be everywhere in the contemporary art world.”⁴ As Auther further notes, feminist artists from the 1960s to the present legitimized fiber as a valid material for use in contemporary art practice in several ways; specifically, opening the arena for women’s everyday experience as a subject, interest in fiber’s

¹ Heidegger, Martin as quoted in *Homi Bhabha, The Location of Culture*, New York: Routledge, 1994, p. i.

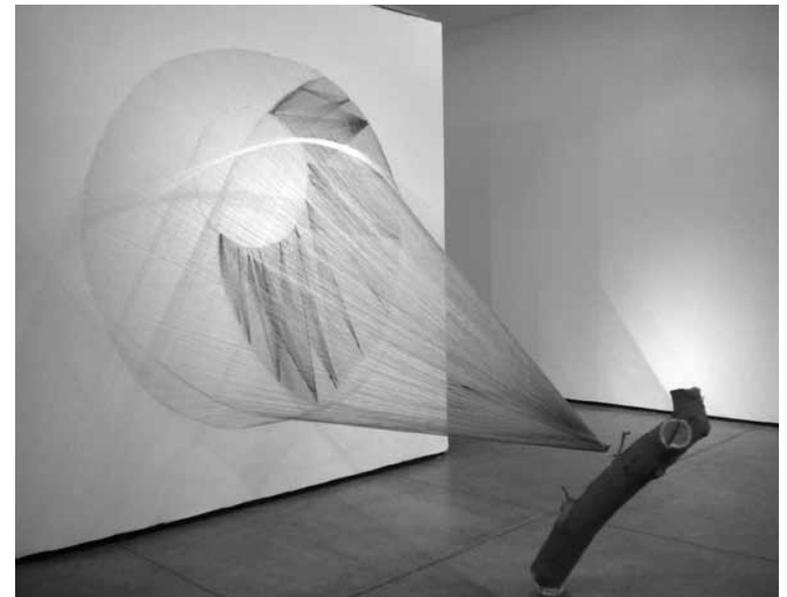
² Bhabha, p. 2.

³ Bhabha, p. 1.

⁴ Auther, Elissa. *String, Felt, Thread*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, p. 163. Auther, p. 165.

aesthetic and material properties as well as socio-cultural meaning.⁵ Over the past 50 years, fiber and the rise in installation art have been inextricably intertwined. Decades of conceptual work set the stage for the conversations taking place in *Unraveling Tradition* as much as the thousands of years of domestic handicraft traditions and, one could argue, generated new forms and traditions that cannot be linked to a singular canonical perspective, an exclusively Modernist interpretation.

In more recent decades, the rise of postcolonialism and globalism, coupled with the resurgent interest in the handmade in the current decade bring handicraft traditions further into the conversation about fiber art and craft. Shu Hung and Joseph Magliaro’s *By Hand: The Use of Craft in Contemporary Art* (2007) provides a sampling of visual practitioners across fields who exemplify a renewed interest in fiber materials and processes. Here, the melding, meshing, and blurring of boundaries that define the contemporary cultural moment makes it difficult to isolate a single trend, movement or way in which artists are currently working with and through fiber. Instead, we are enmeshed in a decade in which artists freely borrow from a cornucopia of traditions, creating works which operate in a liminal space in which the “here” and “there” are simultaneously visible.



A Rare Perfection of Form, 2010, site-specific installation, thread, painted wood, coat hanger, dimensions variable

With fiber-based work today taking place across a spectrum of locations from private domestic realms to public spaces of the white cube and further into the community-at-large, the work in *Unraveling Tradition* provides a glimpse of how individual conceptual art practices reconsider the collective and communal aspects of traditional craft-based uses of fiber.

Beili Liu's work provides an excellent example of this. Liu's elegant installation focuses on a traditional idea from China that an invisible red thread links all those meant to be part of a community. The simplicity of execution and the lines of strings suspended from the ceiling echo minimalist installations by Fred Sandback in which different colored strings create a dimensional line drawing in space.⁶ Rather than focus exclusively on the string's ability to hold its linear form, however, Liu uses color and metaphor in an installation that is as much about community as it is about cultural narratives and material elements.

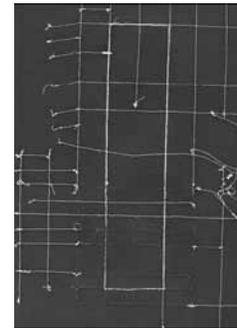
Communal loss takes form through the sculptures of Loren Schwerd. Appropriating the type of human hair extensions used in African-American communities, Schwerd weaves and constructs memorial homages to the



communities of New Orleans whose homes and lives were devastated by Hurricane Katrina. Work created in recent years by Hrafnildur Arnadottir and Sonya Clark, for example, reveal a similar strong interest in hair as a cultural signifier and powerful metaphorical tool, each creating work that, like Schwerd's, references cultural and

ethnic traditions. Simultaneously referencing Victorian mourning jewelry in which hair of a deceased loved one was fashioned into various adornments, Schwerd's work recalls that of Melanie Bilenker who creates exquisite resin and hair drawings of her daily life in the form of jewelry. For Bilenker and Schwerd, the historical reference to mourning jewelry morphs into portraiture of vernacular experiences and spaces: of personal grooming for both, and of daily activity for Bilenker and abandoned architecture for Schwerd. Deeply linked to site and situation, the fabrication processes echo physical forms of loose fibers, woven textiles, and are a play on the idea of the "weave" as a culturally relevant fiber form.

As a mapping of a range of the kinds of practices in the terrain of fiber-based work today, the exhibition raises many critical questions about how we understand tradition...



Finally, Ellen Rothenberg turns the grid of a city and the movement of communities through and across its streets into a physical metaphor for the way a shuttle passes through the warp and weft of a woven textile, or the embroidered line that works between the gaps in those threads. Through physical interaction resulting in a concrete object, Rothenberg reminds us of the structures of the most basic of embellished woven forms through work that is simultaneously linked

to current interests in moving installations and art practices out of the gallery or museum environment into the world-at-large.

As a mapping of a range of the kinds of practices in the terrain of fiber-based work today, the exhibition raises many critical questions about how we understand tradition as a broader, more complex idea than as a prescriptive and easily defined marker of identity. As work that skillfully defies easy categorization, fiber art in the hands of the artists exhibited here exemplifies the diversity of fiber as a vehicle, form, and an idea for creative explorations. As new traditions continue to emerge and morph as nearly 50 years of fiber-based sculpture and installation merge with older handicrafts traditions, historic references combine with experimental materials, and accessible amateur techniques meld with rigorous knowledge, the next decade promises to be an ongoing sorting out of what tradition means to contemporary communities. □

Namita Gupta Wiggers is the Curator of the Museum of Contemporary Craft in partnership with Pacific Northwest College of Art where she directs the exhibition, collection and education programs. Her publications include *Ken Shores: Clay Has the Last Word*, and *Unpacking the Collection: Selections from the Museum of Contemporary Craft*.

⁶ See Glenn Adamson's recent blog entry *A String Theory* for an examination of uses of this basic fiber element <http://www.vam.ac.uk/things-to-do/blogs/sketch-product>

Left: Loren Schwerd, *1812 Tupelo Street*, 2007, human hair, mixed media, 23 x 24 x 8 inches
Right: *Loop* (detail), 2010, D-Ride bus installation: digital prints

Mandy Greer

Seattle, Washington



“My current projects are about making visceral transitory states of the human emotional experience tangible through the overabundance of crocheted, knitted and sewn fabric. My work addresses our fundamental need for narrative, to examine the human predicament through story, particularly through using natural and animal forms. My conceptual process involves investigating archetypes, mythology and folk tales from a wide variety of cultures, seeking out imagery that coincides with our experiences of everyday life, yet also having an air of timelessness... The act of creating decadent forms out of lowly or discarded materials, particularly fibers, is always at work in my process.”

Lime Chandelier, 2008, steel, wool, synthetic & natural yarns, glass & plastic beads, fabric, acrylic, glitter, 7 x 3 feet

Miya Hannan

San Diego, California



“In Eastern cultures, death is not seen as negative, but as a part of the continuum of life. For the last four years, my work has addressed issues related to cultural perceptions of death and life. In the *Remains* series, twisted paper is sewed into bedsheets that are laid over the landscape of human remains. These twisted papers contain multitudes of names collected from phone books. I like to use fabric and thin Japanese paper, materials that recall the temporality and fragility of physical bodies. I chose bedsheets as the place human life starts and ends. In this youth-worshipping, progress-oriented society, the idea of death is distorted, and the natural process of aging is denied. The advancement of the human world is celebratory, but because of this, people are more and more detached from a sense that human beings are a part of nature and eventually decay. My work— influenced by Buddhist philosophy, cosmology, and death rituals, as well as by my scientific knowledge—is about my belief in the importance of accepting death as a part of our life cycle.”

Remains 5, 2008, digital printing on tissue paper, bed sheet, dye, plaster, 30 x 40 x 15 inches

Sarah Hewitt

Santa Fe, New Mexico

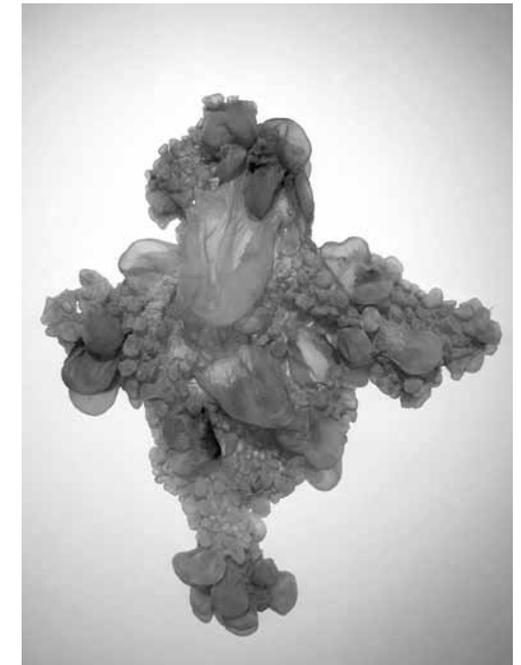


"The *Seeking Shelter* series is a contemporary exploration of the traditional Ngarrindjeri mats of Australia, which I encountered while working on fiber sculptures in Adelaide, South Australia. The way they folded into womb-like baskets mesmerized me with the simplicity of structure, materials and use. Traditionally the women of the Ngarrindjeri made them by gathering sedge grasses and coiling them into eight-foot diameter mats. Folded and partially stitched, they were used to carry children, scoop fish, and hold sacred objects. Enclosed completely, they were used to wrap the dead. This basket structure is symbolic of the sacred fertile state out of which things come. By recreating this style of mat with materials ranging from seagrass, rawhide, natural fiber cords, and other skins, I explore the potential forms available by simply folding an oval mat, contorting its shape and stitching sections of the woven cloth. These large-scale folded pouches/wombs hold space for thoughts, emotions, memories, and deaths."

Beloved from the *Seeking Shelter* series, 2010, seagrass, rawhide, waxes
22 x 38 x 28 inches, photo by Wendy McEahern

Lisa Kellner

Brooklyn, New York



"In my work, silk performs similarly to a layer of epidermis. It is translucent, yet deceptively strong, maintaining the shape of organ-like forms and cell structures. Each bulbous shape is hand formed, emulating cellular systems gone awry. Because the original objects are removed, a sculptured contour drawing takes shape in three dimensional space. The result is a bodily landscape generated from the microscopic. These works go through a lengthy process in which pigment, ink, acrylic, bleach, and compost are applied until the intended painterly effect is achieved. Drawing from the Japanese technique *Shibori*, these pieces are pulled and distorted to capacity. Rooted in the language of decay, erosion, and disease, my work merges intricate microcosms with immense topographies. My process involves the accumulation of minutia to form a critical mass."

Almost Perfect, 2009, silk, pigment, ink, thread, embroidered text, surgical pins
42 x 31 x 6 inches

Beili Liu

Austin, Texas



"The ancient Chinese legend of the red thread tells that when children are born, invisible red threads connect them to the ones whom they are fated to be with. Over the years of their lives they come closer and eventually find each other, overcoming the distance between, and cultural and social divides. *Red Thread Legend* series is a group of installations inspired by this tale. *Lure/Forest* is the first project of the series. The installation makes use of thousands of hand spiraled coils of red thread suspended from the ceiling of the gallery. Each disk is connected to another, as a 'couple' and each pair is made from a single thread. Every coil is pierced in the center by a sewing needle, which enables the suspension of the disks a few inches from the ground. Subtle air currents set the red disks swaying and turning slowly as the loose strands of thread on the floor drift and become entangled."

Tristin Lowe

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



"I make sculptures of things which appear to have no use value—discards of our casual consumption, clichés, the empties, and other lowly objects. They are made out of felt, an ancient fabric that is formed through a process of accumulation of lint, dust, silt, and hair. The works mimic the properties of this material in that they absorb and insulate energy, light, and sound and create a stillness that is atypical in today's frenetic world. The pieces imply movement and vulnerability through a gesture, and their precariousness underscores our transient nature as we pass from present to past, now to then, between something and nothing, among ghosts and stillness."

Yelizaveta Nersesova

Dallas, Texas



"I am interested in the ritual of constructing meaningful sites and events. In a way, it is an exploration of the meaning of the 'sacred,' or rather, what communicates sacredness and ritual to myself and the audience. I work with thread because of the dichotomy that it offers. On the one hand, it has a level of tactility which gives it materiality. On the other hand, it depends on its surface to grow in volume and does not have identity on its own. The installation process and arrangement of objects necessarily bring meaning to the site. However, this meaning is not stable and cannot be defined. As a result, there is a sense that something important just happened or is about to happen, but the actual event is hidden."

A Rare Perfection of Form (detail), 2010, site-specific installation, thread, painted wood, coat hanger, dimensions variable

Ellen Rothenberg

Chicago, Illinois



GALLERY INSTALLATION

"Possibilities for Use: brings together unrelated histories and geographies. The hand-stitched banners of the early suffrage movement suggested an initial methodology and scale for these works. The architectural sculptures of social, permeable spaces by Brazilian artist Hélio Oiticica's were a reference for the potential of multiple use for this series. In the spring I visited Istanbul for the first time, its culture of presentational display—from the street peddlers to the markets and museums—contributed to a rethinking of modes of presentation in the gallery context."

D-RIDE BUS INSTALLATION

"The D-Ride provides a civic service of free transportation for all of Albuquerque's citizens and visitors. The buses progress their downtown route linking businesses, arts organizations, municipal offices, the train station, and convention center. This circular bus route threading through the downtown grid of streets, weaves and stitches Albuquerque together, reconstituting the life of the city and its people each day."

Possibilities for Use: (installation details), 2010, utilitarian fabrics, natural dyes, dimensions variable. This project is made possible in part by the The School of the Art Institute of Chicago in partnership with 516 ARTS and ABQ-Ride.

Valerie Roybal

Albuquerque, New Mexico

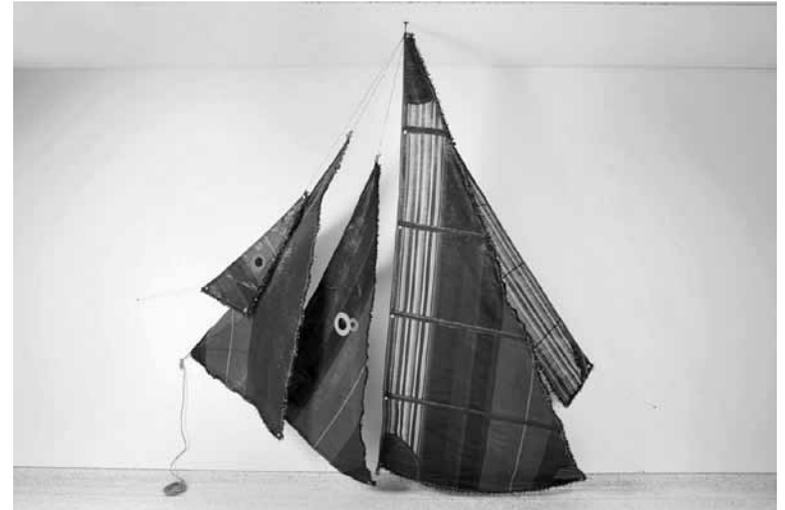


"My embroideries are drawings with thread, non-traditional in the sense that I do not use or start with a pattern or a set idea of what the drawing is to become. In the series *Inevitability*, I am interested in capturing the intricacies of natural forms such as diatoms, radiolaria, and objects and creatures imagined. The series began with inspiration from the studies of Ernst Haeckel, a naturalist and artist (among other things) who fantastically captured and published natural history from the mid-19th to early-20th centuries."

Inevitability, 2010, installation of thread embroideries on fabric, wood hoops
dimensions variable

Alyce Santoro

Fort Davis, Texas



"The creation of Sonic Fabric was inspired by Tibetan Buddhist prayer flags, wind indicators or 'tell tails' used on small sailboats, and by the notion in quantum physics that, at the most basic level, everything that appears solid may ultimately be composed of little more than vibration. Tibetan prayer flags are traditionally made of cotton fabric imprinted with the images of 'mantras', or sacred sounds. They are hung outdoors where the breeze blowing through them can 'activate' the sounds, sending them out around the world on the wind... As a conceptual artist and a musician, I am constantly collecting and experimenting with the sounds that are recorded onto the tape before it is woven into fabric. The current batches of fabric are recorded with the *Between Stations* album, a collection of sound collages made from the sounds of the city, and is intended as an ode to life in post-9/11 New York. Sonic Fabric has been included in exhibitions in galleries and museums around the world related to sound art, recycling and repurposing, technology, music, and fashion. In 2003 I was commissioned to make a dress for Jon Fishman, percussionist for the band Phish, which he wore and played on stage during a concert in Las Vegas."

Tell-Tail Thangkas (Sonic Fabric Sails), 2007, sonic fabric (textile woven from audio-cassette tape and cotton); 9 x 9 feet, photo courtesy the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego

Loren Schwerd

New Orleans, Louisiana

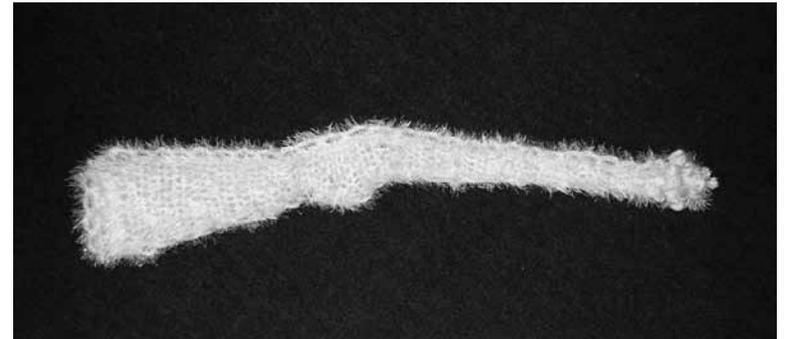


"The *Mourning Portrait* series are memorials to the communities of New Orleans that were devastated by the federal levee breaches that followed Hurricane Katrina. These commemorative objects are made from human hair extensions of the type commonly used by African-American women that I found outside The St. Claude Beauty Supply. The portraits draw on the eighteenth and nineteenth century tradition of hairwork, in which family members or artisans would fashion the hair of the deceased into intricate jewelry and other objects as symbols of death and rebirth. Working from my own photographs, I create metal armatures that act as frameworks for weaving the hair into portraits of the vacant houses of the Ninth Ward neighborhood... Hair serves as the essential metaphor of this series, by evoking a sense of profound intimacy and absence, by referring to Victorian mourning practices, and by suggesting the racial factors that have paralyzed the city's recovery effort."

Corner of Maurice and Chartres, 2007, human hair, mixed media, 18 x 16 x 5 inches

Jerilea Zempel

Keene Valley, New York



"I can't resist a struggle with my past. Putting elaborate fuzzy, crocheted covers on objects like guns, chainsaws, cars, and tanks are love letters to a grandmother I never knew who made lace tablecloths and secret messages to her son, my father, who truly believed that educated women should become either nurses or teachers."

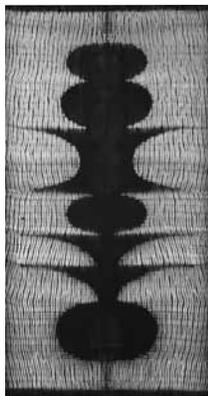
Warm Gun, 2004, rifle and crochet, 5 x 34 x 3 inches

Ancient and contemporary threads

by Rufus Cohen

Restoration: *Creative Work by Textile Conservators and Restorers* is an exhibition of contemporary art. The participants all work alternately as artists and as professional restorers and conservators of antique textile art. In this work they reweave damaged tapestries, mount fragile Pre-Colombian textiles for display, and carefully clean archeological fabrics; in their spare time, they apply the same meticulous attention to their own artwork.

The potential metaphors inherent in textile restoration are endless, any one of which could have been used as a theme for this show: healing wounds, bandages, rebirth, giving new life to the overlooked and forgotten. But rather than driving home a specific unifying theme for this very diverse group of artists, this exhibition highlights the different ways in which the artists address their multiple identities and the intersection of the ancient and the modern. How do antique artifacts inform contemporary expression? How does maintenance influence creativity? In what ways do restorers/conservators become apprentices to the artists of the past? How do artists value their own time and creativity in comparison to the sometimes overwhelming financial value of the antiquities on which they work?



Traditional textile arts—such as Turkish rugs, Chinese silks, Andean tapestries, African cloths—have been an influence throughout art history, and since the Bauhaus era, textile history, pattern, and production have been important models for modern design and technique. The current antique market has sought to intertwine the appreciation and value of antique textiles and modern art. But while the modern art world has gazed curiously at the wonders of old textiles, the artists in this exhibition are engaged and immersed in their own unique ways.

Frank Connet, *Veil 5*, 2010, mokume shibori on wool, using indigo, walnut husks and black oak bark dyes, 82 x 43 inches



The conservation and restoration of textiles require an understanding of their structure and their cultural context. The artist must go deep inside the material, history, and aesthetic of the pieces they work on in order to preserve them. During this process, the textile itself also gets deep inside the artist. This exhibition offers a look at the conversation between artist, artifact, and artwork that occurs in the conservator/restorer's studio.

For some of the artists in this exhibition, their art is an extension of the techniques of restoration. In her woven versions of children's drawings, **Laura Center** uses the same techniques of carding, color matching, and needlework that she employs in re-weaving Navajo blankets. Her artistic attention becomes an act of devotion that accentuates the value of under-appreciated artworks. **Ilona Pachler**, who works as a conservator mounting, stabilizing, and securing ancient and fragile textiles, puts her own textile creations to the test by slicing and burning them, then



The artist must go deep inside the material, history, and aesthetic of the pieces they work on in order to preserve them. During this process, the textile itself also gets deep inside the artist.

Left: Laura Center working on Navajo rug
Right: *Snake* (detail), 1984, wool tapestry, 5.25 x 12 inches

carefully mounting them to preserve the moment of simultaneous creation and decay.

Other artists in the show create artwork that is inspired by the textiles they restore. **Frank Connet** uses traditional vegetal dyes in the shibori tradition to create iconic, almost talismanic images that seem to pose ancient questions to the modern world. **Kayla Paul** uses ikat-dyed warp in her twill



tapestries to create over-laid patterns that seem to exist simultaneously in multiple dimensions. Conservator **Bojana Lezniki's** tapestry *My Little Prayer Rug* is assembled from multiple mini-tapestries, a fragmented view that also speaks to the small fragments of time that were available to make it. Her work on one hand expresses the transcendent possibilities of woven art, but also the cage-

like qualities of warp, weft, and time. And **Jesse Henio**, a weaver of rugs in the Navajo/Diné tradition, is unusual among traditional weavers in that he also does restoration on old rugs. Just as he seeks to return life to old textiles through restoration, he is also engaged in rediscovering old vegetal dye techniques for his own rugs that connect the weavers of the past to a sustainable future.

In some cases, the restoration/conservation work seems to exist parallel to the work of the artist. **Norma Cross**, who has worked with old Navajo blankets, takes multiple paper images of a war-torn and alienated world and weaves and layers them into singular pieces that seem to unify sadness and beauty. **Kristal Hale** is a conservator who works washing textiles, a meticulous process that applies modern chemistry via careful hand work. Her artwork uses traditional lace-work techniques with unconventional materials, an almost metallurgical process that produces sculptural jewelry out of fiber. **Joyce Hulbert** is a tapestry and collage artist who assembles diverse influences and images in her creative process; the work of ancient artists and their vision of nature are an inspiration for her own work. And

Above: Kayla Paul working on a Navajo rug
Right: Chris Rolik, *Live with Lightning*, (detail), 2008, altered book with graphite, silver leaf, colored pencil, 8.5 x 6 x 1.5 inches

This exhibition highlights the different ways in which the artists address their multiple identities, and the intersection of the ancient and the modern.



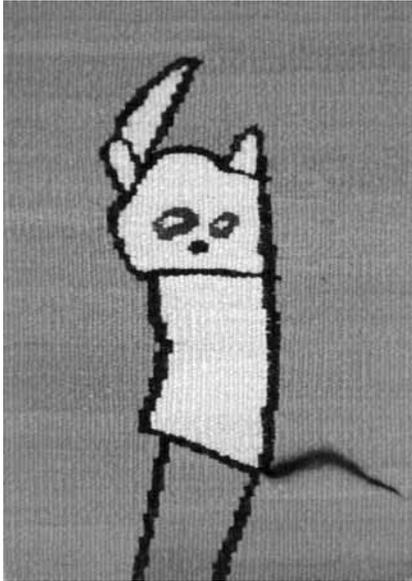
Chris Rolik works with text as well as textiles, improvising on the book arts form to speak new unexpected truths that are buried in the traditional forms of pages and words.

More often than not, the balance between the need to make a living and the need to create art seems like an imbalance. But the work in this exhibition shows that quite often multiple identities, while seemingly at odds, can actually feed one another and add up to a greater whole. The cumulative impact of the artwork in this show is a celebration of craftsmanship, hand-work, vision, and expression. □

Rufus Cohen is a rug and textile restorer and the owner of Textival Rug & Textile Workshop in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He was trained at Talisman Restoration in Santa Cruz, California. He is the author of essays including *The Limits of Interpretation* in *Hali Magazine*, and he blogs about textiles.

Laura Center

Santa Fe, New Mexico

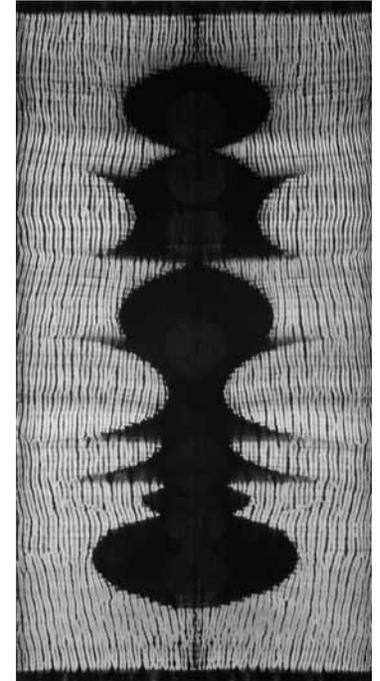


"My small tapestry weavings based on childrens' drawings have evolved out of my restoration work on Navajo rugs: continuous warp, hand carding/blending, and hand-spun weft yarns. My restoration work is itself a re-creation of the original upright Navajo looms, warping, hand-spinning, design all taken from the original weaver. I am inspired in part by Navajo pictorial weavings: I have always found their unique woven images of things found in their environment to be refreshing and welcoming. There is an unspoken trust when I view images created by children... purity and joy in the vulnerable visions they have. What is more needed in the world today than a pure heart? The drawings and notes I do of the Navajo rugs come from a fascination with old field notes done by anthropologists."

Indigo Man, 1984, wool tapestry, 11 x 8 inches

Frank Connet

Chicago, Illinois

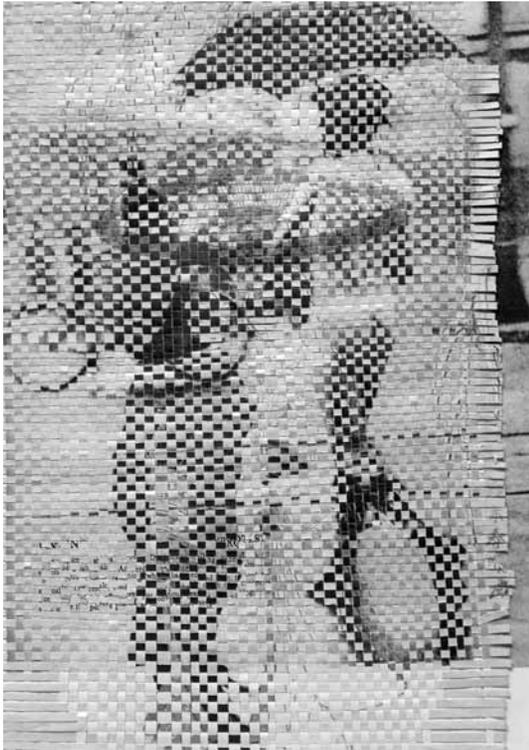


"My artwork utilizes *shibori*, a resist technique historically used by several African, South American, and Asian cultures, particularly the Japanese. In this type of shibori, parallel rows of hand stitches are used to 'draw' the form. The size and placement of the individual stitch and the distance between the lines of stitching allow me to control the movement of the line. These lines of stitches are then pulled tight, creating a compressed bundle, which is then dyed. The exposed edges of the bundle readily take the dye while the interior remains untouched. The stitches are then removed, revealing the image. My interest in pre-industrial dyes, indigo, walnut husk, madder root, and black oak bark is a direct response to the depth and beauty of the early dyeing traditions of the ethnographic and ancient textiles I have conserved."

Veil 6, 2010, mokume shibori in wool, using indigo, walnut husks and black oak bark dyes
82 x 43 inches

Norma Cross

Santa Fe, New Mexico



"My weaving and restoration background over the years has been the foundation for this work with paper, often using the grid to create layers of visual information, resulting in glimpses into fictional realities containing elements of emotional content."

Protest, 22003, woven paper, 20 x 17 inches

Kristal Hale

Santa Cruz, California

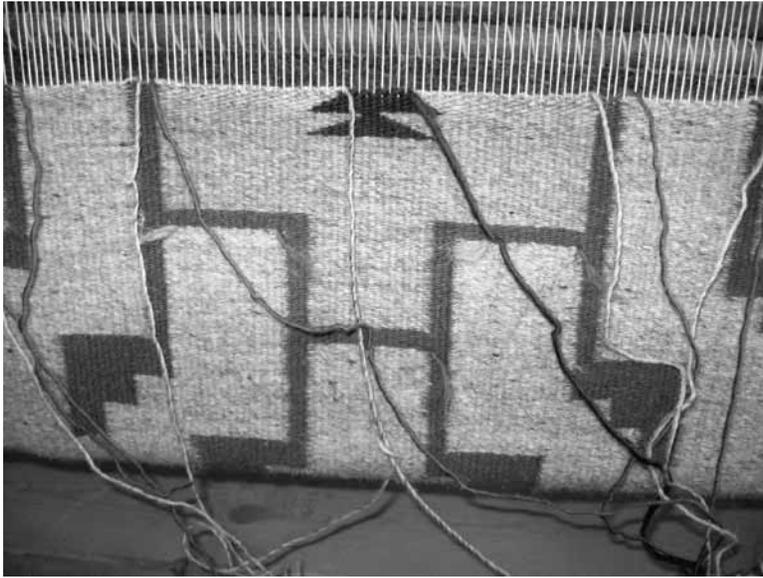


"Textiles have held a fascination for me since my earliest reminiscences. Although they are such a common part of our everyday life, I am continually intrigued by the intimate details that they reveal about people and cultures across the world. I began embroidery at an early age, my textile interests later expanding, eventually encompassing the ancient art of Bobbin Lace. As a craft, it most resembles weaving; however, there is one exception—the warp and weft threads alike have been released to dance to their individual rhythms. Ultimately, the journey that is made by these threads creates Lace. Working in Bobbin Lace is an analogy of people's lives; dancing, touching, creating, and yet being individual."

Windemere, 2010, Renaissance Metal Lace, copper wire, beads, 16 inches diameter

Jaymes "Jessie" Henio

El Moro, New Mexico

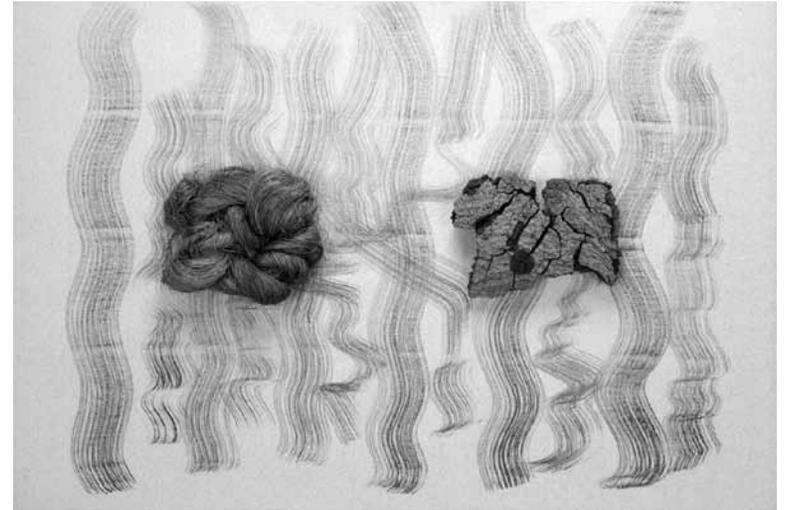


"At six years old, I was taught how to weave by my Grandmother, who was a master weaver and vegetal dye artist. Herding sheep on horseback was always a part of our daily lives, and the lessons that were instilled will be with me forever. I was chosen by my grandmother to carry on her work as a weaver and keeper of stories, and she gave me the knowledge and secrets of processing rich colors from plants. Using the wool from the Navajo/churro sheep, the hand woven blankets came to life in our hands. Sheep have been and always will be a big part of our lives. As my grandmother said, "The Navajo/churro sheep play an important role in our lives, they make the family strong and keep it together sustaining life of the young to the old."

Jaymes "Jessie" Hennio, *Star Seed Dance* (detail in progress), 2010, handspun Navajo/churro wool, natural wood color and vegetal dye, 60 x 30 inches

Joyce Hulbert

Berkeley, California

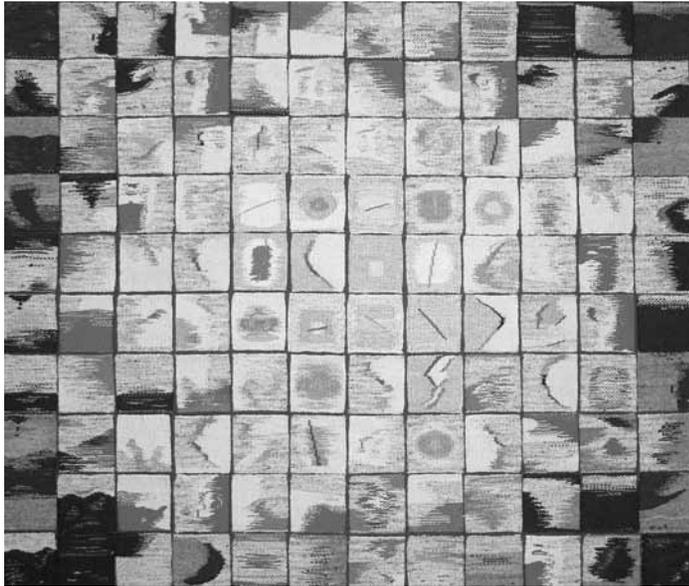


"Working in a craft based medium has taught me to anticipate a material culture in the art I am conserving. The implications of a particular detail found in an ancient cloth are known to me as a weaver. Questions of conservation—who were they? who made this?—inform the critical thinking of art making. Trained both for the science and the art of textiles, conservation allows a seamless dialogue between art-making and livelihood, while at the same time establishing a deep lineage that gives all my work sustenance."

Suspension, 2006, fabric, ink, objects, 32 x 48 x 3 inches, photo by Sibila Savage

Bojana Leznicki

Verona, New Jersey

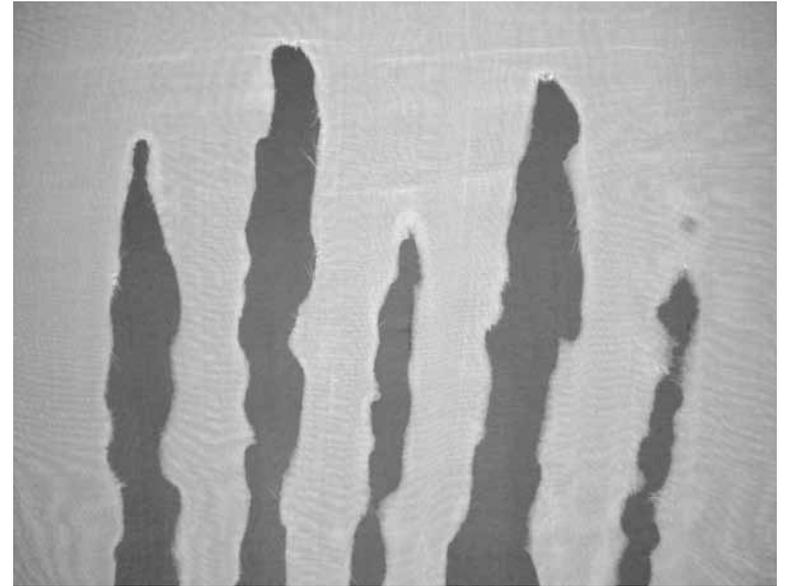


"Textile conservation and teaching textile classes have influenced my art-making process in ways that are subtle and almost unconscious. The inspiration from teaching comes from the link that the exchange of ideas provides. And having worked as a textile conservator for the past two decades has provided me with inspiration from ancient textiles. Compositions used in ancient prayer rugs, the combination of different textiles, and their multitude of colors and different textures are echoed in my artwork. As I mature, my perspectives change; working abstractly has helped me reflect on the positive aspects of life, the beauty around me, and the freedom of breath. Lately I have begun assembling pieces that develop from smaller elements. Working at that scale, they provide the necessary intimacy to draw my personal stories. Each little square is an element in itself, but together tells a story of the beauty and simplicity of life."

My Little Prayer Rug (detail), 2008, wool cotton, 44 x 37 inches

Ilona Pachler

Santa Fe, New Mexico

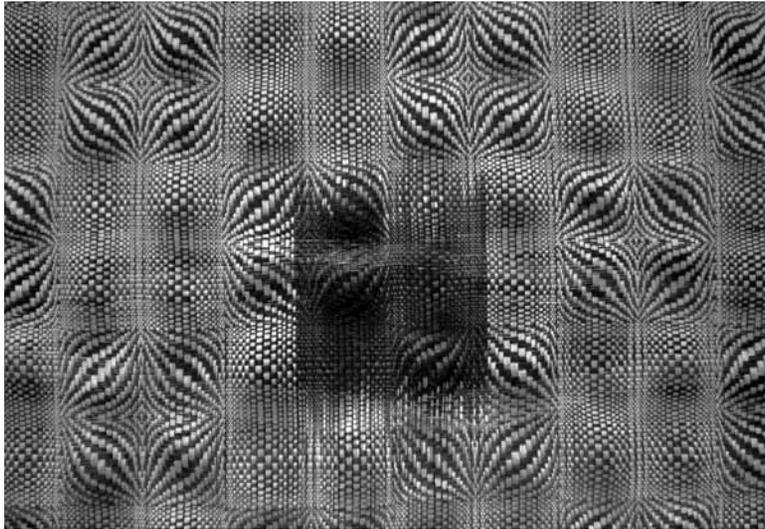


"For more than 25 years, my work as a conservator and weaver has been one analogous aspect in my life. And with it comes the other, the making of my own artwork with the use of fabric and the medium of textile. Inspiration in nature is endless. The light, the strong and the fragile, the layers and grids, colors and constructs that one finds in our natural surroundings are all represented in the materials and techniques with which I work. I try not to use the historical and traditional methods employed by crafts people and artists working in this medium. I burn, tear, layer, and fold the woven plain, using it as a painter would, to create the visual impact of a memory inspired by nature."

Clouds (detail), 2006, burned silk, 18 x 18 inches

Kayla Paul

Albuquerque, New Mexico



"In this work I have used *ikat* as a way of breaking up the pattern and allowing the viewer a different perspective. The strong colors in the *ikat* portion in the center of the piece create a little distance and space in the piece that add to the dimensionality that I am trying to create, inviting the viewer in to look closer and see how the structure is related to the pattern. I like to look towards the margins of what is generally acceptable. I am always mining my mistakes for visual ideas and creative applications. One of the first lessons I learned in weaving is how incredibly easy it is to produce a strobe effect and how hard it is to avoid. From this I learned to use warm and cool variations of the same tone and set them next to one another in a way that produces a slight vibratory effect which I feel enhances the patterns."

Untitled 2 (detail), 2010, *ikat* warp and weft on patterned tencel, 23 x 18 inches

Chris Rolik

San Francisco, California



"Working with found materials is always an adventure. I never know what I'll find or what the universe will gift me with, and my task is to then figure out what the material is asking me to do with it. Sometimes I know immediately; other times I have to spend a long while contemplating and problem solving, experimenting and screwing up and starting over. Working changes the nature of the material. This change is sometimes brought about by the addition of valuable or precious materials, but always it is the time invested that is the 'value-added' element. Think of other time and labor-intensive examples of detritus transformed: Victorian memorial hair jewelry; watch fobs and other decorative objects, Tramp Art boxes, frames, crosses, created from chipped and carved cigar boxes; prison art—decorative and functional objects created from discarded cigarette packs... Reusing or repurposing something that has been used, can no longer be used, or no longer has its original value, extends the life of the material indefinitely. The transformation of materials leads to a transformation of our perception. We never look at these materials the same way again."

Scientific Fundamentals for the Beauty Specialist: A Book of Hours (detail), 1999, altered book with metallic watercolors, hair, teeth, alligator hands, bugs, gold leaf, silver leaf 8.5 x 5.5 x 1 inches

ARTISTS' BIOGRAPHIES

UNRAVELING TRADITION

Mandy Greer is a mixed-media installation artist with an MFA from the University of Washington. Her work has been shown at the Tacoma Art Museum, The Lab in San Francisco and the Tampa Museum of Art in Florida, among others. She has received numerous awards and grants which have contributed to many public projects. In 2006, Greer completed a permanent installation in the Seattle Central Library, as well as an installation at the Bumbershoot Arts Festival and Center on Contemporary Art. In 2008 she had the solo museum show *Dare alla Luce* at the Bellevue Arts Museum in Washington.

Miya Hannan creates installations, two-dimensional mixed-media works, and sculptures addressing issues related to Eastern perceptions of life and death. Her work is influenced by death rituals, Buddhist philosophy, archaeology, and cosmology, as well as by her experiences as a radiologist. Recent solo exhibitions include *Connectivity* at Grossmont College's Hyde Gallery, San Diego, and *Circularity* at R.B. Stevenson Gallery, San Diego. She received her BA in Painting and Printmaking from San Diego State University and her MFA in Printmaking from San Francisco Art Institute. She was born in Japan and currently lives and works in California.

Sarah Hewitt creates sculptures using textile techniques patinated with waxes, tars, and cement. Her work is exhibited around the country as well as published in *Surface Design Journal*, *Shuttle*, *Spindle and Dyepot*, *Santa Fe Trends* and *Fiberarts*. Recently she was honored by being named one of the top 150 artists in New Mexico by Diane Karp of the Santa Fe Art Institute and *The Santa Fean* magazine.

Lisa Kellner received her MFA from The Art Institute of Boston after completing her undergraduate studies at The School of Visual Arts and Boston University. Her work has been exhibited in solo exhibitions at the Urban Institute for Contemporary Art in Grand Rapids, Michigan and the Brooklyn Arts Council in New York. Her work has been reviewed in *The New York Times*, *The Boston Globe* and *Sculpture Magazine*. She recently completed a site-specific sculptural piece for the lobby of a new waterfront loft conversion in Williamsburg, Brooklyn.

Beili Liu is a Chinese-American artist whose work has been exhibited and published nationally and internationally. She has shown in venues such as the Elizabeth de Brabant Art Center Shanghai; Tarryn Teresa Gallery, Los Angeles; Museum of Art and History, Santa Cruz; the Chinese Culture Foundation, San Francisco; Nordisk Kunst Plattform Project Space, Norway; Lessedra Contemporary Art Gallery, Bulgari; and Granary Gallery, Fiskars, Finland. Her work has appeared and been reviewed in *Art in America*, and several international publications. Liu was born in Jilin, China. She received her MFA from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and is currently Assistant Professor of Art at University of Texas in Austin.

Tristin Lowe was born in Boston, Massachusetts in 1966. He studied at Parsons School of Design in New York, Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Maine, and Massachusetts College of Art from which he received his BFA in 1990. The recipient of a Pew Fellowship in the Arts (1994-95) and the Lois Fernley Award for excellence and innovation from Arcadia University (2001), and has been Artist in Residence at numerous colleges and institutions. His work is in

the collections of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, and the Brodsky Center for Innovative Editions at Rutgers, among others. Lowe is represented by Fleisher/Ollman Gallery in Philadelphia.

Yelizabeta Nersesova, the daughter of a former Russian diplomat, was born in Tehran, Iran in 1982. After spending her childhood in Zambia, Africa she lived in Russia in the early 1990s where she experienced first-hand the consequences of the collapse of the USSR. Since 1996, she has been living and working in Texas. She received her MFA from the Southern Methodist University after finishing a second MA in Art History at the University of North Texas. She teaches studio art and art history at University of Texas at Dallas, University of North Texas and Collin County Community College. In 2009 she was awarded a residency fellowship at Vermont Studio Center. Her work there culminated in a solo project exhibited at Centraltrak Gallery in Dallas.

Ellen Rothenberg creates public projects and installations informed by social movements, politics, and history. Her work has been presented in the United States and Europe at The Institute of Contemporary Art and The Museum of Fine Arts Boston, London's Royal Festival Hall, The Neues Museum Weserburg Bremen, and The Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, among others. Rothenberg has received numerous commissions for public projects and grants from The NEA, The Rockefeller Foundation, The Bunting Institute at Radcliffe College and Harvard University, and the Illinois Arts Council, among others. Her work is included in *Experimental Geography* a touring exhibition curated by Nato Thompson, which was featured at The Albuquerque Museum for LAND/ART in 2009.

Valerie Roybal was born in Santa Fe, New Mexico. She has a BA from the University of New Mexico, and has done extensive study and practice in printmaking and book arts at UNM. She has shown her work in numerous exhibitions including *The 2nd National Book and Paper Arts Biennial* at Columbia College Center for Book and Paper Arts in Chicago, *Tributaries* at 516 ARTS in Albuquerque, and *Biennial Southwest '08* at The Albuquerque Museum.

Alyce Santoro is a conceptual and sound artist whose work is deeply informed by science and philosophy. Coming out of a background in biology and scientific illustration, her *Props for Installation and Diatribe* (or *philosoprops* incorporating video, assemblage, text, and live performance) are used to demonstrate quasi-scientific concepts and spark discussion around the mysteries inherent in the natural world. She is best known as the inventor of *sonic fabric*, an audible textile woven from salvaged audiocassette tape. In 2006 Alyce relocated from Brooklyn, New York to the high desert near Marfa, Texas for the unique quality of land, light, and soundscape, and to explore experiments into permaculture and homesteading. She refers to her studio as *The Center for the Improbable & (Im)permacultural Research*.

Loren Schwerd received her BFA in Studio Art from Tulane University and her MFA in Sculpture from Syracuse University. She was a Visiting Assistant Professor at the College of Charleston, South Carolina before joining the Louisiana State University School of Art faculty. Her sculptures, installations, videos and costumes have been exhibited nationally including at the Visual Arts Center of Richmond, Virginia; The Center for Craft, Creativity, and Design, North Carolina; and the Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts, Miami. She has participated in numerous artist residencies, including the Djerassi Resident Artist Program and The Art Omi International Artist Residency.

Jerilea Zempel is a visual artist and activist. She holds degrees from Penn State and Columbia University and taught for years at Fordham University. She also designed stage properties for Ping Chong and Meredith Monk. Jerilea has received grants from The NEA, the New York Foundation, the Middle Atlantic Arts Foundation, CEC Arts Link, and the Gunk Foundation. Her public projects have been installed in New York and across the United States and Europe. Her biggest public work, a crocheted cover for a Russian tank, was made in Poznan, Poland. She has also made replicas of masterworks in horse manure in the United States and Canada. A recent Canadian project, a crocheted cover for an SUV, landed her on *The Colbert Report* in December, 2008. It experienced an afterlife on Earth Day, 2010 at Lawrence University, Wisconsin and will reappear outside the Saranac Lake train station for Hobo Fest on Labor Day, 2010.

RESTORATION

Laura Center studied Drawing and Painting at the University of Utah and before switching to weaving, which she studied at Haystack Mt. School of Crafts in Maine and California College of Arts and Crafts. She wove for and assisted professional weavers at Fiberworks in Berkeley, California while continuing her own weaving. She stumbled upon Navajo rug restoration in Santa Fe when she saw a weaver restoring a Navajo rug on a picnic table outside of her studio on Canyon Road. For the last 33 years she restored worn, used, and damaged rugs back to wholeness. She has continued drawing, incorporating sketches with her technical notes on the Navajo rugs and has continued weaving, using her restoration techniques to produce small weavings of children's drawings.

Frank Connet is a studio artist, teacher and the owner of Textile Restoration, Inc. in Chicago, Illinois. He is a graduate of The Kansas City Art Institute. His work is in the collections of The Art Institute of Chicago, the City of Chicago, the De Young Museum in San Francisco and the MacArthur Foundation in Chicago.

Norma Cross was born in New York City, educated at Bard College, and has lived in Santa Fe for many years. She has worked as a weaver, machine knitter and designer, papermaker, and textile restorer. She has exhibited her work at Eidelon and Karen Ruhlen Gallery in Santa Fe.

Kristal Hale has studied English lace with the Belium School of Lace, linen lace at the Organisation Internationale de la Dentelle au Fuseau et à l'Aiguille in Sweden, and French chantilly, Milanese lace, Renaissance metal lace and more at the Lace Museum in Sunnyvale, California. She is also a recent graduate of the Royal School of Needlework in Hampton Court Palace in the U.K. During her tenure working at Talisman Restoration, she has had the opportunity to delve into textile conservation, working with many ancient and historic items. She is intimately influenced by the ocean and the mountains of California.

Jaymes "Jessie" Henio began weaving as a six-year-old, learning from his grandmother in the El Morro area near Ramah, New Mexico. He carries on the family tradition of using natural or vegetal-dyed, hand-spun wool, and he has developed his own unique style of pictorial weavings. He has exhibited work at the New Mexico Museum of Indian Arts and Culture, the Smithsonian Institution, and at exhibitions in New York, Los Angeles, and San Francisco.

Joyce Hulbert maintains a studio in Berkeley, California, where she works in drawing, assemblage/collage, and tapestry. She has exhibited her work nationally and internationally since 1985. She works as Collections Manager for the San Jose Museum of Quilts and Textiles, where she has orchestrated the receipt of over 150 donations to the museum and permanent collection. She holds a degree in Textile Technology and Design from North Carolina State University, and she has further trained with conservators Judith Hoefnik de Graaff, Leslie Smith, and textile scholar Milton Sunday. She has mastered skills in Gobelin tapestry technique, conservation sewing techniques, archival mount design, and the custom dyeing of protein fibers.

Bojana H. Leznicki was born in Sofia, Bulgaria. In 1969 she went to Poland to study Textile Art where she graduated from the Fine Art Academy in Lodz. She lived there until 1986 when she moved to the United States, where she has worked in fiber as an artist and textile conservator. Since 1975 she has shown her work in over 130 group and individual shows. Her work is held in many public and private collections. Since 1987 she has worked as a textile conservator with museums, art dealers, and private collectors. She holds workshops and classes in fiber. Her work has been featured in *Fiber Art* magazine, *International Tapestry Journal*, *The Tapestry Handbook* by Carol Russell and various Polish and Bulgarian magazines.

Ilona Pachler was born in Austria and lived in India as a young child. She studied commercial graphics and then painting and textile art at the Viennese Academy of Fine Arts and graduated MFA (cum laude) from the Art Academy in Linz. In 1982 she moved to New York City where she worked as a tapestry weaver in two weaving studios (Ruth Scheuer and Michelle Lester), and as an artist assistant for painters and sculptors (Nancy Spero, Sidney Blum, Sol LeWitt, and Kit Snyder). She worked as a conservator of textiles at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Gail Martin Gallery as well as producing her own designs and weaving commissions for the Citycorp Building in New York City and the IBM Headquarters in White Plains, New York. In 1991, she moved to Santa Fe, where she established her own business in textile conservation.

Kayla Paul studied Fiber Arts at the College for Creative Studies in Detroit, Michigan. Upon moving to New Mexico in 1986, she acquired a small tabletop loom and started weaving small samples and scarves. Later on she built a Rio Grande loom and started weaving small blankets and rag rugs. Her current work of scarves and shawls are woven on a 16-harness dobbie loom. They can be seen at Weaving Southwest in Taos and Karen Melfi Gallery in Santa Fe. She has been restoring Navajo and Rio Grande rugs and blankets at Textival Rug and Textile Workshop since 2001.

Chris Rolik is an artist and educator who makes one-of-a-kind artist books, creates textile-inspired sculptural objects made primarily with found and recycled materials, and teaches popular bookmaking classes and workshops around the country. She is a full-time instructor at the Academy of Art University in San Francisco. She lives just across the San Francisco Bay Bridge in Emeryville, where she maintains a busy textile conservation practice, handling historic textiles, traditional costume, and ritual objects.

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