

LITTLE Marlene (UK)

The Inter-relationship of Photography and Textiles within Personal Practice: a continuation of tradition or a new 'Space Between'? - paper

This paper outlines the key issues concerning photography, textiles and personal practice. It attempts to locate all three and illustrate their inter-relationship.

A tradition of photographic practice integrated into the work of specific textile artists and designers developed in the analogue age. Having moved to the digital age, is there still a clearly inter-related but hierarchical underpinning to current practice, or have changes in practice led to a new fusion - a 'space between'? Is the concept of specific textile descriptor now redundant?

Using a combination of survey and case study approaches, this paper explores issues relating to this rich but relatively undocumented aspect of practice. It uses the triangulation of concept, photographic, and textile processes as a basis for exploring the broad issues of

- categorization and collaboration
- tradition and new technology
- diversity

It focuses on the work of individual contemporary designer/ makers and textile artists, such as Shelley Goldsmith, Michael Brennan-Wood, Natasha Kerr, Alex Arahna-Ward and Deb Bowness. It introduces the work of Lee Lapthorne, public artist, textile designer, digital technology pioneer, photographer, curator and catwalk show producer, and questions the inclusion in this paper of the 'Beyond the Hungry' series of work by Marc Wayland, fine artist/ printmaker. His large photographic images printed on layers of fabric investigates 'portraiture of the spirit', and the 'tissue-thin membrane between living and not'.

The fusion of formerly defined areas of practice, collaborative ventures, and the use of industrial technology has led to a new area of practice that is dynamic, diverse and not subject to automatic categorization.

Marlene is course director of the four BA (Hons) Textile Design degrees at the University of Central England in Birmingham, UK. She has two MA's - one in Textiles/Fashion, the other in Visual Communication/Photography. Her personal practice has developed from knitwear

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for BBC TV shows to solo photography exhibitions. This paper spans her twin interests of photography and textiles and charts the exciting new areas of practice that are developing.
