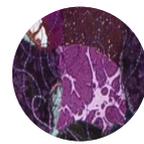
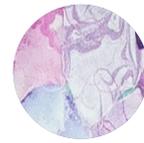
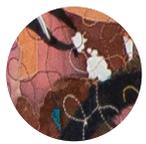
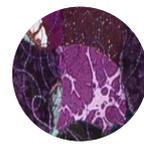
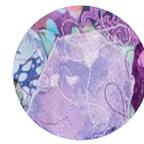
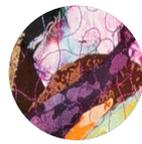


# HUE



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# • CONTENTS



03 From the Director



05 Exhibitions



09 Education



14 Membership



17 Art as a Force for  
Change

**Visiting the Depot**

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The St. Louis County Depot is open and free to the public. All guests over the age of 2 will be required to wear a mask inside the building. For the best experience, please download a QR code reader and the Smartify app prior to visiting.

## The Fiber of Life

Christina Woods



The year we planned has been almost completely unwoven. The crisis of the pandemic and focus on racial injustice has forced the DAI to try new things, tear them apart, and try again. In our duty to stay connected to community, we found our ability to weave and reweave has become the norm. Because our galleries were closed for most of the spring season, we had to be creative in rearranging our exhibition calendar. Without conscious effort, we find ourselves offering a season of fiber art where all the metaphors are more relevant today than ever before. I am fascinated by the breadth of meanings that fiber art holds. Fiber is a universal part of human life. It fills an endless number of roles in our practical, personal, emotional, social, communicative, economic, aesthetic and spiritual lives.

No too long ago, I posted on my social media a picture of an afghan made by my mother, Helen Woods. Using the creative process to learn

and unlearn, to try to tear apart, she created hundreds of items by knitting, crocheting, embroidering, and sewing. This afghan was one of the final things she made for each of her eight children. As I curl up under the yarn that slid through her fingers, I realize working with fiber paralleled much of her life, especially the part where she had to weave and unweave in order to move forward. Her work was a type of rebellion. The practical nature of her work was a direct answer to poverty. It was a rebellion against the injustice of oppression that prevented us from participating in the economy around us.



Fiber is a universal part of human life.



On September 16, we presented fiber artist Chesley Antoinette as a special guest at our virtual gala. Antoinette's work was selected in 2019 by the DAI panel to show spring 2020. She is one of the many artists whose exhibition we had to reschedule and show now within our walls and online. It seems so fitting to offer a season of fiber art to represent the collective struggle of a pandemic and the rebellion that brings attention to the injustice we need to be free of. It is the fabric of our lives, the thread that binds us, and the warp and weft that holds the community together.

### Notes

In living our mission, we've pivoted. Our website now features links to BIPOC artists in our region, COVID-19 resources, and online classes. The app Smartify brings art experiences to the palm of your hand from your home or our galleries.

• ON VIEW



**Morrison Gallery***Integument*

Susanna Gaunt

Fall 2020

**Artist Talk:** Nov. 18**Steffl Gallery***Identity*

Blair Treuer

Fall 2020

**Artist Talk:** Oct. 28**Corridor Gallery***Material*

Alyssa Swanson

Fall 2020

**Artist Talk:** Oct. 21**Depot Lobby***Reflections*

Kristen Kaas

Fall 2020

# Identity

## Blair Treuer

**John Steffl Gallery**

Textile artist Blair Treuer's portraits of herself, husband and nine children move off the walls with emotional energy. Textures and patterns blend and contrast, creating form; fabric mimicking paint while luring viewers to lean in, to observe, to examine the detail. Relationships of the

materials emerge, as do the relationships between the artist, herself and her family. Treuer explains, "The portraits are an intimate conversation about my life and the lives of my husband and children. My son's inability to fit in at school; my daughters struggles with drug abuse, incarceration and the loss of her children; the loss I feel about my severed connection to my ancestors as a Scandinavian transplant with nothing left of my heritage to hold onto." Treuer continues, "This exhibit is about my life as an outsider, the only non-Native American in my immediate family. My work is about my reflections of standing fixed on the outside, but privileged enough to look in."

As Treuer's children prepared for a ceremony, the only way for her to participate as a non-native was to make blankets for their spiritual offering. She pored herself into them, teaching herself how to sew and discovering a transcendental process that feels to Treuer like "Inspiration channeling through me faster than my fingers can move".

In *Identity*, Treuer becomes a storyteller delivering a message, "magic can be created when two people from different cultures love each other and build a life together."



## *Tignon*

**Chesley Antoinette**

**Fall 2020**

**Smartify app**

The 1786 Tignon Law of Louisiana was enacted to oppress affluent women of African descent, to decrease their beauty and thereby diffuse their allure to white men. Under the administration of Governor Esteban Rodriguez Miro, women of African descent were forced to cover their hair as an effort to control them, their wealth, beauty and intelligence. However, the headwrap itself became a

symbol of rebellion as women donned their hair with exquisite, colorful scarves, adding jewelry, ribbon and other fine material. The Tignon was and is embraced by women of African descent, proving an occasion to showcase one's creativity and adaptability. Artist Chesley Antoinette is the creator and designer of Cantoinette Studios where she explores wearable art and sculpture. Antoinette, teacher at Mountain View College in Dallas Texas, holds a BFA in sculpture from Stephen F. Austin University and an MFA in Fiber Art from University of North Texas. In *Tignon*, she presents a collection of unique headwraps, exhibiting a vast range of color, form and wrapping techniques.

The headwraps are accompanied by large scale contemporary photographs and essays providing visual and written historical context to the Tignon Law.

Antoinette narrates a tour of *Tignon* on the DAI Smartify venue. Download the app or visit: <https://smartify.org/tour/tignon>

Image Credit: Chesley Antoinette, "No be ganado mi libertad sobre las espaldas", Photography: Inkjet print on cotton paper with archival pigment, 26X40", 2020

*Art shows us how to be brave.*



## Reflections

### Kristen Kaas

#### Fall 2020 Depot Entry

“I see the tradition of weaving as a connection to the past. I carry this connection forward with a modern aesthetic and through the use of new materials and processes.”

—Kristen Kaas

Working with fiber, Kristen Kaas designs and weaves pieces exploring texture and dimension. On view this fall are two large scale weavings in a soft pallet. Tufts of thread escape woven edges while iridescent yarn shines sporadically yet rhythmically throughout the

weft. Kaas’ experimental techniques result in contemporary designs rooted in traditional methods. Her current work focuses on weaving layered structures to create dimension.

Drawing inspiration from interiors, vintage furniture design and apparel design, Kaas explores how textiles enhance our environment and daily experiences, focusing on their tactile nature. She explains, “I believe that surrounding ourselves with a rich sensory experience will have an effect on our physical and emotional awareness.”

At her home studio, Kaas surrounds herself with curated image clippings, estate sale yarns and found objects; each contributing to a growing list of ideas for weavings, collabs, and products. Kaas’ designs

are driven by these ideas and evolve throughout her weaving process, resulting in a range of work from sculptural to wearable.

Raised in Stillwater, Minnesota Kaas was inspired by her local artistic community. She earned a bachelor’s degree in art from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities and an Associate of Applied Science in apparel design from the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City.

*This activity is made possible in part by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Arrowhead Regional Arts Council, thanks to appropriations from Minnesota State Legislature’s General Fund.*

Image Credit: Kristen Kaas, “Rivulet Reflection” Tabby with supplementary warp Cotton, Flax, Wool, Nylon, Rayon, Mylar 60” x 21.5”, 2020

# UPCOMING



## Fall

### Transitions

A temporary installation of work for sale, featuring artists recently and currently exhibiting in the Duluth Art Institute Galleries.

Hosted in the St. Louis County Depot Great Hall this fall, Tuesdays through Sundays, 10am-3pm.

### Disperse

Susanna Gaunt's *Integument* includes the performative installation piece "Disperse." Gaunt will be live from the George Morrison Gallery as she adds to her seed bank at 12pm on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of October, November, and December. Witness Gaunt as she hand-stitches a collection of translucent photographic moments. These seed pods accumulate as the show matures, transforming the exhibition over time.

View the live performance by subscribing to the Duluth Art Institute's YouTube channel. Viewer questions are encouraged as Gaunt discusses her process.

## Winter

### Winter 2021 Exhibitions

#### *Thrown*

Steffl Gallery

A juried ceramic exhibition

#### *Visual Voice of Autism*

Harrison Heinks

Morrison Gallery

#### *Personal*

Ann Magnusson

Corridor Gallery

### 63rd Arrowhead Regional Biennial Open Call

The open call for the 63rd Arrowhead Regional Biennial begins January 11 and runs through March 31, 2021. The Duluth Art Institute is proud to announce the 63rd Arrowhead Regional Biennial juror, Kayla Aubid.

Mark your calendars and watch our website for upcoming details.

## Spring

### Annual Member Show

The Annual Member Show, an exhibition traditionally held in the winter, has been moved to the Spring in hopes of accommodating larger groups. All members of the Duluth Art Institute are encouraged to submit work created in 2020 for the member show. This exhibition will be on view April 16 - May 18, 2021.

Image Credit: Susanna Gaunt, "Release", Wire, hog casings, roving wool and paper, 9'x4', 2020

# Fiber Artists Share Common Threads

**Alyssa Swanson**

I, like many, have a love affair with fiber art. On many occasions I have been caught in the act of crocheting with my eyes closed before bed, fighting sleep for just one more row. Through my graduate study of fiber arts, I've explored topics like the subjugation of craft, voice, performance, and spirituality as they related to my own experiences and those of the women in my family. Though fiber art is a topic I am incredibly passionate about, as I began to write a voice told me I needed to look beyond myself. I could not simply recount my own story on these pages. I have learned so much of what I know about art from this community, largely by watching and listening. I asked community members to reflect upon their own creative practices. The following is a curated record of their thoughts. Their words spoke so strongly to me, that editing them felt hollow. For this reason, I have made two versions of this article and you can find the full version on our website.

*To Susanna Gaunt, Olawole Famule, Liz Vandersteen, Torina Stark, Kristen Kaas, Erika Mock, Shannon Laing, Blair Treuer, and Tia Keo, thank you for continuing to teach me.*



## Why do you work with these materials/processes?

There is something so soothing in the repetitive actions of sewing and weaving. I am attracted to the monotony but also the gratification of visible progress throughout production. I am drawn to the materiality of fiber, its tactile quality, and the sensations this induces—even without touching the surface. —**Gaunt**

I never woke up one day and decided to be an artist working with these fiber materials/processes; I was born into it. A

further explanation is necessary here. I had two step-grandmothers, Iya alaro (a renowned indigo dye maker and dyer) and Iya aranwu (a renowned yarn spinner), while my grandmother too, Iya-onikijipa (vertical-loom cloth weaver), specialized in a kind of Yoruba (of Nigeria) traditional handwoven cloth known as kijipa. —**Famule**

Although I make art with a variety of media, working with fibers feels, to me, like coming home. —**Vandersteen**

## Have you noticed a recent shift in the genre of fiber art?

People are finally starting to take fiber arts more seriously as an art form although, it has a ways to go. Because it is female-dominated, it is not normally included in historical art studies or featured in museum or gallery exhibits and when it is, it is often referred to as a “craft” or “traditional woman’s work.” But I am seeing a shift in that approach. —**Stark**

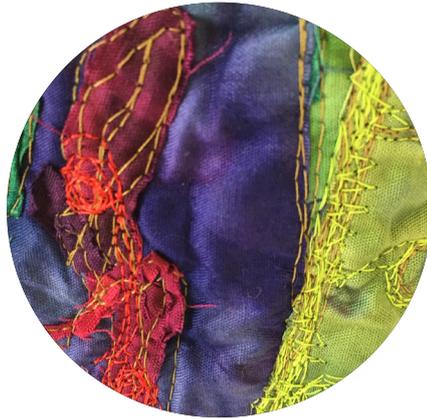
Trends tend to be very cyclical. But yes, there has definitely been a revival of the traditional fiber arts over the past several years that has followed along with the shift towards handmade and a greater focus on the process and materials involved with handmade goods in general. —**Kaas**

I work with bringing art to the everyday, so the shift I've noticed is more and more people using some form of stitching to find calm and balance. Fiber is accessible. It can be a medium of meditation, healing, and resistance. —**Mock**

**How does/can fiber art specifically engage with where we are in 2020?**

Our brains are filled with uncertainty, fear, hope, anger, frustration, and often all in one day... to knit slowly and thoughtfully using the process, rather than the end product, as the focus and thoughtful approaches are what we are in desperate need of right now. —**Laing**

I think that fiber art lends a certain accessibility that may be harder to acquire with other mediums. Some people may have never picked up a paint brush, or built something with their hands but every human on the planet comes into contact with and actively engages with fiber on a daily basis through the clothes they wear, their bedding, etc. —**Treuer**



Through the physical motions and conceptual notions of weaving, I explore unweaving. How might we create space within ourselves by loosening the fibers of our identities as individuals and as a society? —**Keo**



Image Credit (Clockwise beginning on top of the opposite page): Torina Stark, Erika Mock, Tia Keo, Kristen Kaas, Shannon Laing

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# Member Spotlight



## Shannon Laing

I am the Main Street Lincoln Park Program Director at Ecolibrium3, fiber/knit artist, writer, and improvisational comedian. When I moved from Minneapolis in 2002, I found some of my first Duluth friends in the knitting community while an affiliate of the Minnesota Knitters Guild was being formed here. More community connections were made over my 13 years at Whole Foods Co-op and involvement with occasional theater events, most recently as a part of the Maritime Improv Crew performing (pre-COVID) monthly at Fitger's Theater. As someone who deeply appreciates makers and builders, I consider myself lucky to be able to promote and advocate for the Lincoln Park neighborhood both personally and professionally.

### Why did you become a member?

After years of enjoying events at the Depot, I had that forehead slap moment when I realized how much of that programming is DAI-related. I thought I'd better get on board and support this organization promoting art in our community. Also, there are a lot of people who aren't able to contribute financially. I think that art should be accessible to all, so if my membership dollars can help make someone else's DAI experience possible, I'm all about that, too.

### How has art impacted you or your community?

When I was entering the 8th grade I wanted so badly to learn how to draw and paint but was told by a counselor that "you're too smart to take art." To this day, that makes me both sad and angry on many levels. Although I dutifully signed up for Algebra 2 (and hated it with zero retained comprehension), I did continue with choir and band. Those creative outlets saved me. They helped me be a better student and more well-rounded human with a wider world view. Art is not only necessary for the beauty it brings to the world, but constant exposure and practice in activities that tap our creative process helps us to think and approach problems differently. A well-crafted sentence, coming up with out-of-the box solutions to big problems, the wood shop in grandpa's garage—all of these things are rooted in artistic

expression.

The murals that have been an incredible addition to Lincoln Park speak to this. The first one that went up was preceded by all kinds of "someone is going to vandalize that" and "it's not going to stand up to our weather." Those naysayers were almost instantly proven wrong. Every mural that has gone up since has brought a different artist's point of view and more energy to the street. It adds to the unique aesthetic and encourages people to walk around the neighborhood.

### As an art enthusiast, what opportunities do you find at the DAI?

A wide variety of installations, free family activity opportunities, artist information and resources, workshops both for expanding knowledge and art skills—all with the openness to add or adapt programming to respond to artists and our community. This past year, I also found encouragement to enter something in the member show. From the time I wondered out loud if I should be a part of that exhibit to the day I picked up my piece afterward, DAI staff were nothing but supportive to someone who was feeling pretty vulnerable about putting what had been a mostly private pursuit in front of the public. Without that support, I never would have turned anything in. The DAI staff will never know what that meant to the kid who was told to not take an art class.

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\*indicates Board Member

# MUSINGS



Image credit: Alyssa Swanson, "apparition: stretch or drown", Inked tarlatan and thread, 96"x13", 2019

# Art as a Force for Change

## Mary Tennis



As Director of the St. Louis County Depot for just over a year, I have been inspired, educated, and challenged by the Duluth Art Institute (sometimes all at once!) In just this short time, there have been several exhibits in each one of their galleries here: from sculpture to film to sound to paint, the mediums are never stagnant. The DAI refuses, you see, to rest on its considerable laurels. Instead, they work hard to offer the viewer an experience that has impact; an experience that lingers; an experience that matters. Even in the face of disaster, the DAI very quickly led the vanguard and offered virtual artist talks, interactive gallery tours, and thoughtful reopening plans. All of

its pace, is powerful in many ways. At a time when many have forgotten the importance of art, the DAI presents innovative ways to demonstrate how indispensable it is. When we are afraid, we look to art to comfort and console us, as perusing through the virtual Smartify gallery did for me this spring. When we are complacent, we look to art to ask the questions many of us don't think to ask. As I viewed Shaun Chosa's incredible *War Paint* this winter, I marveled at the combination of pain points and aesthetic jubilation and pondered the possibilities of such balance in the universe. Just when we think we've seen everything under the sun, art presents a fierce new face through antique medium and repetition of moving images in

change itself as you trace its movement through the decades.

It is rare that an organization with such a long pedigree is so nimble, but through steadfast leadership and clear mission, it has navigated throughout time: not just as part of a pack, but as a breakaway arts organization. And here's the thing: they really don't have to. The DAI could relax, phone it in, and plod along. Especially in this chaotic time—no one would blame them. But they have done no such thing: they have advocated, installed, reached out, and networked from the minute their galleries closed in Mid-March and—from my vantage— they have not slowed down.

● ●

The DAI embodies change with a dynamism that many organizations, large and small, can learn from.

● ●

this is just to say, that as a corporeal force, the DAI embodies change with a dynamism that many organizations, large and small, can learn from. I certainly have. This evolution, compiled with

Allen Killian-Moore's *I Am What's Wrong With The World*.

The Duluth Art Institute presents narratives of change and reflections of change, yes, but also embodies

The force of art is so powerful because it draws power from inside, even as its very nature is external. In a time when many of us are polarized, this type of magnetic perspective is precious. We need to confront ourselves. With beauty, yet not ignoring bigotry; with blasphemy, yet bold choices. The Duluth Art Institute has created, through programming and curation, such confrontation, and our community is better for it.

*Art is the most accurate depiction of our current time and place.*



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The Duluth Art Institute's programs and services are made possible in part through the support of the Minnesota State Arts Board through an appropriation by the State Legislature from the Minnesota arts and cultural heritage fund with money from the vote of the people of Minnesota on November 4, 2008.

**The mission of the Duluth Art Institute is to enrich daily life with dynamic, innovative visual arts programming that upholds excellence and promotes active and inclusive community participation.**

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#### **Board of Directors**

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#### **Visitor Information**

Galleries and offices are located on Level Four of the **St. Louis County Depot - 506 W Michigan Street**. While some Depot museums require paid admission, the DAI is always free to members. Galleries are accessible by elevator. The DAI Darkroom is on Level Two, and the Fiber Studio is on Level One. The DAI Ceramics Studio, Printmaking Studio, and multi-use classrooms are located at the **Lincoln Park Building - 2229 W 2<sup>nd</sup> St.** (corner of N 23<sup>rd</sup> Ave. W).

#### **Gallery Hours**

Open Daily 10 AM - 3 PM  
Tuesday - Friday

#### **Business Office Hours**

By appointment, please call  
218-733-7560 or email Addison  
Mueller.

#### **Parking**

Metered parking for the Depot is available on city streets, and the Library/Depot Pay Lot - 502 W Michigan Street. A bus transit center is two blocks away with year-round access, and DAI is also accessible by the Port Town Trolley in summer months. Parking for events occurring after 5 pm is free. For the Lincoln Park Building, a small parking lot is available on the West side of the building, as well as free on-street parking.

**dAi** duluthART  
institute



#### **DAI Business Office & Galleries**

506 W Michigan St.  
Duluth, MN 55802  
218-733-7560



#### **DAI Lincoln Park Building**

2229 W 2nd St.  
Duluth, MN 55806  
218-723-1310

# HUE



In this Issue:

## Identity

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Fiber Artists Share Common  
Threads  
Shannon Laing  
Art as a Force for Change

