

COMMEMORATION: Woven Stories

Vita Plume

Nov. 12 - Jan. 9
Mary E. Black Gallery

Biography

Vita Plume has a Master of Fine Art from NSCAD University in Halifax. She has taught at the New Brunswick College of Craft and Design in Fredericton, NSCAD, Concordia University in Montreal and North Carolina State University in Raleigh. Her work is found in collections across the globe and she has exhibited throughout Canada, the United States, Europe, and Asia. She remains engaged in the dissemination of ideas regarding the history, socio-cultural, political and technical applications of textiles. Vita Plume is currently based in Jemseg, New Brunswick.

Image Right:
Alice Webster Suite #4 - Little Alice (2019)
Woven shibori, cotton, polyolefin
50" x 26"



Exhibition Statement

This exhibition features two bodies of work produced by Vita Plume. Working with a digital Jacquard loom using archival photographs from her research. Once selected, the images are manipulated, using Photoshop, to reduce the number of colours in the image and determine how weave structures could be added to weave the NEW image. Similar to black and white photography, she looks at the relative values in the image and assigns structures that will provide a range of shading using combinations of warp (the white thread on the loom) and weft (the colored thread inserted as I weave). Once woven the cloth is dyed using a technique known as Shibori, an ancient Japanese method for hand-dyeing fabric.



Doris Ullmann Series: *Miss Georgia Duffield, Weaver, Gatlinburg TN* (2012)
cotton, polyolefin, woven shibori, machine woven at Oriole Mill,
Hendersonville NC
57" x 71"

Most of her work is woven by hand (exception are some pieces in the Doris Ullmann series) on a computer assisted Jacquard loom. This special loom (TC-1) is attached to a computer. Using the design from Photoshop, the computer directs the loom to raise each of a possible 1980 threads needed to weave the desired image. This is an amazing feat that can only be done with the assistance of a computer-driven loom. The image grows line by line as she weaves; it is incredible to watch it evolve.

To add an element of the unknown, ...a special Shibori (a Japanese term to describe a variety of resist processes of hand-dyeing) thread, that is not part of the design, is inserted.

Once woven and off the loom she gathers the special Shibori thread and pulls it tightly. This results in a cloth that has been gathered into tight pleats. The cloth is then dyed so that only the areas exposed on the outside of the pleats are dyed. All stitched or gathered tie dye is a form of Shibori, this form is done on a loom. Once dyed, washed and the pleats ironed out, one sees the resulting dyed pattern overlying the woven pattern.

This process is an intriguing blend of hand technique with computer wizardry!



Doris Ullmann Series: *Hands of Lucy Lakes (Chair Caning)*
Cotton, metallic yarn handwoven on digital TC-1 loom
Weaving Assistant: Gabrielle Duggan