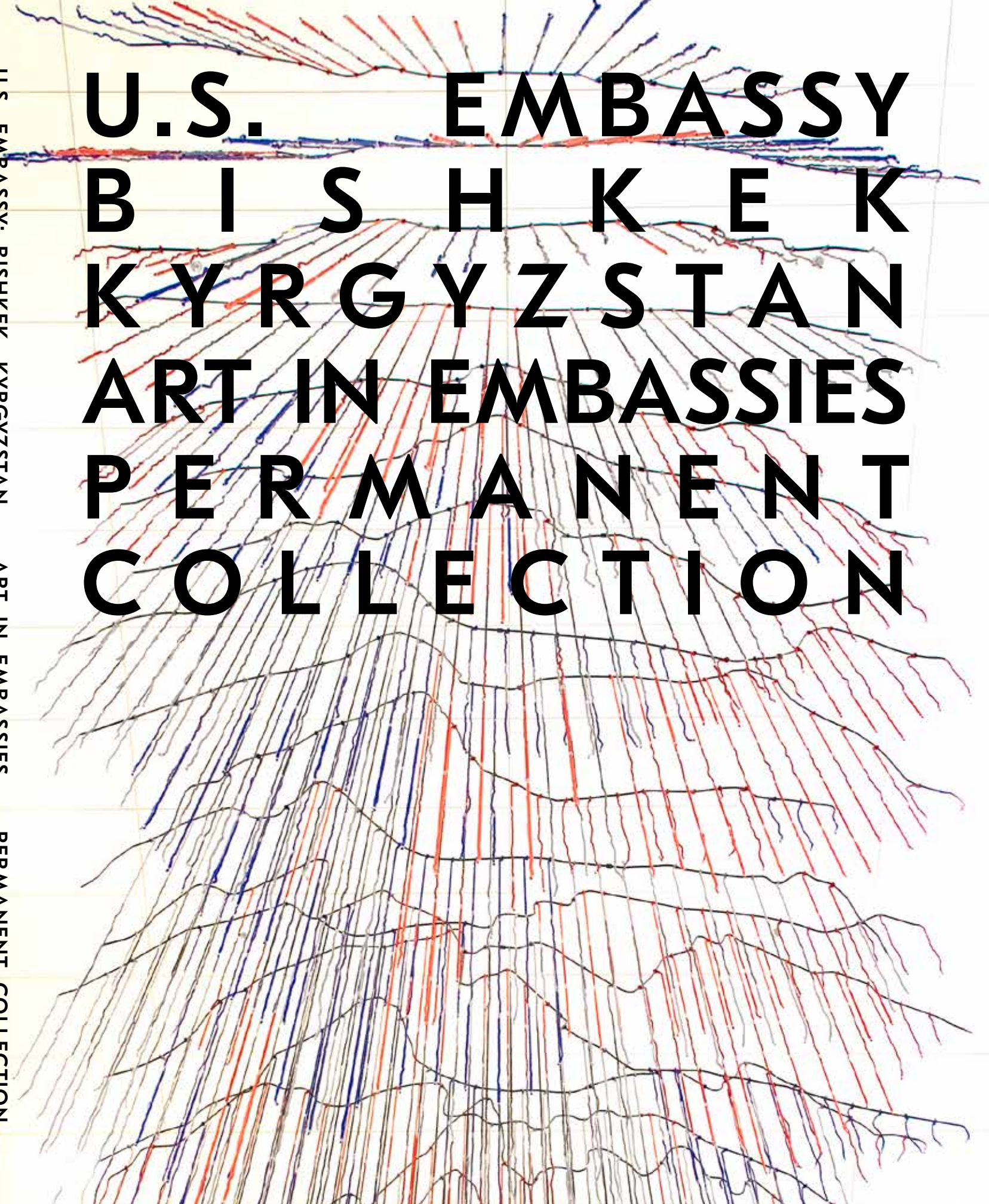




U.S. EMBASSY: BISHKEK KYRGYZSTAN ART IN EMBASSIES PERMANENT COLLECTION

U.S. EMBASSY
B I S H K E K
K Y R G Y Z S T A N
A R T I N E M B A S S I E S
P E R M A N E N T
C O L L E C T I O N



**U.S. EMBASSY
B I S H K E K
K Y R G Y Z S T A N
ART IN EMBASSIES
P E R M A N E N T
C O L L E C T I O N**

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Introduction

Few places in the world have been so predisposed to exposure to such rich cultural diversity. Kyrgyzstan lies at the midpoint between the southern edge of Russia and upper corners of Pakistan and India and shares its eastern border with China. The nation itself is bordered by its neighbors' spectacular natural architecture: mountain ranges that shield turquoise blue lakes, and rivers that naturally delineate the country's limits while twisting through the undulating lands that constitute it. Along with these rich natural resources, Kyrgyzstan also historically sat at the center of the Silk Road, which connected the eastern reaches of China to Europe. Unsurprisingly, the country's artistic history and traditions are deeply shaped by its connection to the natural and the rural, and rooted in the juxtapositions of many distinct cultures over hundreds of years.

Weaving—felt-making in particular—emerges as one of Kyrgyzstan's oldest and richest art-making practices. Textiles inherently entail significant, specialized skill and enable considerable opportunities for expression and personalization. Crafted from organic materials from the land, Kyrgyz woven works and felt—whether rugs, clothing, or wall hangings—have long permeated the every day. A notable example is the *boz üy*, the traditional Kyrgyz home that dotted rural areas for generations and used felt as its primary material.

The artworks commissioned especially for the collection at the U.S. Embassy in Bishkek engage directly with this complex history based on hand-wrought craft and artistic methods passed down over generations. Rachel Mica Weiss passes the warp of landscape through the weft of the weaving tradition in *Immanent Topographies*, which takes as its subject the Ala-Too range just north of the capital. Similarly, Melissa Meyer's *Counterparts* re-imagines textiles in ceramic form and constructs a mural of motif, while Janet Nelson recombines the Kyrgyz *chapan* with Native American elements to produce a garment made of paper rather than fabric. Other works incorporate Kyrgyz methods and materials that reference the country's semi-nomadic history. Natalie Dunham's works showcase leather, while Kyrgyzstan's natural resources and paper-making practice are celebrated by Alexis Callender's four-part work *Beside the Bloom*, itself an artistic ecosystem.

The rest of the collection shares with these commissioned works an emphasis on the handmade, but always with a glance towards the artistic ways of the collective Kyrgyz and American past. Ramon Camarillo's *Sagger Raku* pots, each shaped by the artist at the potter's wheel, attest to the labor, skill, and artistic possibilities of earthly ingredients: clay, leaves, and fire. Darryl and Karen Arawjos' *Light Vessel* similarly demonstrates the complexity that is possible through the careful working of otherwise ordinary materials. Liliya

Lifanova's *Nothing on Blank* and *WL* shift this idea into creations that are equal parts painting and sculpture. In a similar way, Eileen Hoffman's *Redolence* uses unconventional materials and techniques akin to weaving or knitting to produce a large-scale three-dimensional work. Amy Laugesen's *Petroglyph* celebrates the equine figure and its centrality to visual culture. Works on paper such as Julie Cockburn's *Realm of Fays* or Monica Canilao's mixed media collages like *Something Sacred* also play with memory and the meaning photographs and images carry through the passage of time. Four photographs count among the collection and likewise meditate on one's relationship to places past. Laila Jadallah's *Adrift* landscapes recall the many mountain ranges of Kyrgyzstan, as Matthew Brandt's *Lookout Point Lake* is an image literally developed by the landscape it captures. Kyrgyz collaborators Gulnara Kasmaelieva and Muratbek Djumaliev's haunting *New Menhir, Untitled (Horse)* links past and present most explicitly by monumentalizing a memorial left unfinished and forgotten.

Кириш сөз

Дүйнө жүзү боюнча саналуу эле жер мынчалык бай маданий ар түрдүүлүктүн таасирине ээ. Кыргызстан Орусиянын түштүк чек арасынын жана Пакистан менен Индиянын жогорку чегинин так ортосунда жайгашып, чыгыш тарабынан Кытай менен чектешет. Өлкөнүн укмуштуудай жаратылыш архитектурасы аны кошуналарынан бөлүп турат: көгүлтүр-көк көлдөрдү куурчаган тоолор жана тоолорду аралап агып, табигый жолу менен чек араларын белгилеп кеткен дарыялар. Бул чексиз жаратылыш ресурстарынан тышкары Кыргызстан Кытайдын чыгыш аймактарын Европа менен байланыштырган тарыхый Жибек Жолунун борборунда жайгашкан. Ошондуктан өлкөнүн өнөр тарыхы жана салттары жаратылыш, элет жери менен терең байланышты түзүп, жүздөгөн жылдар бою кайталангыс маданияттын салыштырууда тамырын жайып өнүккөнү таң калычтуу эмес.

Токуу, ошону менен бирге кийиз ийлөө Кыргызстандагы эң байыркы, бай көркөм салттарынын бири. Кездеменин табияты зор адис өнөрдү талап кылат. Ал сүрөттөө, персоналдаштыруу үчүн көлөмдүү мүмкүнчүлүктөрдү сунуш кылат. Кыргыздардын токуп кийизден жасаган чыгармалары табигый материалдардан жасалып, шырдакпы, кийимби, килемби, кандай чыгарма болбосун күнүмдүк жашоодо колдонулуп келген. Анын көрүнүктүү мисалы -- боз үй. Көптөгөн муундар боз үйлөрдө жашап келишкен жана бул кыргыздардын салттуу үйүндө анын негизи катары кийиз колдонулат.

Бул муундан муунга өтүп келген кол өнөрчүлүк жана көркөм ыкма салтынын тарыхы Бишкектеги АКШ Элчилигинин коллекциясында чагылдырылат. Рэйчел Мика Вайс “Топографиянын туруктуулугу” атуу чыгармасында ландшафттын негизинде аркак-эриштерди түйүп, токуу өнөрү аркылуу борбор калаанын түндүк тарабында жайгашкан Ала-Тоо кыркаларын сүрөттөйт. Ошол сыяктуу эле Мелисса Мейердин “Өнөктөштөр” чыгармасы кездемени керамика түрүндө көрсөтүп оюу-чийүү дубал жасалгасын жараткан. Джанет Нелсон кыргыз чапанына Американын түпкү элдеринин көркөм өнөрүн кошуп кездеме эмес, кагаздан кийим жаратты. Калган чыгармалар кыргыздын туруктуу жана көчмөн тарыхын баяндаган ыкмаларды жана материалдарды колдонот. Натали Данхэм терини колдонуп чыгармаларды жаратат. Алексис Каллендер “Күлдүн жанында” аттуу төрт-бөлүктөн турган чыгармасы Кыргызстандын табигый ресурстарынан жана кагаздан жасалып, өзүнчө эле көркөм эко-системадай көрүнөт.

Коллекциянын башка буюмдары жогоруда баяндап кеткен чыгармалар сыяктуу баары тең колго жасалып, Кыргызстан жана Американын байыркы замандагы

көркөм ыкмаларын бириктирип келет. Рамон Камарильонун керамикалык чынылары *саггер раку* техникасында жасалган. Өнөрчү алардын ар бирин карапа айлампасында жасап, эмгек, кесиптүүлүк жана жерден чыккан курамдын — чопонун, чөптүн жана оттун көркөм мүмкүнчүлүктөрүн көрсөтөт. Дэррил жана Карен Аравхос жасаган “Жарыктын чөйчөгү” жөнөкөй материалдарды кылдаттык менен өндүрүп чыккандын жыйынтыгында пайда болгон татаалдыкты көрсөтөт. Лилия Лифанова “Көңдөйдөгү ээндик” жана “WL” чыгармаларында бул ойду теңме тең көркөм сүрөт жана скульптура деп атай алган ыкманы колдонгон. Эйлин Хоффман “Аңкоо” чыгармасында адаттагыдан башкача материалдарды жана жүндөн токуу ыкмасына окшош техниканы колдонуп көлөмдүү үч өлчөмдүү чыгарманы жараткан. Эми Поджизендин “Петроглиф” чыгармасы аттын келбети визуалдык маданиятта борбордук мааниге ээ экенин көрсөтөт. Джули Кокберндин кагаздан жасалган “Перилердин падышалыгы” чыгармасы же Моника Канилаонун “Ыйык нерсе” сыяктуу аралаш техникадагы коллаждары убакыттын өтүшү менен фотографиялар жана сүрөттөр камтыган эскерүүнүн маанисин баяндайт. Коллекциянын арасында төрт фото-сүрөт бар. Булар адамдын өткөн убакытка кандай байланышы бар экени жөнүндө ойлонууга кубаттайт. Лайла Жадалла “Дрейф” пейзаждарында Кыргызстандын тоолорун көрсөтүп, Мэттью Брандттын “Көлдөгү байкоо секиси” сүрөтү пейзаждан жаралган. Кыргызстандык өнөктөштөр Гүлнара Касмалиева жана Муратбек Жумалиев “Жаңы меңгир”, “Ат коюлбаган чыгарма (Ат)” сүрөттөрүндө байыркы менен азыркы замандарын байланыштырып, бүтүрүлбөгөн унутулуп калган эстеликти чагылдырышкан.

Вступление

Немногие места в мире были столь предрасположены к воздействию таким богатым культурным разнообразием. Кыргызстан находится как раз по середине между южными рубежами России и верхними границами Пакистана и Индии, а с восточной стороны он граничит с Китаем. Страна отделена от своих соседей впечатляющей природной архитектурой: горными хребтами, обрамляющими бирюзово-голубые озера, и реками, которые естественным образом очерчивают границы страны, извиваясь сквозь её холмистые земли. Наряду с этим богатством природных ресурсов, также Кыргызстан исторически располагался в центре Шелкового пути, который соединял восточную часть Китая с Европой. Неудивительно, что художественная история и традиции страны сформировались в глубокой связи с природой и сельской местностью, корнями уходящими в сопоставления многих отдельных культур на протяжении сотен лет.

Ткачество, в частности создание войлока, появилась в Кыргызстане как одна из старейших и богатейших художественных традиций. Текстиль по своей сути требует выдающихся специализированных навыков и дает значительные возможности для выражения и персонализации. Сделанные из местных органических материалов кыргызские тканые предметы творчества и войлок — будь то ковры, одежда или настенные украшения — с давних времен присутствовали в повседневной жизни. Ярким примером является боз уй, традиционный кыргызский дом, которым пользовались в сельской местности в течение многих поколений, где в качестве основного материала используется войлок.

Произведения искусства, заказанные для коллекции Посольства США в Бишкеке, непосредственно связаны с этой богатой историей, основанной на ручном ремесле и художественных стилях, передаваемых из поколения в поколение. Рэйчел Мика Вайс берет ландшафт как основу на которой через тканые утки передает традицию ткацкого искусства в своей работе “Имманентность топографий” на тему хребтов Ала-Тоо, расположенных к северу от столицы. Таким же образом, “Партнеры” Мелиссы Мейер заново представляют текстиль в форме керамики, изваяв стенопись из узоров, а Джанет Нельсон комбинирует кыргызский чапан с элементами творчества коренных американцев для создания одежды из бумаги, а не из ткани. Другие работы соединили в себе кыргызские ремесла и материалы, возникшие из полукочевой истории страны. Произведения Натали Данхэм сделаны из кожи, а Алексис Каллендер применяет природные материалы и бумагу в своей работе “Рядом с цветением”, состоящей из

четырёх частей, и её творчество само по себе выглядит как отдельная художественная экосистема.

Остальная часть коллекции, как и эти специально заказанные произведения, подчеркивают ручную работу, но всегда с оглядкой на художественное ремесло, объединяющее прошлое Кыргызстана и Америки. Керамические чаши Рамона Камарильо, выполнены в технике *саггер раку*, каждая чаша вылеплена художником за гончарным кругом, свидетельствуя о труде, мастерстве и художественных возможностях земных ингредиентов: глины, травы и огня. “Сосуд света” выполненный Дэррилом и Карен Аравхос также демонстрирует замысловатость, которая возможна благодаря тщательной обработке обычных материалов. Работы Лилии Лифановой “Ничто в пустоте” и “WL” переводят эту идею в творения, которые в равной мере являются живописью и скульптурой. Точно так же, Эйлин Хоффман в работе “Благоухание” использует нетрадиционные материалы и технику схожие с ткачеством или вязанием для создания крупномасштабного трехмерного произведения. “Петроглиф” Эми Лоджизен изображает фигуру лошади и её центральное значение для визуальной культуры. Работы на бумаге, такие как “Царство фей” Джули Кокберн, или коллажи из смешанной техники Моники Канилао, такие как “Нечто святое”, взаимодействуют с памятью и смыслом, которые несут в себе фотографии и изображения с течением времени. В коллекцию входят четыре фотографии, и они подводят к размышлениям о связи человека с местами из прошлого. Ландшафты, запечатленные в “Дрейфе” Лайлы Джадаллы, напоминают о многих горных хребтах Кыргызстана, равно как и “Озеро с обзорной вышкой” Мэттью Брандта, которая создавалась под впечатлением пейзажей, изображенных в ней. Произведения кыргызских партеров Гульнары Касмалиевой и Муратбека Джумалиева “Новый менгир” и “Безымьяное (лошадь)” соединяют прошлое и настоящее самым явным образом путем монументализации памятника, оставшегося незаконченным и забытым.

Collection



Monica Canilao
Something Sacred, 2013
Mixed-media collage
52 ½ × 32 ½ in.
(133,4 × 82,6 cm)



Monica Canilao
Grandmother Spider, 2013
Mixed-media collage
42 × 29 in.
(106,7 × 73,7 cm)



Monica Canilao
Oh Dear, 2015
Mixed-media collage
27 × 16 in.
(68,6 × 40,6 cm)

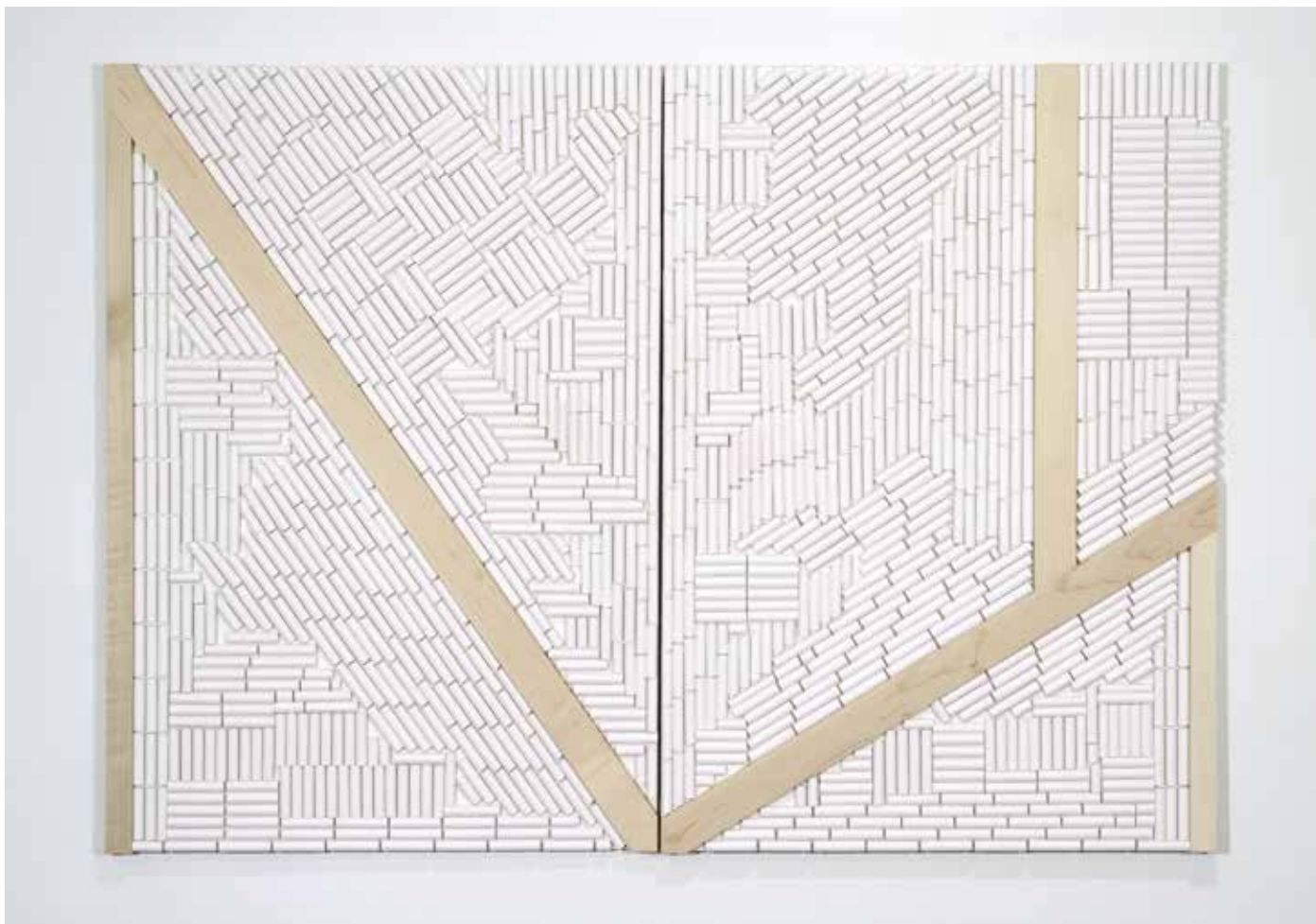
Rachel Mica Weiss
Hung Pelt, 2011
Bullion fringe, hand-woven
with cotton/rayon yarn,
reclaimed wood, nails, wax
linen thread
60 × 50 × 5 ½ in.
(152,4 × 127 × 14 cm)



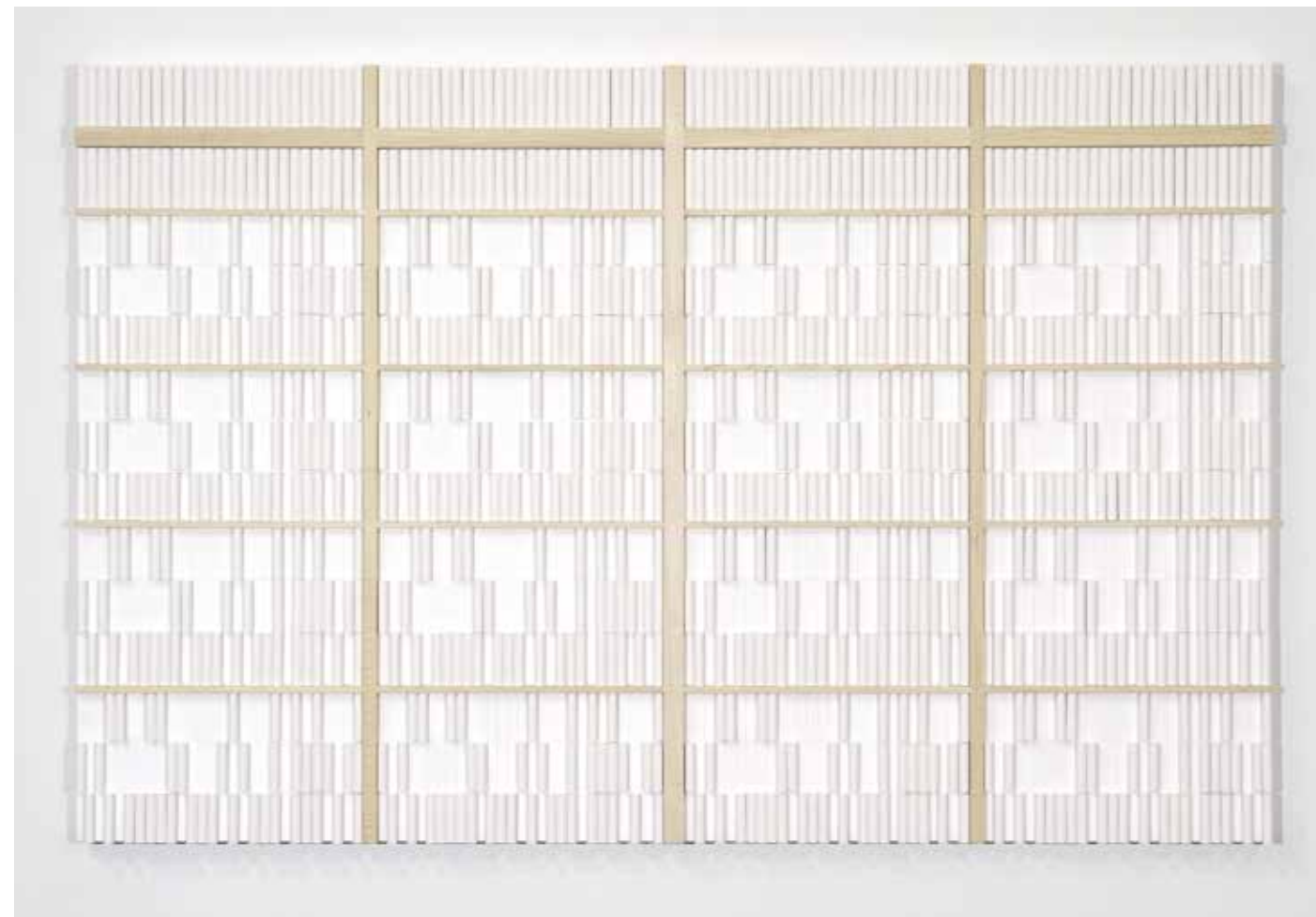
Eileen Hoffman
Redolence, 2011
Chenille pipe cleaners
70 × 66 × 3 in.
(177,8 × 167,6 × 7,6 cm)







Liliya Lifánova
WL, 2013
Paper and wood
28 × 40 in.
(71,1 × 101,6 cm)



Liliya Lifánova
Nothing on Blank, 2013
Paper and wood
29 ½ × 45 in. (74,9 × 114,3 cm)



Unknown Artist
Navajo Pictorial Weaving
(c. 1915)
80 × 44½ in.
(203,2 × 113 cm)





Gulnara Kasmalieva
and Muratbek Djumaliev
*New Menhir, Untitled
(Horse)*, 2005
C-print
23½ × 15¾ in. (59,7 × 40 cm)



Amy Laugesen
Petroglyph, undated
Ceramic with stone base
17 × 10 × 6 in.
(43,2 × 25,4 × 15,2 cm)



Ramon Camarillo
Sagger Raku Pot series, 2015
Porcelain
18×7 in. (45,7×17,8 cm)
20×6 in. (50,8×15,2 cm)
9×14 in. (22,9×35,6 cm)



Sagger Raku Pot series,
2015
Porcelain
21 × 6 in. (53,3 × 15,2 cm)



Natalie Dunham
Untitled Study, undated
Leather
12 in. (30,5 cm) diameter



Natalie Dunham
No. 1.352.2, undated
Leather
42 × 4 in. (106,7 × 10,2cm)
diameter

Darryl Arawjo
and Karen Arawjo
Light Vessel CCLXXI,
undated
White oak, monofilament,
walnut, crystal flash
13 × 9 in. (33 × 22,9 cm)





Janet Nelson
Kyrgyz/Native American
Robe, undated
Mixed media
42 × 34 × 4 in.
(106,7 × 86,4 × 10,2 cm)



Laila Abdul-Hadi Jadallah
Adrift, Untitled V, undated
Digital pigment print
24 × 36 in. (61 × 91,4 cm)



Laila Abdul-Hadi Jadallah
Adrift, Untitled IV, undated
Digital pigment print
24 × 36 in. (61 × 91,4 cm)



Matthew Brandt
*Lookout Point Lake,
OR 5, 2005*
Chromogenic Print soaked
in Lookout Point Lake water
30 × 40 in. (76,2 × 101,6 cm)



Julie Cockburn
Realm of Fays, 2015
Hand embroidery,
watercolor on found
photograph
10 ³/₁₆ × 13 ¹/₁₆ in.
(26,2 × 34,8 cm)



Melissa Meyer
Counterparts, undated
Ceramic tile
96 × 180 in. (243,8 × 457,2 cm)



Alexis Callender
Beside the Bloom, Ibex,
undated
Handmade paper with
mixed media surface
design
7 × 47 × 48 in.
(17,8 × 119,4 × 121,9 cm)

Opposite:
Alexis Callender
Beside the Bloom, Eagle,
undated
Handmade paper with
mixed media surface
design
7 × 49 × 36 in.
(17,8 × 124,5 × 91,4 cm)





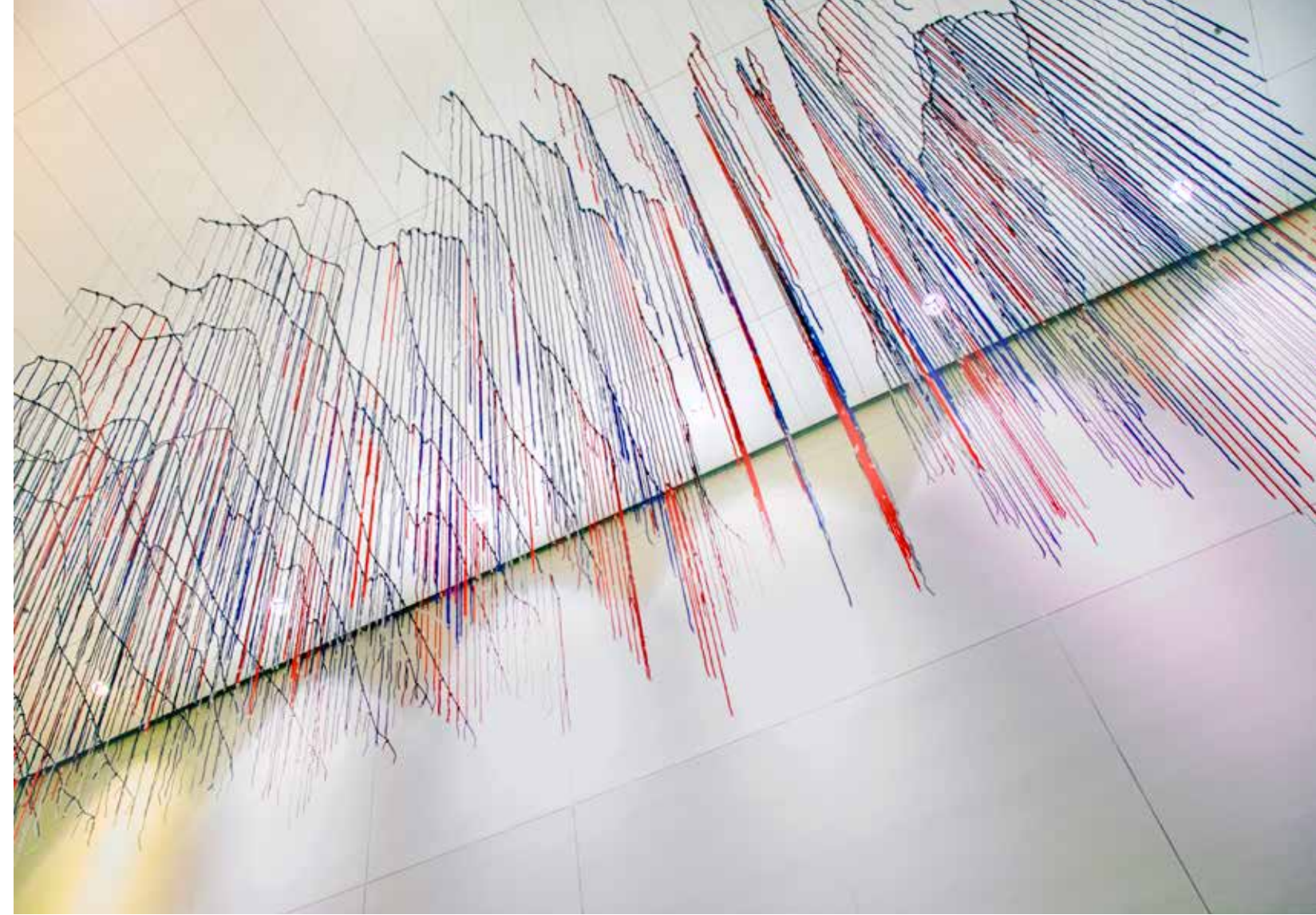
Alexis Callender
*Beside the Bloom, Standing
Snow Leopard*, undated
Handmade paper with mixed
media surface design
8 × 52 × 36 in.
(20,3 × 132,1 × 91,4 cm)





Alexis Callender
*Beside the Bloom, Sitting
Snow Leopard*, undated
Handmade paper with
mixed media surface design
10 × 50 × 31 in.
(25,4 × 127 × 78,7 cm)





Rachel Mica Weiss
Immanent Topographies,
undated
Nylon rope, aluminum
tubes, and airplane cable
Dimensions variable



Artist Biographies

Darryl Arawjo and Karen Arawjo

One of the oldest artistic traditions, basket-weaving entails specialized, technical craftsmanship and design. Darryl and Karen Arawjo have sought to revitalize and explore the possibilities of this practice by introducing unconventional elements, like clear or colored filament. Whereas traditional basket-weaving typically uses only a single material, the Arawjos have married disparate media—such as the fine fiber and wood supports—to create luminous, translucent “vessels.” The process is painstakingly sophisticated: the thinness of the monofilament predates hours of careful handling and weaving to create a vessel of even modest dimensions.

Based in Pennsylvania, the couple has woven baskets since 1980 and began producing their *Light Vessels* in 1997. Karen Arawjo studied at Kutztown State University in Pennsylvania, and Darryl Arawjo at Pennsylvania State University in State College. Specializing in environmental education, Darryl Arawjo has taught for the National Audubon and his alma mater. Working together, the Arawjos create unique designs that evoke nature and experiment with traditional techniques.



Light Vessel CCLXXI,
undated
White oak, monofilament,
walnut,
crystal flash
13 × 9 in. (33 × 22,9 cm)

Matthew Brandt

Yellow saturates and ebbs to cast the edges, valleys, and heights of a serene topography. Bound by mountains beyond and a wooded shore in the foreground, Lookout Point Lake slices through the monochromatic landscape. Located about 150 miles south of Portland, Oregon, the lake serves as the reservoir to the eponymous dam, constructed in 1953.

Photographer Matthew Brandt employed unconventional methods to create *Lookout Point Lake, OR 5*. Using water from the lake represented to develop the image, Brandt's large chromogenic print is thus both a tangible image of and a product of the subject. By submerging the chromogenic print in lake water for extended periods—from days to months—Brandt creates such experimental, nearly abstract artworks. In doing so, the photographer meditates on the manipulation not only of natural resources like the lake, but also the photographic process itself. *Lookout Point Lake, OR 5* counts among his series on lakes and reservoirs, which he shot largely in the western United States.

Based in Los Angeles, Brandt earned degrees from Cooper Union in New York and the University of California, Los Angeles. He has exhibited widely in the United States and his work has been acquired by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Armand Hammer Museum.



Lookout Point Lake, OR 5, 2005
Chromogenic Print
soaked in Lookout
Point Lake water
30 × 40 in.
(76,2 × 101,6 cm)

Alexis Callender

Connection is central to Alexis Callender's *Beside the Bloom*, commissioned for the Embassy. The formal relationships between the four animals create a kind of visual ecosystem among them. The ecology demonstrates the frailty of the animals, the human counterpart, who need community life. The use of Kyrgyz symbols—one artistic strategy that knits the animals together—also gestures towards mythology, memory, and cultural inheritance. Like nature, these intangibles require preservation to be passed on into the future. The artist examines the loss of ecosystem and diversity, and the environmental impacts on these animals.

The animals are shaped more like monuments than active animal bodies; they reference through their skin and surface the historical place of design and geography that is particular to Kyrgyzstan. As an exchange center on the Silk Road route, traditional Kyrgyz craft brought together Eastern and Islamic motifs as design moved to the West, and then back again, the way elements of culture are carried back and forth on our bodies and pollinate with other traditions.

Callender's travels to Kyrgyzstan to research motifs and art-making traditions influenced the final shape of *Beside the Bloom*. In 2015, she made multiple trips to learn about felt-making. Like felt, which entails a long process of accumulation of layers to create a dense, sturdy textile, layered paper can be transformed into a sculptural material. Callender used handmade paper to create the four animals and embellished them with regional symbols and related traditional techniques such as embroidery and beading.

Born in New York, Callender received degrees from Connecticut College in New London and the Massachusetts College of Art in Boston. Her work ranges from painting to drawing to installation. She has exhibited widely in the United States and abroad. Currently, she is an assistant professor of art at Smith College in Massachusetts.



Beside the Bloom, Standing Snow Leopard, undated
Handmade paper with mixed media surface design
8 × 52 × 36 in.
(20,3 × 132,1 × 91,4 cm)



Beside the Bloom, Sitting Snow Leopard, undated
Handmade paper with mixed media surface design
10 × 50 × 31 in.
(25,4 × 127 × 78,7 cm)



Beside the Bloom, Ibex, undated
Handmade paper with mixed media surface design
7 × 47 × 48 in.
(17,8 × 119,4 × 121,9 cm)

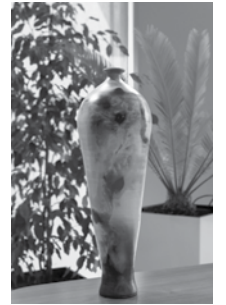
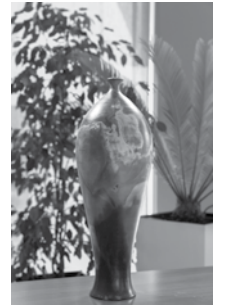


Beside the Bloom, Eagle, undated
Handmade paper with mixed media surface design
7 × 49 × 36 in.
(17,8 × 124,5 × 91,4 cm)

Ramon Camarillo

Ramon Camarillo's firing practice is one of equal parts skill and chance. This meeting of clay and smoke colors each pot in unique ways. Sometimes, crimson gives way to obsidian fumes and saffron dust; in other instances, the amber and orange of a sunset trace the volume, also punctuated by charcoal puffs and thin streams. When viewed in the round, these hues seem to swirl around the form of the tall pot and glide across its surface. The finish of the pot is at times glossy and at others matte and textured. The innovative firing process used to create these *Sagger Raku Pots* incorporates the very nature that the diversity of its colors and varied finishes evokes.

A Hawaii native, Camarillo has practiced this traditional raku firing practice over the course of his forty-year career. Now based in Washington, D.C., Camarillo has led workshops in the United States and abroad to showcase his working method.



Sagger Raku Pot series, 2015
Porcelain
18 × 7 in. (45,7 × 17,8 cm)
20 × 6 in. (50,8 × 15,2 cm)
9 × 14 in. (22,9 × 35,6 cm)
21 × 6 in. (53,3 × 15,2 cm)

Monica Canilao

Oh Dear, *Grandmother Spider*, and *Something Sacred* exemplify the work of Monica Canilao, who juxtaposes different, found media to create new forms. Imbued with memory, these often-discarded materials take on new significance under the artist's hand as she weaves elements together to forge new connections. Canilao thus breathes new life into disparate pieces to create artworks at once historical, personal, communal, sacred, secular, and living.

Oh Dear features a stag that lowers its head, its mammoth antlers extending through its body and pointing downward. An empty cameo forms the background to this display of impossible intersection and is ornamented by lace rosettes at the right. A predella of embroidered flowers, which frame a linen rectangle spotted with age, elongates this visual, abstracted, pink field. The border, with minimal metal ornament and geometric color blocking, frames the central collage to produce an icon of found imagery, touch, and nostalgia.

Recycled textures, forms, and shapes similarly come together in *Grandmother Spider*. An empty white moon hangs above a flat, architectural plane, which forms a niche for a seated figure. Hands clasped, the figure appears to look downward in meditation. The subject's face is covered and its body submerged by overlapping elements: a turned triangle obscures the countenance of the sitter, and red and green painted motifs intersect with its arms and legs. Color, paper, form, line, grids, and three-dimensional media converge in a complex web to become one, like the unbroken circular shape above.

An assemblage of unconnected, disparate vestiges of the past, these works become a kind of sacred, modern relic through their preservation of the history of its components. *Something Sacred* makes this explicit. Paper scraps, paint, ink, and lace unfold and overlap as if splayed through a kaleidoscope. Through this prism, shapes are contorted or abstracted and create a diversified surface: the petals of a white bloom carve out space in a field of yellow and nearly overlap with drawn, cartographic shapes; cutouts of pottery sit below; and lace pieces and paper petals pull away from the surface of the collage to create a unique topography. A collaboration between Canilao and Alexis Anne Mackenzie, a collage artist known for her use of surrealist elements and her love of the abstract, the mixed-media work salvages material to monumentalize its humble and discarded elements.

Based in Oakland, California, Canilao received her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland and was awarded the Eureka Fellowship by the Felishacker Foundation. Her work spans the range of art-making, from performance and traditional fine arts to book-making and costumes. She has exhibited widely in the United States and abroad.



Oh Dear, 2015
Mixed-media collage
27 × 16 in.
(68,6 × 40,6 cm)



Grandmother Spider, 2013
Mixed-media collage
42 × 29 in.
(106,7 × 73,7 cm)



Something Sacred, 2013
Mixed-media collage
52 ½ × 32 ½ in.
(133,4 × 82,6 cm)

Julie Cockburn

Julie Cockburn's *Realm of Fays* plays with collage and sculpture and exploits the three-dimensional possibilities of each medium. Rather than cut apart and overlap flat materials or manipulate a single one, Cockburn searches for pre-existing media and grafts her own hand onto them. The artist uses found photographs to stage and form a backdrop to her own interventions as with the circles here, sewn upon a snapshot of the outdoors. Her appropriation of pre-existing material and her sometimes playful additions make works like *Realm of Fays* at once nostalgic, handmade, and intimate. Cockburn often patterns her works with spots and other geometric shapes through hand-stitched embroidery, paper collage, and paint.

Cockburn studied sculpture at the Chelsea College of Art and Central St. Martins College of Art and Design, both in London, England. She has exhibited her work widely throughout the United Kingdom and Europe.

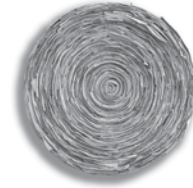


Realm of Fays, 2015
Hand embroidery,
watercolor on found
photograph
10 5/16 × 13 1/16 in.
(26,2 × 34,8 cm)

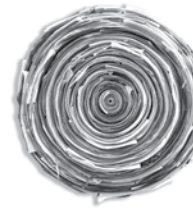
Natalie Dunham

Natalie Dunham's practice is one marked by an understanding of and willingness to play with scale and meditate on the possibilities of a single medium. Works like *Untitled Study* often blur the lines between sculpture and weaving, while her looming installations evoke architecture both organic and contemporary. *No. 1.352.2* and *Untitled Study* both transform leather into a three-dimensional material as enduring as more traditional ones, like clay or stone. Like the weaving of a rug or the making of felt, her practice employs a strategy of overlapping, accumulating, and juxtaposing the simple material to produce solid and complex forms which reference the everyday objects made by the Kyrgyz nomadic lifestyle.

Dunham first trained as a painter at Birmingham-Southern College in Alabama and later earned her Master of Fine Arts degree in sculpture from the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore. She has exhibited widely in the United States and participated in showcases in Prague, London, and Siena.



Untitled Study, undated
Leather
12 in. (30,5 cm)
diameter



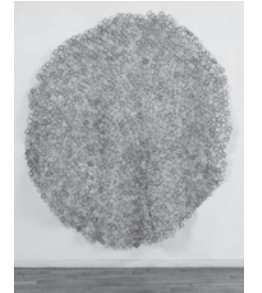
No. 1.352.2, undated
Leather
42 x 4 in.
(106,7 x 10,2 cm)
diameter

Eileen Hoffman

The circular tapestry of chenille forms knit together both resists and draws from the conventional woven work: although not made on a loom, *Redolence* uses pattern and color to create a vibrant material. Densely packed, the chenille rosettes seem to undulate from the multitude of hues that range from crimson to tangerine.

Eileen Hoffman's *Redolence* recalls traditional textile-making and its association as feminine work. Using varied methods to connect the chenille wire together, Hoffman's method amalgamates knitting, sewing, and weaving, all of which are typically treated as domestic artistic practices. Through their recombining, Hoffman sets her labor apart from these standard delineations and subverts traditional categories. Similarly, her repeated use of pink represents a meditation on the symbolism and connection of the color to femininity, itself a construction that has shaped and defined women's artistic practice.

Hoffman received degrees from Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, New York, and Indiana University, where she earned her Master of Fine Arts degree in textiles and sculpture. In addition to wire tapestries like *Redolence*, Hoffman also creates works on paper and painted cloth. She has exhibited widely throughout the United States.



Redolence, 2011
Chenille pipe cleaners
70 x 66 x 3 in.
(177,8 x 167,6 x 7,6 cm)

Gulnara Kasmalieva and Muratbek Djumaliev

The menhir—any large stone purposely set upright through human intervention—counts among the earliest art forms produced by mankind. As markers and testaments of life, of a community, or of burial grounds, these basic structures often lack any distinguishing features that tie them neatly to a given civilization or time.

It is in this kind of unknowable history that artists Gulnara Kasmalieva and Muratbek Djumaliev situate *New Menhir, Untitled (Horse)*. Presented is a close, cropped view of a horse's feet on a pedestal—a sculpture set in a remote, desolate location only otherwise inhabited by an electricity pylon. Framed as a fragment, the undeniably modern sculpture bears no plaque, no mark of an artist's hand, no sign of its significance or erstwhile purpose. Through this series, begun in 2005, the photographers show how rapid, turbulent social and political change can also create impenetrable distance between the ambitions of the recent past and the present.

Natives of Kyrgyzstan, collaborators Kasmalieva and Djumaliev live and work in Bishkek. They produce photography as well as film installations. Their work has been featured at the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the Art Institute of Chicago, and they have exhibited at the biennales in Venice, Montreal, and Thessaloniki.



New Menhir, Untitled (Horse), 2005
C-print
23½ × 15¾ in.
(59,7 × 40 cm)

Laila Abdul-Hadi Jadallah

The feeling “of longing for home—even if you’ve never lived there—or the longing to maintain a connection to a place” permeates Laila Abdul-Hadi Jadallah’s series *Adrift*. The suite of works features seemingly impermanent, transient lands, like the saffron-hued fields that merge with the hills beyond them and churning sky above in *Untitled IV* and *V*. Far from fixed, the landscapes captured by Jadallah are not portraits of specific places; rather, they are palimpsests of multiple exposures that seem to evolve before our eyes. The terrain framed, like many of the landscapes photographed by Jadallah over the course of this tour, lacks any distinguishing characteristics or markers, thus transforming remote locations into seemingly familiar places.

“This series is a reflection on home and the changing landscape of what constitutes home,” the photographer says. Inspired by her own longing to know the places where her family once lived in Israel and Palestine, *Adrift* captures the imagined nostalgia for lands both distant and unknown. Jadallah has lived in Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa and earned degrees from George Mason University in Virginia and the SPEOS Photographic Institute in Paris, France.



Adrift, Untitled IV, undated
Digital pigment print
24 × 36 in. (61 × 91,4 cm)



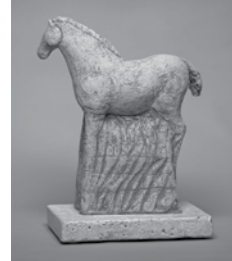
Adrift, Untitled V, undated
Digital pigment print
24 × 36 in. (61 × 91,4 cm)

Amy Laugesen

Pressed, shaped, modeled clay takes an equine form, hardens in the kiln, and rests upon a stone pedestal. It is a haptic process that has been followed since antiquity by artists who sought to fashion monuments to the inherently sculptural animal. *Petroglyph* touches upon this history by presenting an image of the enduring subject, whose legs merge back into the clay and rest upon a stone base. The opaque glaze that defines the horse's body thins to expose the red clay block supporting his torso, emphasizing the relationship between the animal, the earthly elements that make up the sculpture, and the hand of the artist.

Amy Laugesen's sculpture consistently meditates on the lasting symbolic and formal power of the horse. Whether on an intimate or large scale, Laugesen carefully manipulates her medium and often recombines different materials, such as ceramic and stone. Her methods draw from historical and contemporary traditions from the East and West to create new, innovative, tactile works. As a result, her oeuvres like *Petroglyph* often appear to be relics of another time and age.

Laugesen received her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts University in Massachusetts. She has exhibited widely in the United States and has completed several public art commissions in Denver and greater Colorado area.



Petroglyph, undated
Ceramic with stone
base
17×10×6 in.
(43,2×25,4×15,2 cm)

Liliya Lifánova

Here, grids are a stage for geometry, volume, and the most modest of media—paper. Kyrgyzstan-born American artist Liliya Lifánova's *WL* and *Nothing on Blank* thus defy simple categorization. Her oeuvre ranges from experimental theater and performance to film and the fine arts. Questions of identity and cultural tradition are central to her work.

Diagonal and vertical lines divvy up the visual field of *WL*. Even, identical segments of rolled paper mirror the angles and velocity of the wooden elements. In the spaces between the lines, individual pieces also behave unpredictably, grouping together like bricks in the lower right corner or forming perfect stacks along the upper right edge. The result is a surface at once highly geometric, patterned, and in flux, but also incapable of shifting or changing. Any adjustment to the wooden line or pattern-making paper would displace the rest of the whole.

Another grid carves out a panel into nearly even segments: sixteen identical rectangles support a simpler lintel of eight thinner ones. At the edges of the panel, no grid delineates or closes the shapes, making it easy to imagine this crisscross framework as representative of a larger one that could multiply in nearly infinite directions. Each of these larger rectangles divides into three rows. Raised off the flat, white panel background, neatly rolled paper forms an intricate pattern to delineate these rows within these rectangles. Although abstract, there is something inherently gestural and tactile within *Nothing on Blank*: the rolling of paper, its precise placement like tesserae for a mosaic, and the careful carpentry of the grid that contains this work are too a kind of performance.

Lifánova received a Master of Fine Art degree from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She has exhibited widely in the United States and internationally and was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship for Installation Art.



WL, 2013
Paper and wood
28×40 in.
(71,1×101,6 cm)



Nothing on Blank, 2013
Paper and wood
29½×45 in.
(74,9×114,3 cm)

Melissa Meyer

Melissa Meyer's *Counterparts* draws from Kyrgyz artistic tradition while continuing her own experiments with abstraction and color. Meyer traveled to Bishkek shortly after receiving a commission for an outdoor mural installation. There she met with contemporary artists including members of the Tumar Art Group and Emil Tilekov of the Temir Kanat Design Studio to learn about Kyrgyz artistic aesthetics and the region's history of embroidery, felt-making, and tapestry. The massive eight by fourteen foot ceramic tile thus monumentalizes and preserves the results of these artistic exchanges through its incorporation of symbols and motifs that weave together and gesture towards textiles.

For Meyer, whose work extends from an exploration of gesture and color of the first abstract expressionist painters, *Counterparts* presented an opportunity both to continue this study and to use new methods. Meyer's paintings and watercolors often establish complex grounds of overlapping color juxtaposed with drawing to question and complicate the relationship between figure and ground. As an outdoor work, Meyer chose ceramic as the medium to ensure the preservation of the piece and its color. The artist first developed the colorful ground of the composition in layers, then introduced the central motif and border, which evoke the edges of the felt rugs and textiles she examined with Kyrgyz artists. She arranged these various components using digital imaging, which ensured the preservation of the intricate detail of her design. The resulting ceramic tile mural maintains the gesture of her hand as would oil or watercolor, but in a medium that is at once lightfast and itself steeped in haptic, artistic tradition.

Based in New York, Meyer earned degrees from New York University. She has exhibited widely in the United States and abroad, and completed commissions for public works in New York, Tokyo, and Shanghai. Her work counts among the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, the Brooklyn Museum, the Solomon Guggenheim Museum, and the Jewish Museum.



Counterparts, undated
Ceramic tile
96 × 180 in.
(243,8 × 457,2 cm)

Janet Nelson

A high-necked collar, fur-trimmed cuffs, embroidered sleeves, ornamental chest embellishment, and tasseled beading: all features of traditional dress, both among Native Americans and the Kyrgyz. Janet Nelson's *Kyrgyz/Native American Robe* juxtaposes the historical fashions of these two communities to create an amalgam of heritage, visual culture, and ceremony.

Nelson produced this modified *chapan* by pulling elements from both American and Kyrgyz traditions. The decorated collar and cuffs, for instance, feature in typical formal Kyrgyz dress. Other elements, like the turquoise that punctuates the central ornament and hanging groups of long tassels, are distinctly American. Some aspects of the ceremonial robe, like the red and white decorations on the sleeves, simultaneously evoke both cultures: the use of embroidery is common in Kyrgyz clothing, while the shape of the motifs recalls *naja* necklaces.

An imagined artifact of the meeting of two societies, Nelson's *Kyrgyz/Native American Robe* attests to the intersections and similarities of the two cultures' visual traditions. Using paper, glue, mixed polymers, and paint, Nelson recreates ritual vestments. The synthetic materials allow her to create a lasting, tangible juxtaposition and to patinate aspects of the hybrid robe, thus implying its passage through time.

"Ceremonial artifacts from all cultures have always intrigued me, but ceremonial clothing, which was so much more than just body covering, has especially captivated my interest," Nelson says. "The reverence that the maker had for the wearer can be seen by the labor put into their work, and the design usually revealed much of a person's identity, their place in society, and their desires for protection and power."

Born in California, Nelson lives and works in New Castle, Colorado. She also produces three-dimensional, volumetric wire sculpture.



Kyrgyz/Native American Robe, undated
Mixed media
42 × 34 × 4 in.
(106,7 × 86,4 × 10,2 cm)

Rachel Mica Weiss

Some thirty miles south of Bishkek lies the Tian Shan/Tien Shan mountain range also known as the Tengri Tagh, meaning the Mountains of Heaven or the Heavenly Mountain. Stretching from the edge of Kazakhstan in the west to the Issyk Kul Lake in the east of Kyrgyzstan, the often-snow-capped peaks which delineate the Northern Province and zigzag across the horizon visible from the Embassy.

Rachel Mica Weiss's *Immanent Topographies* traces the silhouette of this distinctly Kyrgyz landscape. Thirty-six black aluminum dowels bend to shape the distinct profiles of the regional summits; from each topographic support fall bright, multi-colored ropes. Although static, the parallel suspension and arrangement of these 'slices' appear to fluctuate from different vantage points. Weiss explained, "Large-scale works must invite and reward viewer movement around the work." The viewer experiences the installation in the same way one might explore the elevation in nature—*Immanent Topographies* may be viewed from multiple angles. The resulting planes of free-floating line and color form through their juxtaposition a living, evolving tapestry to nature.

Weiss's work is one that gestures to the history of the weaving tradition in Kyrgyzstan. "When creating this piece," she said, "I began with a few concepts: wanting to somehow integrate my experience of weaving and the felting traditions of Kyrgyzstan, and wanting to celebrate a geological feature of the country." For this site-specific commission, Weiss conceived of *Immanent Topographies* as an active participant in the architectural space of the Embassy at Bishkek.

Whether working on a large or small scale, Weiss consistently alludes to the physicality of art-making. Made of yarn and bullion fringe, the suspended material of *Hung Pelt* is the product of the weaver's guided hand. The tightly packed rows come together to form a weighty, tactile product. The pelt here is not animal, rather, distinctly human-made—it is imbued with the presence of the weaver, the manipulation and working of hands, and the assembly of hand-stitched leather cord tying together wood, hand-wrought nails, and 'pelt.'

An inherently tactile process, weaving shares with sculpture the necessity of bodily labor. "Human scale is so much a part of my work and working at smaller dimensions engages human scale in a different way," said Weiss. "Instead of enveloping or overwhelming the viewer, smaller-scale works speak much more to human labor and are much more relational." Her works, such as *Hung Pelt*, make clear the connection between the body and this kind of artistic practice.

Weiss trained as a weaver and received her Master of Fine Arts degree in sculpture at the San Francisco Art Institute in California.



Immanent Topographies, undated
Nylon rope, aluminum tubes, and airplane cable
Dimensions variable



Hung Pelt, 2011
Bullion fringe, hand-woven with cotton/rayon yarn, reclaimed wood, nails, wax linen thread
60 × 50 × 5½ in.
(152,4 × 127 × 14 cm)

Unknown Artist

Bold, woven geometries zigzag, repeat, and pause to form an intricate textile of diamonds and triangles. Six main registers of green and white motifs are bounded by smaller black and white rows, each of which is framed by black and brown chevrons. Such painstakingly symmetrical, ordered, patterned weaving is the hallmark of the Native American Navajo tradition.

The production of this textile necessitated thorough knowledge of various traditional practices. The wool required spinning and dyeing before weaving could begin, for example. Organic materials like sunflowers and nuts often supplied the hues for dyes used by the Navajo. Once the wool was prepared, a weaver would set the warp, the vertical strands, on a large loom. To facilitate weaving, the artist would use a baton to raise every other strand of the warp. By passing the colored wool horizontally through the warp, the weaver gradually created the textile row by row. Complex geometric patterns like the zigzags and green motifs required substantial planning before this process could commence.

Located in the American Southwest, in Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico, the Navajo Nation has long distinguished itself with the production of such sophisticated textiles. Like Kyrgyz weavers and felt-makers, Navajo works incorporate natural motifs and symbols into complex designs.



Navajo Pictorial Weaving (c. 1915)
80 × 44½ in.
(203,2 × 113 cm)

Art in Embassies

Established in 1963, the U.S. Department of State's office of Art in Embassies (AIE) plays a vital role in our nation's public diplomacy through a culturally expansive mission, creating temporary and permanent exhibitions, artist programming, and publications. The Museum of Modern Art first envisioned this global visual arts program in the 1950s and a decade later President John F. Kennedy formalized it, naming the program's first director. Now with over 200 venues, AIE curates exhibitions for the representational spaces of all U.S. Ambassadors' residences and new embassies worldwide, selecting and commissioning contemporary art from the U.S. and the host countries. These exhibitions provide international audiences with a sense of the quality, scope, and diversity of both countries' art and culture, establishing AIE's presence in more countries than any other U.S. foundation or arts organization.

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