

JAMES HARRIS GALLERY

604 SECOND AVE
SEATTLE, WA 98104

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PRESS RELEASE



Threading the Needle:

March 6 to April 20, 2019

Opening Reception:

Thursday

April 4th, 6:00-8:00pm

Left: Mary Ann Peters, *History Lesson*, 2015. Cotton tapestry, 53" x 70.

Gallery Hours:

Wednesday-Saturday, 11am-5pm

Tuesday by appointment only

Images are available upon request.

James Harris Gallery is pleased to present *Threading the Needle*, a group exhibition exploring the tacitly of the artistic process. The show includes fabric-based works by Mary Ann Peters, quilted paper works Claire Cowie, Brad Winchester's deconstructed linen objects and a photograph by Vik Muniz. The act of threading a needle is mundane and requires great concentration and effort. It is also a small step in starting a larger project, which will eventually end in unity of one or more pieces. In their creation, these works transform the ordinary into beautiful, informative, and poignant objects that comment on social, political and conceptual issues.

Mary Ann Peters' work entitled "history lesson" is a large-scale tapestry, an art form typically associated with idealized scenes. However, in this piece, Peters subverts this intentionally apolitical tradition and uses sourced imagery she found in a political cartoon that referenced French occupation of North Africa. The artist has provocatively stripped the image of particular references to France to allow any country that practices sublimation of another culture to be implied. The central figure of the work is the hybrid mythological creature, part woman part lion that becomes a stand in for the motherland, always an elusive and potentially oppressive notion.

Growing up in North Carolina, Cowie was immersed in a craft tradition throughout her childhood, and quilting was an important part of her community in the rural South. Often made of a mix of ordinary and special materials, Cowie is intrigued by how the quilts become "a way to preserve memories and recycle cloth at the same time." With this practice as a guide, Cowie constructed "Reverse Star Target 2" out of layered paper scraps from her own studio and recycling bins from classes she teaches. She then added the collaged elements using bits of paper and scraps of her own work spanning the last 20 years. In this sense, her piece is a reflection of Cowie's personal

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process as well as an homage to the women of the South who influenced her and to whom she owes so much of her interest in community, story-telling, and making things by hand.

Brad Winchester's practice is defined by his relationship with material processes and repetition. The work begins with the conceptual exercise of deconstruction, where the artist pulls apart the weft and warp of painter's linen to open up a new relationship with this classic material. He then laboriously reconstructs the material by weaving it back together in specific patterns and coarseness. He then puts the reconstructed material through multiple sessions of dyeing and/or bleaching, until tone and color resonate with his sensibility. The linen is then carefully transplanted and re-stretched over frame like structures constructed out of hand milled yellow cedar.

Vik Muniz's art consists of photographs, but Muniz is not a conventional photographer. The artist creates images to be photographed. Often recreating famous artworks or iconic photographs out of ordinary materials, Muniz presents us not with this recreation but with its photographic reproduction. In "1800 Yards (Telegraph Poles)," the artist carefully placed 1800 yards of thread onto a sheet to construct a landscape. The resulting image transforms the material to convey pictorial space.

The diverse pieces in this show demonstrate how narrative is woven into an artist's creation through working by hand, creating meaning beyond the material object. The artist's tactile engagement—weaving, dyeing, preparing cloth, stitching—almost mystically, transfers the artist's thoughts into the threads.