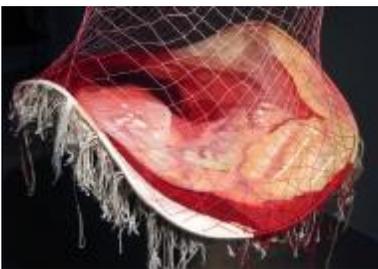


Melissa Wong



Melissa Wong

Circumintervention, woven tapestry with hand-dyed cotton needlepoint lace, cart, instruments, size variable, 2011



Melissa Wong

Circumintervention, detail

Skill is something I value. I grew up taking art lessons, and always sought to gain greater technical ability in working with my hands so that I could better express my ideas and thoughts through my work. Upon entering the Alberta College of Art + Design in 2007, I hoped to develop my conceptual and technical abilities congruently. This influenced my decision to major in the Fibre department, where I knew I would be leaving ACAD with new processes and techniques in my toolkit. As well, I could see the potential for textiles to effectively address the concepts I was most interested in at the time – identity, memory and loss. It was in my third year of studies that I discovered my affinity for tapestry weaving while taking an introductory course instructed by Jane Kidd.

The process is detail-oriented, and at moments challenging. Each time you sit down at the loom, there are new discoveries to learn about the process as you weave. Tapestry is engaging. You are constantly making decisions along the way, yet the repetition allows you to enter into a state of flow. These are some of the qualities that attract me to the process. While tapestry is currently the focus of my practice, I do not see myself as a specialist limited to the medium of tapestry, nor do I feel that I should be confined to working strictly in a traditional manner. For now, tapestry is the focus of my artistic practice because I find it the most engaging way to create work and appropriate for conveying the concepts in which I am interested.



Melissa Wong

Repository, woven tapestry with hand-dyed cotton needlepoint lace, each tapestry component approximately 9 x 6 x 4 inches with 44 inch long lace, 2011



Melissa Wong

Repository, detail

My current work is centered around comparisons between the fields of textiles and medicine. Both involve skilled handwork, reparation, and discipline. By weaving images of the body within a medical context, I draw focus to the intricacy and fragility of life, and the intervention of modern medicine. I cannot imagine this work to be as effective in any other medium. It is the specialized skill, intricacy, and slowness involved in tapestry making that resonates with the subject matter, and the softness of the textile materials that allows challenging imagery to become more accessible.

At times, the slowness of tapestry making is something to be savored; it allows space to reflect on the work as it unfolds, as well as an escape from the constant frenzy of city life. At other times, the slowness is the one thing I would change about tapestry if I could. As a student, I was occasionally frustrated when I looked at the progress of my colleagues who were working in other mediums. I felt I could never compete with the amount or size of work they could churn out within the allotted time we were given to complete projects. However, I see that quality is more important to me than quantity. Yes, it would be advantageous to be able to make work faster, especially when it comes to deadlines and shows, but I feel rewarded in being able to create work that is imbued with the value of time-intensive making, a value that can also be applied to the body and human life.



Melissa Wong

Melissa Wong was born and raised in Coquitlam, British Columbia, Canada. She currently resides in Calgary, Alberta where she graduated in 2011 from the Alberta College of Art + Design with a BFA (Honorary) in Fibre. While the focus of her practice is currently tapestry weaving, she also enjoys needlepoint lace-making, dyeing, painting, drawing, mixed media and installation. Her work has been featured in various solo and group exhibitions, including ACAD's *ArtaWEARness XI* and the Alberta Craft Council's *Coming Up Next*. Wong's artistic endeavors also include music and writing.