

Crossing the Line: Wearable to Unwearable



Heather Sincavage

Influence, 2002, muslin, wire

Curatorial Statement

Crossing the Line: Wearable to Unwearable explores the boundaries of fiber art from fine art wearable to the unwearable. The viewer is invited to make up his or her own mind about what can be worn on the human body. The artwork in the show ranges through a variety of art concepts and media, crossing the line in many ways as it finds form as book, installation, performance, and sculpture. The works address issues of identity and self-protection as they create new fiber forms that either question or redefine the function of clothing.

Artists in the show are Kathy Bruce, Kate Cusack, Caroline Gibson, Erica Spitzer Rasmussen, Maryann Riker, Heather Sincavage, and Yonsenia White. Kathy Bruce's sculptural work shows one view while on display but during a performance the garment unfolds revealing new secrets about the work as the garment moves through space. Kate Cusack uses household items to create her work; sponges and Saran Wrap are fashioned into dresses. Caroline Gibson says, "Life is an affair of putting on and taking off clothes." She uses tar paper and window screening to create work that talks about personal appearance. Erica Spitzer Rasmussen tells us, "My sculptural work is often inspired by childhood myths or adult anxieties regarding my body." She uses non-archival materials in her work - tomatoes, dog hair, and spent tea bags to name a few. Maryann Riker creates books that are wearable bracelets and belts made from natural objects and buttons. Heather Sincavage explores questions of identity and the struggles of everyday living from the viewpoint of being "female" to being simply "individual". She uses tracing paper coated in sugar, coffee, and rust. Yonsenia White writes, "Eurocentric ideas of beauty, femininity, and female sexuality that fuel mainstream constructs of identity and desire have affected me since childhood." Exhibited here are her white commercially made shirts onto which she has added safety pins and locks of blond hair.

When does the piece of clothing lose its functionality and become unwearable? Does the work operate on two or more levels where it is functional and non functional at the same time? I hope the exhibit will help visitors to explore these and other questions including the very definition of fiber arts. As the curator I was extremely attracted to the experimental and ephemeral materials used by the artists in this show. The fiber field is a very exciting and cutting edge discipline that invites artists to use sponges, human hair, gut, coffee filters, sugar, and other unusual materials to create art work.

Nisha Drinkard

Assistant Professor of Textile Design, William Paterson University.



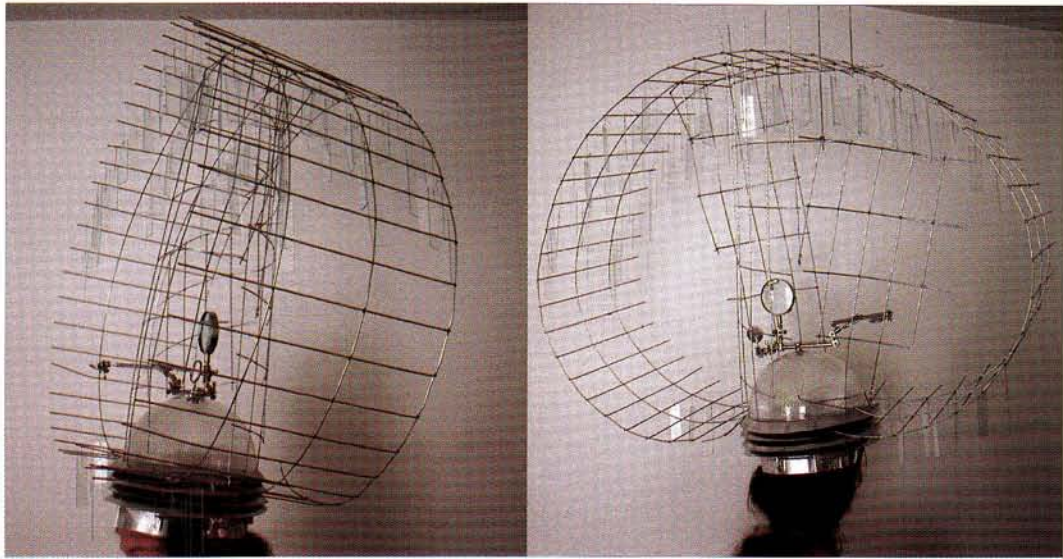
Kate Cusack

Squeaky Clean, 1999, kitchen sponges



Erica Spitzer Rasmussen

Jacket Pilosic, 1999, m/m with handmade paper



Kathy Bruce

Examination of One's Self, 2004, wire, glass, plastic



Maryann J. Riker

Choke-Her, (Artist's Book), 2004, vellum, binder's board, book cloth, silk flowers



Donsenia White *Untitled, 2002-04, men's dress shirt, safety pins*



Caroline Gibson

Shoes, 2001, gutter guard, wax, leather

Works Included in the Exhibit

Kathy Bruce

Naked as Paper, A Victorian Wedding Dress, (plus standard size veil and shoes), 2003, paper, bamboo, wire, 70 x 56 x 56" (dress)
Examination of One's Self, 2004, wire, glass, plastic, 60 x 72" dia. (robe) (helmet) approx. 28" x 22" x 12'

Kate Cusack

Squeaky Clean, 1999, kitchen sponges, size 8 dress
Seventeenth Century Leftovers, 1999, plastic wrap, size 8 dress
Leftovers, 1999, tin foil, wire, size 8 dress

Caroline Gibson

Girdle, 2001, cow, pig, goat rawhide, 28 x 26 x 6"
Shirt, 2001, paper, 50 x 38 x 15"
Shoes, 2001, gutter guard, wax, leather, 9 x 5 x 13"
Foundation Garment, 2001, assorted metals, 24 x 20 x 15"

Erica Spitzer Rasmussen

Corset of Talis, (bottle caps), 2002, m/m with handmade paper, 40 x 12 x 9"
Corset of Talis, (fish skin), 2002, m/m with handmade paper, 35 x 12 x 9"
Corset of Talis, (cherry tomatoes), 2002, m/m with handmade paper, 40 x 21 x 3"
Jacket Pilosic, 1999, m/m with handmade paper, 57 x 21 x 3"
Coat of Talis, 2002, m/m with handmade paper, 61 x 53 x 7"

Maryann J. Riker

Choke-Her, (Artist's Book), 2004, vellum, binder's board, book cloth, silk flowers, 3 h x 3 w x 3 d closed, 1 3/4 x 10-12" open
Entré, (Artist's Book), 2004, binder's board, book cloth, gold foil, beading, organza ribbon, 3 h x 5 w x 1"
Buttons, (Artist's Book), 2004, binder's board, book cloth, buttons, paper, 5 w x 8 l x 2.5" d

Heather Sincavage

Fighting (not beaten), 2004, paper, 6 x 2 x 2'
Influence, 2002, muslin, wire, variable height
Union, 2000, found beds, canvas, linen, sterling, paper, 10 x 6 x 5'
Letting It Go, 2003, paper, copper, wax, wood, 5 x 2.5 x 2.5'

Joszenia White

Untitled, 2002-04, men's dress shirt, safety pins, 30 x 20"
A Beauty to Be Proud Of, 2003-04, men's dress shirt, blonde hair extensions, 30 x 20"

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