ENG
The thread tales- le fil raconte

The Thread Tales – Le fil ra-conte

Even before we knew how to weave, other beings were already weaving.

The spider weaves her web from the thread she produces. The weaverbird patiently interlaces grasses to build its nest. The weaver ant draws leaves together with the silk of its larvae. The caterpillar encloses itself in a cocoon made of its own thread. Weaving seems a very ancient gesture of the living world: to build, to connect, to protect, to inhabit, to transform.



Nature animal
faun amaterial invertebrates pider web

For human beings, thread has become material, tool, language. We have learned to spin it, knot it, braid it, embroider it, weave it, unravel it and take it up again. With it, we make clothes, blankets, rugs, but also stories and memories.

Thread is everywhere in our language. We follow the thread of a story, we lose the thread of our thoughts, we pick up the threads again after a break. A thread can be fragile, almost invisible, and yet be enough to hold something together: to connect what was separate, to hold back what is about to fall, to cross time. It can also be cut.

Life is a weft that we weave, or that sometimes weaves itself in spite of us; and sometimes, it hangs by a thread. Weaving is the art of patience, of making and unmaking: one must go back, untie, begin again, follow a line without always knowing where it will lead us.



Arachne-Geek Mythology Spider Half

The world's tales keep its trace. Ariadne's thread guides Theseus out of the labyrinth; Penelope weaves and unweaves her work, suspending time; the Moirai spin, measure and cut the thread of life. Philomela, deprived of speech, inscribes her story in a cloth: thread becomes a language textile a voice. Arachne challenges Athena and makes weaving an act of creation and rivalry.

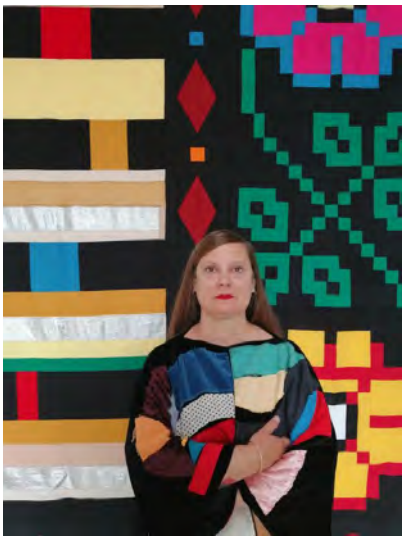
But these tales are not the only ones. In West Africa, Anansi, a figure associated with the spider, is linked to stories, to their transmission and to knowledge: the web becomes a network of circulating tales. Thread belongs to no single culture; it crosses imaginaries, territories and generations.

And then there is the thread that is handed down. Weaving, sewing, embroidering, mending, patching: these gestures pass from hand to hand, sometimes through women, sometimes through men, according to divisions that vary. What runs across cultures is not one same division of roles, but the power of thread as material, know-how, memory and language.

At the Bauhaus, in the 1920s, female students were largely steered towards the weaving workshop, while access to the other workshops was harder for them. What was an assignment became, for some, a space of experimentation.



Group of weavers,
in Annie Albers workshop, 1928,
bauhaus archives



portrait-karina-bisch, The quilts of Gee's Bend, created by African American women from this rural Alabama community, transform recycled fabrics into powerful textile artworks carrying memory, creativity, resilience, and history.

Elsewhere, other memories have been inscribed in cloth. From the quilts of Gee's Bend to the patchwork of Appalachia, fragments of fabric, clothing and lives have been assembled into new compositions, each piece keeping the trace of its earlier life. In South Africa, textile practices have allowed women to bring out their memories and experiences, making cloth a visible memory.

A stitch can hold a memory, an assemblage can bring a community into view. A story is never made of a single thread. A skein, patiently prepared to be woven later.

Thread gathers, but it can also separate: it can draw a border, a limit, a path, and become scar or trace. It can be lost, reknotted, broken and taken up again.

The Thread tales- Le fil raconte tells of those threads: the ones we weave, the ones that bind us, the ones we lose and the ones that, in spite of us, keep on weaving themselves.

The artists gathered here each take their own path through this material. Some weave, sew, embroider, assemble, divert or unmake; others make

thread an idea, a trace, a metaphor. Their practices differ, as do their paths. But something connects them: making thread a space where material and memory, gesture and story, the intimate and the collective meet.

THE ARTISTS

Ana Isabel Freitas works with memory through fragments of fabric, landscapes and traces of lives. In her small paintings, jeans pockets become like small territories where the blue of the denim, the blue of the sea and the blue of the landscapes meet. She assembles and re-stitches these fragments as so many pieces of memory, making thread a link between places, stories and generations.

Anna Novakov builds her compositions from a weft of threads in which lines, repetitions and symmetries organise the gaze. Geometry creates an almost architectural structure, made of frames, crossings and rhythms. But colours shift this rigour: they vibrate, answer one another and introduce tension into the apparent order. Between precision and movement, her works offer a geometry that is looked at as much as it is felt.

Anthia Loizou weaves space. Her installations unfold in the room like networks, veils or singular canopies. Threads cross, accumulate, knot and seem gradually to take possession of the place. They create a fragile, suspended landscape that transforms the way we move through and look at space. But beneath this apparent lightness another reality emerges: that of a society that ceaselessly produces, consumes and accumulates. Thread then becomes the matter of a landscape in expansion, at once delicate and invasive.

Lauren Hartman embroiders landscapes, glaciers, movements and territories. By hand on silk or through digital embroidery, thread draws a mountain as readily as a map, a force or a line of migration. Her ice landscapes appear as territories both real and fragile, which climate change is already transforming. Between abstraction and representation, her work invites us to look at these places differently: as landscapes that are present, but perhaps also as the traces of a world that future generations will no longer know in the same way.

Lya Garcia and Isabel Gozard transform the body through thread. They create wearable forms, headdresses and adornments that give the body a new, almost mythological silhouette. Thread envelops, extends and transforms gesture. The body becomes a space of creation and metamorphosis, bringing forth a strange figure, somewhere between character, creature and apparition. Their creations thus shift our gaze and open a space where reality seems able to tip elsewhere.

Marie-Claude Deshayes-Rodriguez places her work within a long tradition of weaving, which she sometimes deploys on an almost monumental scale. Her

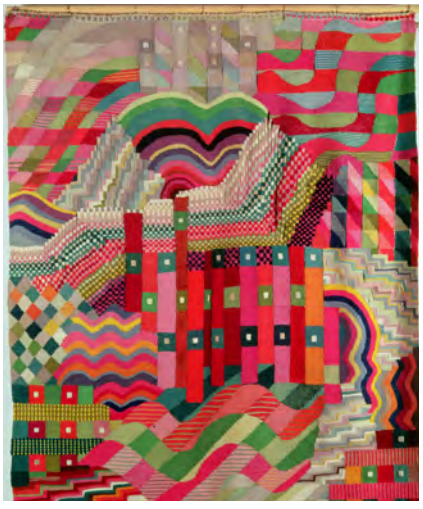
works are veritable worlds in textile, where landscapes, animals, birds and characters compose narratives with dreamlike overtones. The sea holds an important place there, as a space of passage and transformation. In *Passages*, a boat crosses the waters while a ladder links different spaces of the landscape: the figures seem to move between sky, earth and sea. Thread then serves to tell stories, to connect worlds and to bring forth an imaginary in which reality and dream meet.

Natalie Mei brings small creatures into being from threads, beads and delicate materials. Presented as small specimens, they evoke the world of the collector: to observe, to choose, to preserve, to classify. Each piece demands patience and precision. There is in her work a kind of slowness and gentleness, but also the pleasure of discovery, when the gaze moves closer and these curious little presences gradually appear.

Valérie Dufour works brass wire as a material to weave, interlace and model. Her sculptures take forms that evoke adornments, fragments of clothing or plant forms. Some can be exhibited, others worn: they pass from object to body, from sculpture to ornament. The wire draws delicate interlacings, like lianas, flowers or living networks. Presences to be worn as much as looked at.

Thus a thread is never only a thread. It can be the one that guides us, the one that connects us, the one that allows us to tell, the one we lose and seek to find again.

And sometimes, a single thread is enough for everything to still hold.



Gunta Stölzl, Gobelin Wallhanging, 1926-27, linen and cotton, Bridgeman Images, © ADAGP, Paris



Mary Sibande
a South African artist - sculptures, photographs, and installations explore identity, race, gender, labour, and the legacy of apartheid through imagined female alter egos.





José ert Lordes Benites Sànchez painting with thread, mexico, folk art, Huichol Yarn Painting