

The Matter of Material at Turner Contemporary

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Looking beyond the warp and weft: unpicking latent narratives in clothing.

The paper presents my on-going practice in which I explore and reveal perceived memory and experience imbued in worn clothing, specifically through the recent piece of work **Łódź Blouse Trilogy**.

In this work, I undertook a series of interventions on blouses to reveal dormant and latent matter; details from a single photographic image of a tea party in Poland's Lodz Ghetto. Discovering Henryk` Ross's photographic work many years ago, I have been haunted by this photograph. Further investigation disclosed how Ross hid (buried) his collection of images, returning years later to unearth them.

Łódź Blouse Trilogy and related work addresses the use of textiles, cloth and clothing as a rich landscape for expression; a vehicle to explore and communicate complex ideas within a fine art context. And seeks to present knowledge and provoke thinking on a series of levels, from craft skills to contemporary scientific and psychological thinking.

We are intimately familiar with the physicality and materiality of clothing. Thus, this work offers a 'safe' fluid entry point to discuss and stimulate contemplation around inherited memory; biological and metaphorical transference; personal recall and repression; our sense of self and the ability of cloth and clothes to hold and translate human experience.

In today's Forensic landscape, textiles play a powerful contributing role in developing narrative from the crime scene. In 'A Garment in the Dock...' Kitty Hauser talks about the FBI's use of unique ridges and valleys' in worn denim jeans to identify US bank robbers. This research showed that despite the ubiquity of jeans, each pair has individual identifying characteristics and highlights the relationship between garment and wearer.

Fascinated with the creative implications of what is left behind in the clothes we wear, and supported by my experience of working with Alison Fendly at the FSS, I have sought to make visible a personal response. The use of garment construction/deconstruction, digital embroidery and dye-sublimation printing have made this work manifest.