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the Rice Thresher

The Moody's Newest Exhibit Weaves Artists into the Narrative



Courtesy Woomin Kim and the Susan Inglett Gallery
By [Julia Li](#) 1/10/23 9:50pm

The Moody Center for the Arts is kicking off the semester with a new installment to celebrate the next generation of international artists at the forefront of fiber arts. With works from a selection of 21 artists, the art in this exhibition conveys a multitude of contemporary issues through innovative fiber-based media. Although some artists don't have a background in fiber-based media, they've come together through their own artistic journeys and processes to shape and mold the impact of their contribution to "Narrative Threads." Ultimately, the exhibition offers new perspectives on this medium, as the works span from small-scale, intimate thread drawings to sculptural installations.

"We started with a long list of possible artists who had been on our radar for a long time, and whose work we had seen in various exhibitions in the US and abroad," curators Frauke Josenhans and Alison Weaver wrote in an email. "Through conversations with artists and studio visits, [we] selected a group that represents a broad array of different nationalities, genders and techniques."

This new exhibition ultimately explores how this fiber-based medium can serve as a conversation starter in shedding light on hidden histories and unique, cultural perspectives.

"The main goal of the exhibition is to explore a trend in contemporary art, considering artist's embrace of a historic medium to explore current topics related to identity, gender, race, sexuality and power," Josenhans and Weaver said.

Through experimental and fragmentary approaches, each of the artists in the exhibition utilize fiber and textiles to craft personal, social and political histories that ultimately invite the viewer to consider new perspectives through diverse lenses.

Each of these exhibitions has its own story to tell. According to Josenhans and Weaver, the different techniques utilized by the artists are often inspired by ancient practices. According to several of the artists who identify as women, LGBTQ+ and people of color, the textiles are powerful carriers of cultural meaning, drawing attention to both personal experience and historically oppressed communities.

“For instance, sewing, as a metaphor for repair, can point to connections between individuals and society, indicating a means of promoting healing in the wake of trauma and building community in the face of adversity,” Josenhans and Weaver said.

Woomin Kim, one of the featured artists in this exhibit, spoke about how her primary media is textile sculpture. Kim is based in Queens, New York, but her current textile work depicts Shijang, a large fish market in Korea.

“Rather than conveying a message, I just wanted to share the depiction of the street markets from the point [of view] of someone who grew up with this culture of street markets,” Kim said. “Asian street market culture is often misrepresented in the Western context, and I just wanted to show that it’s a really big part of [peoples’] daily lives.”

Kim said that her project is still ongoing and continues to change.

“It is growing, just like the market culture in Asia,” Kim said. “Textile is a medium that I reach out to very comfortably. It’s like air to me — the most comfortable and breathable media.”