FLORA FAUNA FIBER TEXTILES IN CONTEMPORARY ART

TORGGLER

Amanda McCavour

In my work, I use a sewing machine to create thread drawings and large-scale installations. By sewing into fabric that dissolves in water, I can build up stitched lines on a temporary surface. The crossing threads create strength so that when the fabric is dissolved, the thread drawing can hold together without a base. With only the thread remaining, these works appear on the verge of falling apart — but in fact they are quite strong. I am interested in thread's assumed vulnerability, its ability to unravel and its strength when it is sewn together.

Stitch is used in my artwork to explore various concepts such as connections to home, the fibers of the body, and more formal considerations of thread's accretive presence. I explore embroidery's duality — its spindly quality versus its accumulative mass, and its perceived fragility versus its structural stability. Through experimentation, I continue to investigate line in the context of embroidery, drawing and installation.

In *Poppies*, I explore the fleeting nature of this delicate flower by rendering and preserving its ephemeral bloom in thread. Inverting the perspective of a traditional garden, viewers are invited to walk underneath the poppy field. I welcome the multiple symbolic associations the poppy evokes, from sleep, to remembrance to death. The installation — a surreal moment suspended in time — draws upon garden design, while also suggesting the repetitive patterning of floral fabrics or wallpapers.

Poppies began as a commission of one-hundred flowers, suspended to commemorate 100 years from the end of the First World War. From these humble beginnings, this work expanded to hundreds of embroidered poppies suspended from the ceiling, creating a dream-like environment. The poppies are a keepsake, a memory, and a tender reminder of life, time and space.

Amanda McCayour is a Canadian artist who works with stitch to create large-scale embroidered installations. McCayour holds a BFA from York University where she studied drawing. In May 2014 she completed her MFA in fibers and material studies at Tyler School of Art in Philadelphia. McCayour shows her work in galleries nationally and internationally with recent solo exhibitions in Ottawa (Ontario), Virginia Beach (Virginia) and Vancouver (British Columbia) and has completed residencies at Harbourfront Centre's Textile Studio in Toronto and the Klondike Institute of Art and Culture in Dawson City, Yukon. She has received numerous awards and scholarships from the Ontario Crafts Council, the Canada Council for the Arts, the Handweavers and Spinners Guild of America, the Ontario Society of Artists, the Surface Design Association and the Embroiderers' Guild of America.



Amanda McCavour Poppies, 2018 Polyester thread 20 x 30' Courtesy of the artist