

Editorial: Looking Backwards While Moving Forward

So far 2012 has been an interesting year in which I have been moving back and forth through textile history. Learning about Canada's textile trade history, visiting living museums and seeing the work of many of this year's graduating students working with textile construction techniques or as a medium. In this issue you will find the words and images of 16 of the more than 30 to whom I offered the opportunity / space for 750 words and 6 images. It is always interesting to see how they decide to best use this space.

Three Canadians received the Julia Caprara Honours BA in Embroidered Textiles from Middlesex University, UK. Ingrid Lincoln, Judy Martin and Lesley Turner along with 7 other students are presenting their graduating class's exhibition in Oakville during the Worlds of Threads Festival at the beginning of November. You can read about this program in their article which opens this "finishing school" issue.

The World of Threads Festival (with its 10 "Common Thread International", and 9 independent exhibitions with a "wearable" boutique in Oakville; November 2 - 18 in Toronto November 9 - Dec 2) is just one of the textile focused events to look forward to this fall. The Cambridge Galleries is presenting its 14 biannual juried exhibition fibreworks from September 29th November 11th, 2012, and "Fibre Content", a two day event at the Burlington, is presenting the work of 65 quilters and fibre artists from throughout Ontario. These exhibitions are sandwiched between new exhibitions opening at the Textile Museum of Canada (WANDERLUST September 15 - Nov 18, 2012) and BIG at the ROM's Patricia Harris Gallery of Textiles & Costume opening November 3rd.

Interestingly enough, an exhibition of Canadian quilts opens on September 13 2012 in Ste Marie aux Mines, Alsace, France: "Tradition in Transition: Contemporary Canadians Textiles in France" curated by Sandra Reford this show then comes to the Joshua Creek Heritage Art Centre, in Oakville, after the World of Threads' De rerum natura (On The Nature of Things) closes. You can read my thoughts on this concentration of exhibitions and the future possibilities I can easily see in "Textile Analyses 101. On the Velvet Highway";

On the Backpage you can read the second article from Xu Jia a graduate student at the China Academy of Art in Hangzhou, China. This is a review of the "Cotton: Global Threads" exhibition at the Whitworth Art Gallery, University Manchester, Manchester UK, 11 February - 13 May.

In addition to frequenting living museums, this year saw me searching for a documented trail of trade cloth. Stroud cloth, which looms so large in our history, is difficult to pin down --or it was for me when trying to write about it for Selvedge magazine, as I mentioned in my last editorial. Dr. Cory Wilmott, Associate Professor, Anthropology at Southern Illinois University - Edwardsville in Illinois who found out about my interest in Stroud Cloth. She contacted me and told me about her paper: "From Stroud to Strouds: The Hidden History of a British Fur Trade Textile," published in 2005 in Textile History 36(2):196-234. Textile History is an internationally recognized, peer-reviewed journal from the Pasold Research Fund and one of the leading publications in its field. Both the article and what I subsequently found out about her contribution to the field of fur trade textiles make her particularly important to include in the developing textile history for Canada. She, like Deborah Livingstone - Low (PhD candidate, graduate studies, Dept. of Scottish Studies, University of Guelph), who delivered a paper called "1881 CENSUS: WEAVERS COMING OUT OF THE WOODWORK," to my weaving guild Toronto Guild of Spinners and Handweavers last fall, are helping to fill in the many blanks in the emerging picture. The question becomes how to get students coming into the studio based textile programs in Canadian schools interested in finding and using this historical material. Each year fibreQUARTERLY tries to track exhibitions and the published material they generate; we also try to track academic publishing. Is it time for us to start publishing? Write and tell me what you think. Below you will find a link to Dr. Cory Wilmott and some articles I have recently stumbled upon.

Me searching the banks of the Grand River which drains into the Great Lakes (see below) looking for flat stones to skip and not noticing the changing light as dusk approaches July 3 2012.

photo by Lisa Spencer- Howard

Links of interest: Dr. Cory Wilmott http://www.siu.edu/artsandsciences/anthropology/Cory_Willmott.shtml

The Pasold Research Fund and Textile History <http://www.pasold.co.uk/>

Articles

The Practising Collaborative Research; The Great Lakes Research Alliance Visits to the Pitt Rivers Museum and British

Museum, Anne Destecher and Stacey Loyer

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