

Rope a necklace to my tongue | Christalena Hughmanick

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PANEL Contemporary I Faur Zsófi

Opening remarks by Emma Nagy (cultural attaché, US Embassy)

Curated by Veronika Molnar

Ever since Tracey Emin's very personal 'blankets' first appeared in the early 1990s, it has become evident that the traditionally feminine craft of quilt-making can be transformed into a process of self-expression and reflection in the realm of art. The technique is usually associated with its use for bedding, however, a number of contemporary artists, including Christalena Hughmanick, use it as a tool for their conceptual endeavors.

Hughmanick came upon the technique in her birthplace, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, a region famous for its Amish communities and their skillful quilt-making tradition. Historically, these works record important family information, events and depict the surroundings of the physical world experienced by their makers. Hughmanick utilizes this craft history to ask how a search for personal identity through mysticism and hand making can compact a viewer's notion of time.

In her pieces, organic forms appear in harmony with the grids of the patchworks, depicting hands with soft gestures, shells found in nature and elaborate ancient hairstyles. After examining the Roman ruins in Italy and Aquincum in Hungary, Hughmanick started to incorporate particular patterns and forms from these sites into her works, animating long-forgotten figures of the ancient Roman society. Hughmanick's work is a nod to hand labor: just as workers built the legendary Colosseum brick by brick, she stitched the fabrics together piece by piece. Taking inspiration from buildings and structures that stood the test of time, her quilts reflect her urge to search for the roots of our (European and North-American) culture, observing humanity's thirst to build, create and conquer. Her works have a comforting presence that - apart from the soft fabrics and pastel colors - comes from the elements that symbolize the longevity of our cultural heritage. Thus, even without wrapping them around us, Hughmanick's quilts provide shelter from the anxieties and uncertainties of our time, from an economic, political and environmental perspective.

Christalena Hughmanick is an artist working in textiles, sculpture, and performance. She received her Masters In Fine Arts from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2012 where she is currently a Lecturer in the Fiber and Material Studies Department. She is currently on a Fulbright Fellowship for the 2018-19 academic year as a resident Lecturer & Researcher at the Moholy-Nagy Művészeti Egyetem in Budapest, Hungary. In addition, she received an Individual Assistance Grant from the US State Department to complete a public quilt making project in Hungary during the Summer of 2019.