

TEXERE Exhibition review by Alice Kettle

the joy of textiles and stitch A doll made by Melanie Maier one of Marianne Puschner's students from BAKIP Secondary School in Austria

The exhibition by TEXERE members was shown in Kaunas Lithuania during the September 2011 Biennale and it exemplified the philosophy at the heart of the group itself. This is the education, research and good practice of textiles and the bringing together of textiles process, concept and discussion across continents. The range and diversity of contributions in this exhibition both geographically and in terms of textile practice was rich. We see work exhibited from MA students, degree students, amateurs and young people and individual practitioners, teachers and professionals. The use of traditional making sits alongside the emerging new technologies, for example as in Jane Ironside's digitally printed and smocked dress and the alternative materials and issues of sustainability of Cathryn Amidei's shimmering music cassette tape jacket, in Frederike Drop's melted threads and Anneke Kersten's metal yarns. Accomplished stitch is exhibited, as in Gwenda Forde's darned body sculpture and examples of traditional weave in contemporary idiom in the work of Julia Astreu. The link with industry is healthily apparent through the applied principles of design education exhibited through the work of Renata Pompas and the refined project designs of the digital textile students from AFOL MODA Milano Italy. This project as with all the collected group works makes evident the inspired teaching (in this case in the hands of Pompas) and the exploration of current textile attitudes with a view to economic production. DigitalTextile students from AFOL MODA Milano Italy who worked on this project are: Alessandra Anerdi, Cristina Ciutan, Benedetta Del Pino, Silvia Galimberti, Elisa Gallone, Alina Maria Griga, Mara Ippolito, Flavia Loiacono, Chiara Morelli, Anita Oran, Federica Sgobbio, Denis Valenza, Federica Surace

The aspect that was particularly striking and important in the whole TEXERE exhibition was to see the educators exhibiting alongside the educated, the verification that through practice these teachers are actively engaged in making. It is a rare opportunity to see the evidence of education so positively exhibited with the voice of a passionate teacher articulated alongside and through their students. It takes a level of confidence and courage to exhibit as a busy teacher. What came through strongly was the enthusiasm for their subject and the importance of supporting and promoting student practice and shared opportunity. This is to be commended and supported as an extraordinary achievement of the reach and shared discourse of the TEXERE group.

Cathryn Amidei and Y Collective students at the School of Technology at Eastern Michigan, USA describes their work as a joint project which grows from collective contributions. They exhibited garments some wearable and others as statement artworks, which show technical mastery and inventiveness in their use of alternative materials as with Amanda Cinco who recycles old jeans and tee shirts described as 'a reorganisation of matter';

The Seamless Textile group is led by Caroline McNamara who exhibits a delicate hanging of collected cloths tenderly connected to the subtle memory of her mother. As a group they collectively used the subject of 'Maternal Lines' interpreted with personal resonances of identity and legacy. Mary Ward and Sue Foster look at marriage. Ward utilises a sampler form as a textural memory whilst the veil becomes Foster's metaphor for the advent of new marriage with a linen warp as the blank open page. The particular poignant stories of motherhood are shared in the garments of Janine Oxley's apron strings and Gillian Hills' wedding dress. People gathered in front of The Seamless Textile display at the opening of the Texere opening

Patricia Christy gives us the 'Big Bang', she says that from apparently nothing a fireball exploded. This image of debris forming into matter at the beginning of time is an inspired subject for her artwork, the creation of textile alchemy. Pamela Hammond's wall hanging alongside is an intricately dyed cloth quilt inspired by the tree forms and family histories and Rosemary Derwent's quilted family history.

The students of Crawford College Ireland exhibit a group of work that explores a variety of issues ranging in subject from landscape with Fiona Creagh's batik works of untouched cracked and frozen ice-scape and Sinead Gibbons sanded maps and Renee Carroll's shadow sculptures of decayed and lost land to Lorraine Barry's reinterpretation of traditional fairy tales and Maeve Lynch's prayer in paper and chiffon. Fiona Creagh's batikHanny Spierenburg and Breed Textiel Overleg from the Netherlands exhibit work that shows the diversity of circumstance and the nature of ambition, the work once again acknowledges its roots in tradition but engages with experimentation in playful renditions of 'Graffiti Lace' by Judith Peters and Jannie Keizer-Jans; 'Dancing Queen'. I do have favourites, I must admit. The dolls made by Marianne Puschner and students of BAKIP secondary school in Austria show the joy of textiles and stitch. They are individual stories which are expressive textile characters with animate personalities.

Pamela Hardesty teaches at Crawford College Ireland. Her glass and gold leaf 'Halo' takes your breath away in its intricate poise. She uses hard material to make something that is weightless, deeply spiritual and profoundly moving.

The community of practice and exchange of ideas is an inspiration. I would have liked to have seen the work exhibited in better light and on a less textured wall, but nevertheless the work shone through and in watching people stop, gaze and comment I knew that the process of education and enlightenment had gone beyond the immediacy of each contribution and each group to a wider and appreciative audience. ‘Halo’ glass and gold leaf by Pamela Hardesty teaches at Crawford College Ireland.

Alice Kettle Bio

Alice Kettle has established a unique area of practice in stitch, consistently and on an unparalleled scale. She is currently Research Associate at Manchester Metropolitan University.

Her work is represented in various public collections; the Crafts Council, the Whitworth Art Gallery Manchester and the Museo Internazionale delle Arti Applicate Oggi, Turin, Italy. Commissions include the National Library of Australia, the Scottish High Court in Edinburgh, Gloucester and Winchester Cathedrals and the School of Music & Drama at Manchester University.

visit here website to see her work <http://www.alicekettle.com/> About Texerre [Textile Education and Research in Europe] ‘Graffiti Lace’ by Judith Peters

After an international meeting of people involved in Textiles Education, held in Kehl, Germany in 1990, the main delegates from the European countries present met in Göteborg, Sweden in 1991, to discuss the formation of a new European Association of Textile Teachers. At this conference we defined the national and international differences and similarities among various sectors of textiles education. During the 1992 conference in Helsinki we decided to adopt the name TEXERE which stands for Textiles Education and Research in Europe

The principal objectives of TEXERE are as follows

- To collect and exchange information and knowledge in the field of textiles education on an international scale.

- To gain insight into the place, level, form and content of the subject of textiles within all sectors of education throughout the world.
- To Promote the subject of textiles at all levels of education. more information can be found at <http://www.texere.u-net.dk/index.html> Copper and Cotton 4 by Riek Bruggink [www.wevenriekbruggink.nl]
Marianne Puschner felt slippers