

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Sasha Ali | Exhibitions Manager
sasha@cafam.org | 323.937.4230 x25



"Untitled (02)," Allison Smith, archival Inkjet on fiber paper, 2009. Courtesy of the artist

SOCIAL FABRIC

January 27 – May 5, 2013

The Craft and Folk Art Museum presents an exhibition of contemporary artists who intersect fabric-based art with social engagement

LOS ANGELES — The Craft and Folk Art Museum presents Social Fabric, an exhibition of seven contemporary artists who confront the problems of mass production and consumption through fiber-based art that incorporates social engagement and public interaction. The exhibition will be on view from January 27 through May 5, 2013 and has been curated by Anuradha Vikram, Curator of Worth Ryder Gallery at the University of California Berkeley, Department of Art Practice.

Fabric is a rich material for contemporary American artists who are engaged with social critique and public engagement. Textiles communicate a range of ideas that reflect personal tastes and cultural identifications; yet, they also carry implications about larger concerns related to labor, global commerce, and sustainability. The emerging and mid-career American artists represented in Social Fabric use their fabric-based art as a conduit to question global economic and labor systems.

The artists featured in this exhibition apply social practice forms of art to create opportunities for interaction between artists and audience members through performances, workshops, and collaborations. The resulting collaborations with art viewers and non-artists expand notions of single authorship for artworks. The Counterfeit Crochet Project by Stephanie Syjuco enlists the work of participants around the world to make crocheted imitations of designer handbags and accessories. She refers to this system of outsourced labor as "improper ways of interfacing with capitalism," in that the work made by the individual makers belongs to them, and Syjuco does not profit from it.

Artists such as Allison Smith, Bean Gilsdorf, and the Combat Paper Project utilize refashioned military textiles to articulate collective memory around war and histories of nationalism. Combat Paper helps veterans turn their military uniforms into paper, mining the therapeutic potential of art. Smith's practice of recreating wartime gas masks extends to workshops that simultaneously teach sewing skills and engage veterans and civilians in understanding the war experience.

Performance artist Frau Fiber's (Carole Frances Lung) mending workshops encourage people to learn sewing skills in order to increase their sense of competence and reduce their dependence on shopping. Her installations of "upcycled" and re-gendered used clothing highlight several collaborative projects she is involved with both in the United States and Haiti. Frau Fiber's exhibition-related workshops will coincide with historical dates in feminist and labor history to invoke the connections between labor history and economic disparity in the textile industry worldwide, which is largely female.

Each of the artists in Social Fabric considers the act of making as an assertion of self-sufficiency against the worker's disenfranchisement within industrialized society. That agency extends beyond the artist's studio and empowers all those who encounter the art to be active participants rather than passive observers. To that end, even traditionally installed works of art by artists Donna Huanca and Rachel Bernstein will respond to the cultural and social contexts at play in museum architectures, extending from the gallery to the windows and facade of the museum itself.



"Brown Chanel Bag 2," Stephanie Syjuco, acrylic yarn, 2007. Courtesy of the artist

An opening reception for Social Fabric will take place on Saturday, January 26 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. The reception is open to both members and the public.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS FOR SOCIAL FABRIC:

Monday | February 18 |

Social Fabric Lecture Series @ CSULA: Drew Cameron

6:00 p.m. | Free and open to the public | Location: CSULA Student Union: Pasadena Room

The Combat Paper Project facilitates papermaking workshops where veterans use their uniforms worn in service to create works of art. The uniforms are cut up, beaten into a pulp, and transformed into sheets of paper. Participants use the transformative process of papermaking to reclaim their uniforms as art and express their experiences with the military. Social Fabric artist Drew Cameron will be speaking about the project.

The Social Fabric Lecture Series is presented by: CSULA College of Arts and Letters, Department of Art, Fashion and Textile Option, CAFAM, ASI and the FADS Club.

Saturday | March 2

Artist talk with Stephanie Syjuco

3:00 p.m. | Location: CAFAM

Sunday | March 3

Counterfeit Crochet Workshops with Stephanie Syjuco

10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.: Beginner workshop

2:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.: Advanced workshop
(participants must have crocheting experience)

Location: CAFAM

Friday, March 8 – Saturday, March 9

Knitting Performance by Lindsay Degen

Location: CAFAM

Artist Lindsay Degen will create a "knitting factory" in the Museum Shop window to demonstrate the amount of time it takes to make garments by hand. Lindsay will begin the performance wearing a nude bathing suit, putting on each piece of clothing as its knit, and slowly transforming herself before the viewers' eyes.

Saturday | March 23

How to Sew a Shirtwaist Blouse with Frau Fiber

(commemorating the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire)

10:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. | Free | Location: La Casa Del Mariachi

Social Fabric artist Carole Frances Lung will be performing as Frau Fiber to host a durational workshop demonstrating how to construct a shirtwaist blouse. On March 25, 1911, a fire destroyed the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in NYC. At that time, the ready to wear Shirtwaist blouse was a symbol of emancipation, providing women with freedom from domestic sewing and allowing them to work in factories and earn their own wages. Join Frau Fiber in commemorating this day, by learning how to construct your own shirtwaist blouse.



"Flag for New Frontiers," Bean Gilsdorf,
polyester, metallic spandex, satin, 2012.
Courtesy of the artist

Monday | April 29

Social Fabric Lecture Series @ CSULA: Allison Smith

6:00 p.m | Free and open to the public | Location: CSULA Student Union: Pasadena Room
Smith's practice investigates the cultural phenomenon of historical reenactment, or Living History, using it as a means of addressing the relationship between American history, social activism, craft, and queer identity. This collaborative form of "history in the making" has been a pivotal focus of her work, offering up a rich set of activities and objects that she brings into association with contemporary art. The Social Fabric Lecture Series is presented by: CSULA College of Arts and Letters, Department of Art, Fashion and Textile Option, CAFAM, ASI and the FADS Club.

Wednesday | May 1

Collaborative Mending with Frau Fiber's Bicycle-Powered Sewing Factory
(commemorating May Day)

11:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. | Location: CAFAM

Join Carole Frances Lung a.k.a. Frau Fiber in celebrating International Workers' Day by mending your garments. Using the Collaborative Bicycle-Powered Sewing Factory, the public provides the pedal power and the garments to be mended, and Frau Fiber provides the sewing skills.

Situated on historic Museum Row since 1973, the Craft & Folk Art Museum (CAFAM) is an invaluable contributor to Los Angeles culture, exhibiting current artists with intriguing perspectives and distinctive practices. Exploring the leading edge of craft, art, and design, CAFAM gives audience to diverse makers and artists whose work is often not represented in larger art institutions. The museum is a place to see art and make art — all under one roof. CAFAM coordinates a robust roster of hands-on workshops led by professional artists and makers. The intimate, atypical museum space and independent spirit at CAFAM combine to create an atmosphere of excitement and innovation, where people in Los Angeles deepen their relationships to art, creativity and one another. For more information, visit www.cafam.org

Location: 5814 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90036

Admission: FREE every Sunday

Regularly: \$7 for adults; \$5 for students, teachers, seniors, and veterans; free for CAFAM members

Hours: Tuesday-Friday, 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Saturday & Sunday, 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.; closed Mondays.
Every first Thursday of the month, extended hours 6:30 - 9:30 p.m.