

Blogpost #antainartists

Úna Curley | Textile Metaphors

Have you ever wondered why some artists choose to work with textiles?

My mum used to say that her knitting would always show how she was feeling. The tension would vary from tight to loose depending on her moods and could ruin a plain knit jumper. I've always been one to pick up the knitting needles and holding them wrong (as my sister would point out!), I would just start to knit nothing in particular. I could never follow a pattern because the lines on the page would split and I could never find my place. I would knit the start of one line and the end of the next so nothing ever turned out as it should. Of course, there was no such thing as dyslexia back then - I was just stupid! So now, years later as a working artist, I find the rich narrative in textiles unequalled by any other medium. Especially when my work focuses on communication and the difficulties associated with words, concepts, feelings and emotions. Visual Art gave me a voice where words seemed inadequate.

Yarn, Weave, Knit, Spin, Pattern, Fabric, Flexible, Transparent, Opaque, Unravel, Frayed, Knotted, Tangled, Twisted, Stiff, Faded, Used, Worn, Tension, Loose, Tight, Wound up, Rip out - the list is endless. If I wanted my work to convey any of these messages I could readily find something in my sewing room to create an image. For instance, what are the following images saying to you?



As well as textiles, I also use natural, free, industrial waste or recycled materials to highlight the impact of fast living and subsequent waste. And I look to our heritage and culture to find 'the baby in the bath water' before we throw it out!

Úna Curley is An Táin Arts Centre's visual artist in residence. Úna will be in residence in the Basement Gallery studio during July, August and September 2016. Follow her progress on Twitter @una_curley #antainartists