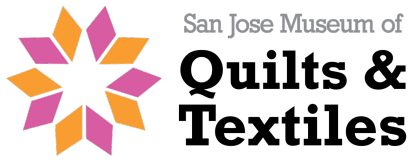


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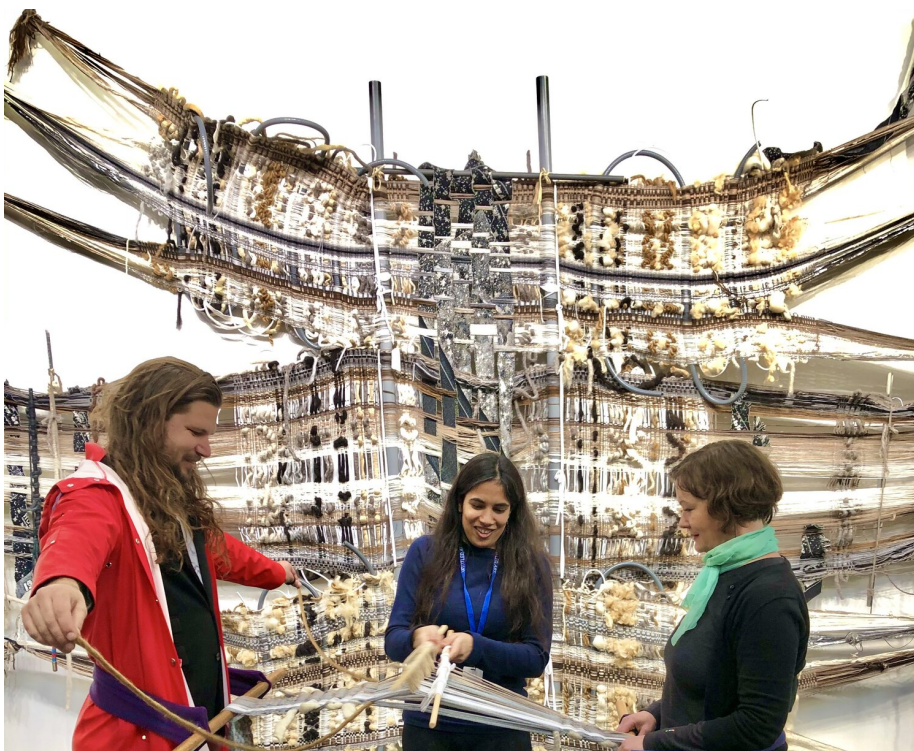
Kira Dominguez Hultgren is a Bay Area-based textile Artist who currently has a solo exhibition at San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles, entitled *I was India: Embroidering Exoticism*. Kira is a recent graduate of California College of the Arts, earning a dual degree MFA/MA in Fine Arts and Visual and Critical Studies. Dominguez Hultgren is represented by Eleanor Harwood Gallery in San Francisco, and she is a Graduate Fellow at The Headlands Center for the Arts where she is preparing for upcoming shows at the Bedford Gallery in Walnut Creek and the de Young Fine Art Museum of San Francisco.

WEBSITE

([HTTPS://WWW.KIRADOMINGUEZHULTGREN.COM/](https://www.kiradominguezhultgren.com/))

INSTAGRAM

([WWW.INSTAGRAM.COM/KIRADOMINGUEZHULTGREN/](https://www.instagram.com/kiradominguezhultgren/))



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What are materials and processes utilized in your body of work?

I primarily work on floor looms, backstrap looms, Mapuche looms, and looms created from tensioning yarn between any two or more fixed points (chairs, bedframes, flag poles, walls, etc.). I use my studio practice to materialize my research, whether that be photographic documentation of textile archives or my own family textile archives and history. I weave in response to weavings. Weaving tells, speaks, and awaits a response. I consider weaving as manifesting and responding to material culture. Silk from India and wool from North and South America are my primary materials with which I weave; and found wood, PVC pipes, metal anchors, and zip ties are my primary materials that I use to construct the loom in the gallery. Silk and wool allow me to confuse a metonym (symbol) for North American Indigenous identity (geometric woven patterning in wool) with a material like silk, which is often read as synonymous with Asia. The found materials I use to construct the loom question the physical and cultural architecture with which we encounter these woven fabrics. How are these textiles bound in words, spaces, places, and global infrastructures from which they cannot break free?





Describe the main differences of your 'old' studio to your 'Shelter in Place' studio.

The biggest difference between my studio at the Headlands Center for the Arts and my shelter-in-place studio is my children! Rather than living the Woolfian ideal of "a room of one's own," i.e. my studio at the Headlands, I have now been plunged headlong into an ever-changing circus theater where living room becomes studio space becomes middle-school classroom. Bedrooms become practice spaces become never-ending Zoom meetings. Even if my looms are still blissfully my own, to step into them requires an active turning-away from the dishes piling up in the sink, an active stepping over the piles of books and papers strewn over the couch. But then I stand at my loom and breathe, my kids rushing by with laptops and headphones in hand to their next in-place activity, and my fingers remember other rhythms. The rhythms of weavers who stood at their looms, pressing on warp strands, picking up patterns, and I'll trust those ancient rhythms to carry me through this season: to create even while I'm standing in-place.





What drew you to the fiber art medium over others?

Weaving is about storytelling through material and structure. Rather than creating a linear narrative, the act of weaving leaves in its wake a web of creative deconstruction that is never a finished statement. Just think of Penelope waiting for Odysseus, unweaving by night what she wove in the day. Even without the weaver's hand, my materials – wool, zip ties, tubing, coaxial cables – are working against one another, actively deconstructing what appears as narrative continuity when a fabric is pulled from the loom. Weaving, as it tells, compels some material to sink to the bottom, while other material rises to the surface. Some strands act only as a support, while other strands steals the spotlight. To weave with competing unequal materials is to reflect a lived experience of ongoing U.S. colonialism supported by unequal histories. Some histories go unheard, unseen, while other histories seemingly become the whole story. I want to tell those histories which need to be heard, but have yet to be said: stories from weavers such as Juanita (Asdzáá Tl'ógi, Navajo, 1845-1910); or stories of living between races when miscegenation was a crime such as my grandmother's story of growing up Hawaiian, Black, Indian, and White.





What artist, who works in a different medium, informs your practice?

Faith Ringgold (b. 1930) is an African-American painter and sculptor who often uses quilting as a framing device for her work. I am drawn to her practice for many reasons, one of which is her fluidity between mediums, often using textiles as the last step in her process. Through quilting her painted canvases, she turns visualized narratives of the Black experience in Harlem for instance, into materialized evidence that can be handed-down to the next generation. Her American People Series has been a huge influence on my work, where she shows how the symbol of the U.S. Flag is not neutral. In Ringgold's paintings, the flag racializes bodies, buries those bodies, and yet is only made visible through the blood of those bodies.



What are you looking forward to doing again once Shelter in Place is over?

I'm looking forward to running into people again, literally! I never appreciated how much I like to bump shoulders in doorways, brush hands when picking over produce at the grocery store, or grab onto arms to steady myself, when I crash headlong into a fellow artist, both of us absentmindedly turning a corner in the Headlands studios. Although I'm not particularly extroverted, I am very tactile, and I miss connecting with people through casual, spontaneous touch!



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