CECILIA HEFFER

Lace Narratives
2010 | Damien Minton Gallery, Sydney

Aerial Lace
2011 | Sensorial Loop: 1st Tamworth Textile Triennial

Textiles contribute to a social and cultural landscape and their evocative power conjures different emotions and experiences.

Lace Narratives and Aerial Lace explore memory, place and identity. This series of work in contemporary lace seeks to extend metaphorical and material translations of lace. It reflects on the experience of migration and the process of cultural assimilation.

Lace Narratives and Aerial Lace make up a collective story of connection to country and place within a changing Australian landscape. The work draws from the past and re-interprets memory as a textile narrative through innovative combinations of traditional natural dyes and photographic transfer processes. The lace is created with a unique process of machine embroidery onto a soluble substrate.

Lace Narratives was a featured exhibition in Sydney Design Week 2010. Its theme was story telling as a human act. The National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne has acquired a selection of the work and it has become part of the National Living Artist Trust Fund that houses a collection of over 350 Australian artists.

Aerial Lace was selected for Sensorial Loop, the 1st Tamworth Textile Triennial. Curated by Patrick Snelling the exhibition featured the work of 22 textile artists and included a catalogue and artist talks. Participation in an event of this scale signifies the level of cultural recognition the work received nationally.

Aerial Lace was selected as a case study of contemporary lace practice in the publication Lace: Here: Now, edited by Amanda Briggs-Goode and Deborah Dean (Black Dog, London, 2013).
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Lace Narratives

Retrato 2010
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Lace Narratives

EXHIBITION: 28 JULY – 14 AUG 2010
Venue: damien helm, 3 Little Queen St., Chippendale, Fw. Phone: 02 9318 2992.

1. lace narratives exhibition invitation 01, front and back
2. sun herald review, sunday, august 1, 2010, culture
   landscapes sweeter from afar, lace works, andrew taylor, pp 29
3. sydney morning herald review
   the sydney magazine
   issue 88, august 2010
   cecilia heffer – lace narratives, annemarie lopez, pp 89
4. sydney design catalogue powerhouse museum
5. sydney design lace narratives in sydney design catalogue powerhouse museum pp 105

Cecilia Heffer – Lace Narratives

Set aside images of grainy quilting for this reinvention of textile art. Lace Narratives (including Art 20 above) is a
travel story using fabric as a metaphor for place, history and memory. Artist Cecilia Heffer’s textile works interpret traditional
techniques using natural dyes, digital printing, laser cutting and machine embroidery. The unique lace patterns – some
pictorial, some abstract – tell a story of loss of belonging.

Jeannie Baker – Mirror
This exhibition of collages by renowned children’s book author and artist Jeannie Baker (where the forest meets the sea and
the hidden forest) features works from her new book, mirror. It’s a visual story contrasting the bustling and busy of Sydney
with a remote village in Morocco, evoking similarities between two cultures and landscapes. Baker’s meticulous style lends
itself particularly well to depicting the rippled magic of the moroccan scenes.
August 14 – October 10, Museum of Sydney, corner Phillips and Bridge streets, city, $5-10.
Phone: 9251 5888.

Kauri Project
The premature death of one of the rarest species of kauri trees, deforested by roosting flying kauris, has been
turned into a positive. Thirty short artists have created collectible works from the timber of the kauri trees, whichwill be sold
in aid of the Kauri recovery trust. The festival will also feature the opening of the heather ballantine gallery.
August 14, Daine Minton Gallery, 61-63 great barkingham street, bondi. Phone: 6989 7501

Brick by brick
FULL COURSE: A unique course in the art of...
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Visa 10
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1. Horizon
2. Dora
3. Closed Histories
4. Borders of Hope
1. Monday
2. Eaton Scholar
3. Son
4. Sender From
Contemporary Lace: An Aerial Landscape Suite is a new collection of work that explores narrative through innovative translations of lace. The translations are both metaphorical and material. The work is about my own story of migrating from Chile to Australia as a young child. It is the experience of being suspended in space between two cultures. Memory of the past either fades or becomes integrated with new experiences, the Australian landscape, at first so foreign, becomes familiar, beautiful and then finally home.

The work draws from the past and re-interprets memory in a textile narrative through the combination of traditional and new textile technologies, rusted cloth, natural dyes, digital transfer, old passports, stamps, handwriting, photographs, antique hand-embroideries, machine embroidery. Colours reference the bush, burnt umber, wattle yellow, eucalyptus greens, dulled green, black and faded sand.

Contemporary Lace: An Aerial Landscape Suite explores the experience of flight, creating new landscapes for the first time. Observing the geometric patchwork of patterns and paddocks below. The work takes inspiration from the novel Goyang, in which writer Murray Bail compares a paddock to a paragraph. He writes about how paragraphs are supposed to fence in wandering thoughts.

A paragraph is not so different from a paddock—simile shape, similar function. The rectangle is a sign of civilization—Europe from the air. Civilisation?

Consequently, Contemporary Lace: An Aerial Landscape Suite can be seen as a series of textile paragraphs or even paddocks, postcard in size, they make up a collective story. Some of the postcards are pictorial, some abstract, both contain a story of connection to country and place within a new Australian landscape.

The sewing machine is my main tool; it is a steady work horse. I bought it from the yellow pages from a man I have never met but who services the machine. I just leave it in my front garden, and he collects it and drops it off. I have done all my exhibitions on this sewing machine. It is a second hand Bernina that was used at schools to teach girls to sew. It still has the graffiti and the names of the girls who used it.

Water dissolves the soluble base of my lace pieces. I watch the words dissolve before my eyes, only to be replaced by a new image: I use scissors to get the threads and work with the positive and negative in the lace. Photography and digital transfer are used to create images. Negative space, I use this as a tool to create the lace work; what is not there, missing, is as important as what is has remained.

Supporting evidence

1. Catalogue cover
2. Artist statement included in catalogue
3. List of galleries where the exhibition toured nationally 2011-2013
RMIT University, School of Fashion & Textiles
BA Textile Design, Brunswick campus - BS14 Auditorium
25 Dawson Street, Brunswick VIC 3056
Friday 10 February 2012

Contact Patrick Snelling 03 9925 9411 or email: patrick.snelling@rmit.edu.au to book for this session which starts at 2.45pm and concludes at 6pm. Afternoon tea provided.

Panel and discussion format following on from the morning Sensorial Loop seminar.
This session will encourage a discourse focussed around the themes of textile education and research; the collaboration between textiles and other creative disciplines and the developing synergies with technical, community and industry partners.

Panel members will be asked to comment on their textile interests, professional practice and research experiences referencing the key discussion themes of Textile Futures.
This session aims to offer a unique opportunity for the audience to respond to panel members views and contribute to a conversation exploring contemporary textile education and practice in Australia.

Panel members:
Chair - Patrick Snelling - Program Director, BA Textile Design, RMIT University
www.patrick.snelling.net
Dr Juliette Peers - Senior Researcher, Fashion & Textiles, RMIT University
Cecilia Heffer - Course Director, Fashion & Textiles, UTS Sydney
http://databases.uts.edu.au/abdb/staffdetails.cfm?StaffID=2687
Emma Bymes - Co-Director, Harvest Textiles & Workroom, Melbourne
http://www.harvesttextiles.com.au
Leanne Zilka - Lecturer in Architecture, RMIT University, PhD candidate at Harvard University, Principal of Zilka Studio

Weblink: