

Ainsley Hillard

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Research Groups: The Centre for Lens Arts and Science Interaction; Contemporary Textiles

Evidence Portfolio: Series: Image as Structure

Output Number: 1 of 1

Output Code: WIRAD-UWTSD-AH01

Output Type Code: M

Output Description: Exhibition

Author: Hillard, Ainsley

Year of Publication / Production: 2010-2013

Location / Venue(s): Saatchi Gallery, London, UK 2013; UK and international venues 2010-2013

Media: Site-specific installations of hand-woven and digital jacquard woven structures in collaboration

with the National Trust

Number of Works: 4 interdependent bodies of work





Hand-woven Structures: works from the *Image as Structure* series







Flow 2012 The Window 2013 to and fro 2011





Research Context

The context for and content of Hilliard's work is informed by her understanding of the construction of cloth and the process of weaving as 'the act of weaving' in its widest physical and metaphorical sense. The *Image as Structure* project investigated the idea of 'poiesis', the poetic rearrangement of objects or materials by bodily action that adds to the world, through the translation of two-dimensional images into three-dimensional woven structures. It makes reference to the phenomenological ideas and theories of Meurleau-Ponty concerning the relationship of the body to its environment. The focus of the project was the investigation, design and production of a series of art works that transfigured photographic images into a range of woven structures. The works are an investigation of the 'language of materials' in terms of their representation and the meaning conveyed through the final transfigured structural image. Production of the series involved traditional hand-weaving ikat techniques, the process Hilliard developed for digital heat-transfer printing, and the use of a Digital Jacquard Loom at Falmouth University.

Research Imperatives

Hilliard's principal question was: How does the transfiguration of a two-dimensional image into a threedimensional woven structure elicit a heightened haptic response? Developing a need to challenge the conventions





of weaving, and driven by a respect for both sides of a woven cloth, the project investigated the idea of 'image as structure' in the translation of two-dimensional images into three-dimensional structures.

Project Methods

A period of practical applied research exploring the idea of 'image as structure' was supported by an Individual Training Grant and an Arts Council of Wales Project Grant in collaboration with the National Trust and Ruthin Craft Centre. In 2010 an Arts Council of Wales Individual Training Grant enabled applied research in Digital Computer Jacquard Weaving at Falmouth University.

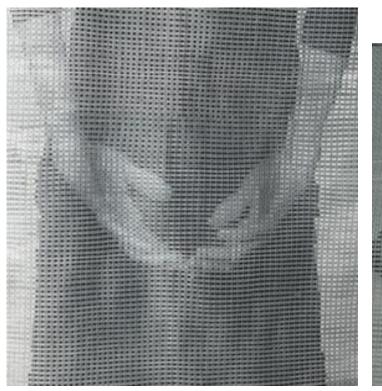
Following the production of a series of figurative photographs examining the theme of body, space and movement, and having explored the traditional ikat weaving technique, Hilliard developed and tested of a process of heat-transfer printing photographic images on to weft yarns. The manual process involved wrapping, printing, unravelling and subsequently hand weaving the printed weft yarns through a nylon monofilament warp. The semi-transparent weft yarns tested allowed the images to be recognisable; the imagery is misaligned however, and naturally shifts through the exploitation of the ikat hand-weaving process. Both sides of the structure having equal value and the woven work may be taken off the wall, creating a dynamic multi-perspective audience experience.





Funding

Arts Council of Wales Individual Project Grant, Arts Council of Wales Training Grant and Wales Arts International Award.





Flow 2012. Hand-woven Structure Photographic images heat-transferred onto a viscose weft hand-woven, hand-dyed nylon monofilament warp, $78.75'' \times 63$

to and fro 2011







The Window 2013. Hand Woven Structure exhibited in *Collect*, Saatchi Gallery London and 8th International Cheongju Craft Biennial 2013



Folds 2010. Digital Jacquard Weave





Outcomes and Dissemination

Exhibitions and Associated Publications:

Works from the series were included the following:

- Warp + Weft: Contemporary Woven Textiles, Oriel Myrddin Gallery, Camarthen, Wales, 11th September -30th
 October 2010 and national tour 2010-2011
 - Artwork 'to and fro' included in *Warp + Weft: Contemporary Woven Textiles* exhibition catalogue and essay. ISBN: 9780955143427
- Series included in the exhibition *Shadows & Light* at Ruthin Craft Centre 1st December 2012 6th January 2013
 - Artwork featured in exhibition catalogue and limited edition prints. ISBN: 9781905865505
- Flow presented in the juried exhibition Fiberart International 2013, Pittsburgh, USA, 19th April 18th August 2013
- Flow exhibited in 7th International Fiber Art Biennale, Nantong City, China, 8th November 5th December, 2012
 - Featured in 7th International Fiber Art Biennale catalogue ISBN: 9787112147465
- Flow and The Window were included in Collect 2012 and 2013 International Fair for Contemporary Objects, Saatchi Gallery, London. Included in the Crafts Council, Collect catalogue ISBN: 101903713323





• Kaunas International Textile Biennail, The Republic of Lithuania, 22nd September – 4th December 2011

Folds artworks exhibited and included in the Kaunas International Textile Biennial exhibition catalogue ISBN: 9789955958741









7th International Fiber Art Biennale, China 2012

Talks:

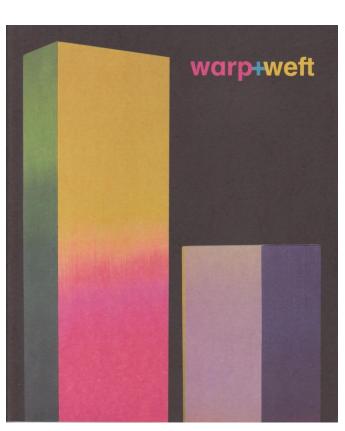
Awarded a Wales Arts International grant to speak at the symposium *Fiberart Forum: A Dialogue with the Artists*, Pittsburgh Center for the Arts, USA, 20th April 2013







Folds Site-referential Installation in collaboration with the National Trust



Warp & Weft National Touring exhibition 2010-11, catalogue



Shadow to Light, Ruthin Craft Centre 2012, catalogue



Wales Institute of Research in Art & Design





Collect 2012 Catalogue





Reviews:

Review of Folds site-referential exhibition published in Selvedge Magazine Sep/Oct 2010, Issue 36, p. 90



AINSLEY HILLARD: FOLDS 28 August-19 September 2010, The Old Laundry, Newton House, Direferr Parl and Castle, Llandeilo, Carmarthershire, SA19, T. 0155 82:302, www.xxisweb.org. Warp & Weff, 11 September 30 October 2010, Oriel Myrddin, Carmarther www.orielmyrddingallery.co.uk

Folds is an installation that traces the social and architectural history of the Old Laundry at Newton House. It is the first time that the National Trust in Llandello has worked with a contemporary artist and offered a space within the historic building for artistic intervention. What might we make of this place, this haunting, something half left? An uncarny collection of traces bleached of colour, half formed echoes of the past.

In looking behind our present, over our shoulders, we turn easily to the photograph; its testimory to what was once but is no more both reassures and unsettles. In this place there are no photographs, no celluloid ghosts play before our eyes. Instead, Hillard gives us something more material yet equally fugitive, the pressings of lace, edges of cloth, the promise of a table and the suggestion of order held in abeyance.

Here other things tell stories, offer a different way of revealing the past. This dry laundry marked the final processes in editing out the stairs of everyday life; the pressing of linen sheets, tablecloths, petiticoats and shirts. Rituals practised only by laundry maids in a space that was exclusively female. This care of cloth emphasizes the connection of textiles to the feminine sphere. It is tempting to romanticise such care, to speak of the sphendid isolation of such things. Florie, once the Head Laundry Maid, remembered the centuries old





inen, procase sorces, the muon sers and environment, she spoke with fondness of work that must have been far from easy. I sense, in Florie's story, arevisiting of 'flow state', a way of 'being' occasionally discovered in the perfectly executed, rhythmic practice of repeated labour – a kind of reverie. Much is currently made of the need to work with our hands, to rediscover 'authentic' labour. Here Hillard's labour is ever-present, in her pressing, dipping and firing, her material processes invertibose of Florie's – heat and effort at its core.

We all know of cloth's ability to resonate memory, the body and loss. We hold onto garments that remind us of what was once real, precious even. Such things, held in our hands and to our skin, recall lives lived and gone. Like photographs, such garments can 'prick' us. Hillard is clever with this connection. She might have returned to us the objects of the laundry malid's labour, yet she avoids mimesis, instead her vision – fractured edgas, porcelain loso, and cloth pressings – emphasiases what is lost from sight, how the bodily thing lies beyond our grasp and how memory has its own 'edga'.

It is usual to think of buildings absorbing lives, of holding secrets, of walls having ears. With these half complete things—fragments of dothing, a table that floats without edge — we might anticipate a disappearance instead, we witness a kind of emergence. This is no easy memorial, incomplete yet, somehow, full. Hillard offers a creative split between past and present. This gape in time, gives us authorship, allows us to fill in the gaps. In this absonce, Hillard reminds us that history is always mutable. ••• Angela Maddock

07 - Ceramic Installation 2010 08 & 09 - Details Ceramic Installation 2010

