

## **BAXTER Maggie & STORY Holly (Aus)**

### ***Lost and Found - re-inventing traditions in textile practise - paper***

This paper explores the interface between textiles and fine art through a comparison of practices that span two different sites of production; namely Kutch in northwest India and Perth, Western Australia.

Maggie Baxter will draw on her relationship with traditional Indian embroiderers and weavers in Kutch, developed over 13 years. Her art practise explores the space between a traditional material culture based on the decoration of functional objects and garments, and formalist, minimal, abstract painting with references to grid forms (and therefore a return to warp & weft). She investigates the relationship between marks drawn on paper, and marks made on textiles through print, embroidery, and weave. She will refer to her most recent field work research project to be undertaken from December 2003 - February 2004 as well as her extensive knowledge of traditional Indian textile craft and the changes made to adapt those practises to the contemporary market economy.

Holly Story uses hand embroidery in her work to signify Anglo-Australian cultural traditions, to reference colonisation, and to position herself as a woman artist as well as to question the hierarchies of art production and the nature of "work" in a post-modern (Western ) industrial society

The joint presentation will examine on the one hand different ways that some of the earliest forms of representation (embroidery, weaving, block printing) inform two contemporary art practices, and on the other, how the meaning of those traditional crafts themselves have changed by entering the modern market economy. It will look at issues around the cultural construction of the notions of art, craft, production and the value of labour. In Story's practise embroidery becomes signification in a multilayered postcolonial practise, whilst Baxter investigates to the basis of formalist aesthetics as used in traditional textiles forms and construction and contemporary painting.

Maggie Baxter is an independent curator, public art coordinator, and artist. She has worked with traditional crafts in the Kutch region of North West India since 1990. Her current research into the formality of borders, implied borders, and fields in Indian unstitched and wrapped garments will result in minimalist, abstract works with references to grid forms that can be seen ambiguously as garment and painting.

***the space between*** textile\_art\_design\_fashion

Papers & Visual Presentations

Holly Story graduated from Curtin School of Art in 1991. Her work investigates ideas of place and identity, using a combination of materials and pigments from indigenous plants, with techniques and motifs from European textile tradition. Her work has been included in major national touring exhibitions and she has had solo shows in Perth and Canberra. Her most recent work 'Belongings' was included in a survey of Western Australian contemporary art, at the Art Gallery of Western Australia in December 2003. Holly is currently project officer for the Shell Fremantle Print Award at the Fremantle Arts Centre.

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