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FRAGMENTS OF EVERYDAY LIFE

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INTRODUCTION

In my work I am concerned with the general concepts of movement and change and specifically with the profoundness of the idea that we are touched by fiber from the moment of birth until the moment of death. This accessibility of textiles combined with the vast historical foundation of textiles allows for abundant exploration as an artist.

In her book, *On Weaving*, Anni Albers (1965) defines weaving as "the making of a pliable plane" (19). She further describes six structures used to create this pliable plane. They are interlacing (which we normally think of as weaving), plaiting or braiding, looping, knotting, twisting or twining, and matting or felting (Albers, 1965, p. 19). I embrace this definition of weaving because it describes the physicality of the textile itself, the process of making the textile, and the broad focus of weaving.

DESCRIPTION OF WORKS

Using structures found in old dishtowels, a series of works titled "Fragments of Everyday Life" explores everyday events in the life of a dishtowel. Because dishtowels are used in many ways other than drying dishes, torn edges, stained areas, and twisted fibers communicate these possibilities. "Waffle Fragment" and "Waffle Towel" use twenty harness waffle weave structures; "Twill Towel" and "Twill Fragment" use twenty harness twill structures, all common structures found in dishtowels. Linen fibers painted with inks before interlacing work to create an integration of surface and structure to enhance the meanings of these humble textiles. "Fragments of Everyday Life" (Figure 1) illustrates these techniques.

The series "Deadhead's Straight Wardrobe" uses the paper-making process. This process mats cotton linter fibers and bonds them together with pressure. The paper doll image is used as a vehicle to explore the ordinary man's shirt and comment on how quickly a personal image can be changed and how superficial that change can be. The paper doll image works as a visual vehicle to facilitate these quick-change possibilities. The male shirt was chosen because it is less commonly thought of as an image maker. Questions are raised and visual comments on gender issues are made. The surface image is literal in that the color and mixed media are visually on the surface of the handmade paper; although structurally, they are part of the paper making process. The matting/felting process is used; cotton linter, dyes, pigments, and mixed media are used to create these works.

CONCLUSION

Although two different processes are used, the common form is textile. In all the works images of textiles used in everyday life are seen. "Fragments of Everyday Life" is a series of five pieces using the dishtowel and commenting on how it changes and moves throughout its life cycle. "Deadhead's Straight Wardrobe" is a series of ten pieces which use the paper doll to communicate how quickly an image can change.

The significance of textiles in our lives; how people take textiles for granted every day, the vast historical, social, and psychological aspects of textiles, and the incredible array of structural possibilities allow for endless exploration and questioning by an artist.

REFERENCE

Albers, Anni 1965. On Weaving.
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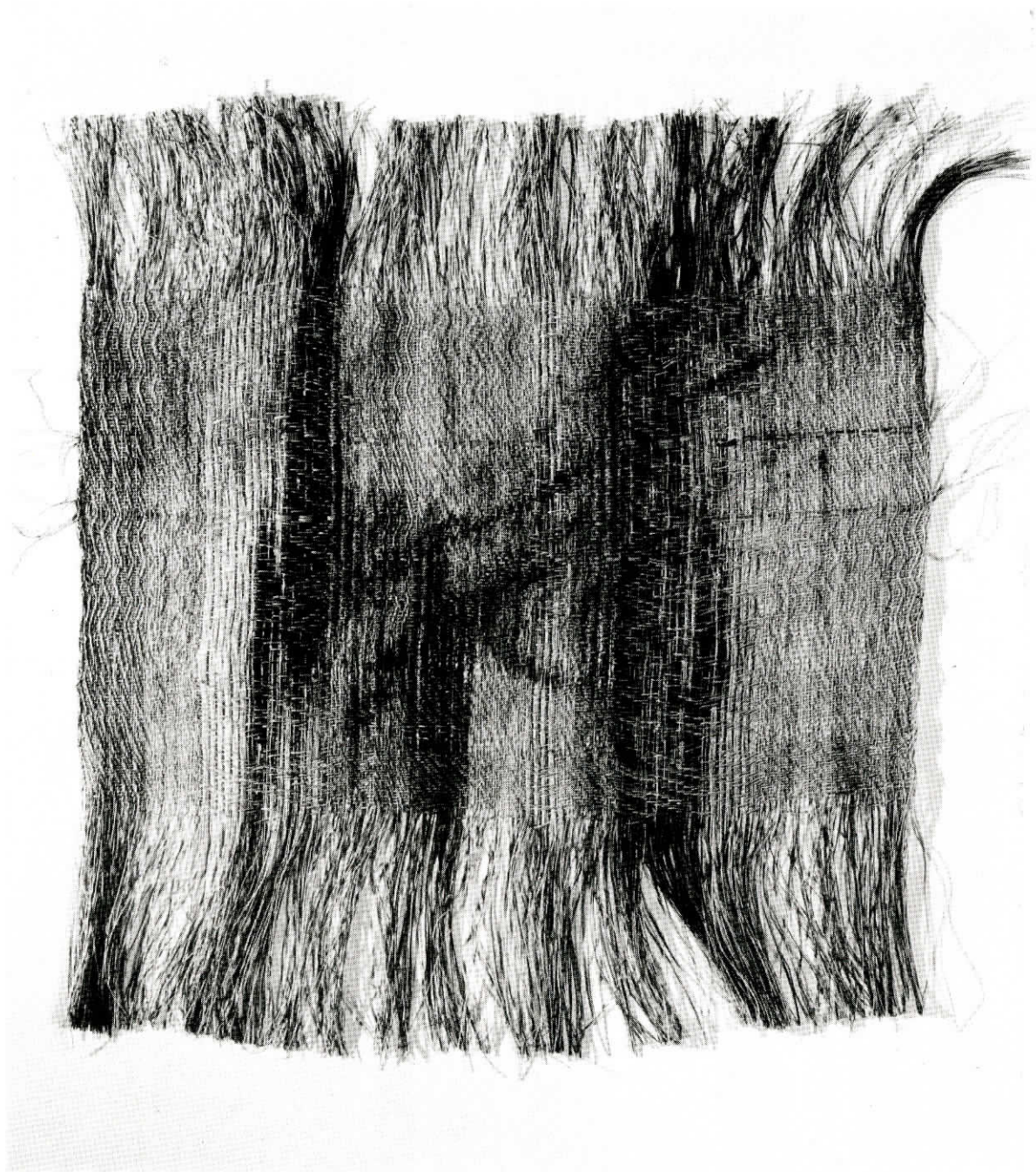


FIGURE 1 "Fragment of Everyday Life", 13" X 12".

