The Craft(y) Revival

Community and Knowledge-Sharing in Textile-based Crafts

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Abstract

The Craft(y) Revival: Community and Knowledge-Sharing in Textile-based Crafts is a thesis exhibition and curatorial paper that celebrates contemporary modes of knowledge-sharing between textile-craft practitioners, while also connecting contemporary practices to earlier models of knowledge-sharing and community within the discipline. In the twenty-first century, with the widespread adoption of the internet and the rise of social media, the manner in which knowledge has been shared has evolved to crafters' needs and reshaped their process in creating.

Including work by artists Lizz Aston, Amy Bagshaw, and Sarah Zanchetta, in addition to community participants, this thesis explores the contemporary role of online networks as a method of fostering community in textile-based crafts, with a focus on North America. I look to earlier moments of communal practice, and particularly feminist and queer community in fibre art histories, identifying parallels and divergences between contemporary textile-based craft communities and previous such communities. In this thesis, I hope to reveal the potential of online community and knowledge-sharing methods in the current revival of craft and DIY practices, highlighting the contribution of communal knowledge-sharing methods and the resulting production of community.

Acknowledgements

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CONTRIBUTIONS

I would like to thank all participants who contributed to the success of *The Craft(y) Revival: Community and Knowledge-Sharing in Textile-based Crafts*.

Yarn Bomb! Open Call Participants:

With special thanks to my Mum, who helped me collect and connect all the yarn squares together, producing the *Yarn Bomb!* project.

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Research Participants:

Claudia Aikman, Amy Bowring, Jasmine Canaviri, Kelsey Drummond, Molly Farquharson, Stephanie Fortin, Ashley Hemmings, Barbara Hollis, Diana Kirkaldy, Christine Manges, Mariane Martin, Heather Riley, Karen Rowe, Casper Sutton-Fosman, Marjorie Wilcox, Sarah Zanchetta.

PREFACE

Within this thesis, *The Craft(y) Revival: Community and Knowledge-Sharing in Textile-based Crafts*, community is evidently a main theme: I argue the importance of it and why it is needed, how it is built, and how it continues to grow – but what *is* it? There are areas of the complex, intersectional nature of 'community' that cannot be defined – I view community as an individual experience, with no single definition that encompasses all expressions of this concept. As someone who identifies as a 'third culture kid',[1] community is a complex concept. Regardless of where I found myself in the world, I always (unconsciously) sought community; and it is my own experience of community, both within and outside of craft, that provided the initial motivation for this thesis.

I grew up in the United Arab Emirates, spending twelve years there, but was never allowed to call it my true home – we couldn't apply for citizenship and my parents still held a lot of national pride for England. I was born in the United Kingdom, but we left when I was two and visited somewhat regularly during summer holidays. At fourteen, I experienced a third culture – Canadian – where my family immigrated to and has since acquired dual-citizenship status.

I was accepted into OCAD University's MFA program in the spring of 2021, and made the decision to move with my partner to Toronto, so that I could attend. Upon getting settled it became clear the excitement of opportunities attached to both the city and the program had dimmed, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For the first year of the program all classes were online, there were limited-to-no social events, the city reverted into lock-down again during the winter period, removing external opportunities. Once again, I was online. During this time, the

[1] A term created by US sociologist, Ruth Hill Useem, in the 1950s, 'third culture kids' (TCKs) are defined as "children who spend their formative years in places that are not their parents' homeland… TCKs often develop an identity that's rooted in people rather than places." Kate Mayberry, "Third Culture Kids: Citizens of Everywhere and Nowhere," BBC Worklife (BBC, November 18, 2016), https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20161117-third-culture-kids-citizens-of-everywhere-and-nowhere.

thing I desired most for my own mental wellbeing was human connection, be it mediated through online sources or in-person experiences (where possible). To achieve this, I sought assistance from an old friend present at other times throughout my life when I had sought comfort: Craft.

While craft may have begun as a childhood pastime initiated by the adults in my life to keep me occupied, its effects have followed me through to adulthood and academia. During this time, my own development of the understanding of craft has transferred from a *crafty* hobby into a serious design form and fine art, however, the adults in my life who played a role in my initial introduction to craft, have remained.

The sound of a sewing machine always manages to trigger a memory of my mother sitting at our kitchen table, pushing blue and white checkered fabric through the whirring-machine. Her face is focused, her hands are stable, and her right-foot is pulsing beneath the table. She reverses the stitch and pulls the fabric from under the needle, exposing white-frills bustled and swaying. What used to be yards of fabric now revealed itself as an iconic pinafore-costume, measured for my sister to wear in the production of 'The Wizard Of Oz.'

My mother has always been a key figure in my experience with textiles: she shared her skills and knowledge with me, and when I started to further pursue the theoretical and academia side of these practices, I returned the favour. Like many who work within textile-based crafts, my own experience with the discipline was taught to me by a senior familial figure motivated by skill transmission. While an initial community through textiles may begin with a family member, like in my experience, the passion that practitioners have for their craft is infectious, leaving you to crave their presence and motivations in your own practice. In highschool, I took 'fashion' as an elective course where I was challenged with using a sewing machine; I had previously known hand-sewing and had only used a sewing machine to sew a straight line, never to make an item.

In this course I learned to construct bags, clothing, home textiles, and more, and began realizing the potentials now available to me. I became an ‘overachiever’ in the course, making items outside of class time and producing more than required for course credit.

Community encapsulates like-minded people with a shared, invested passion – this is prevalent within the textile community. In my experience, and one that appears to resonate across that of the research participants I interviewed for this thesis, this community is also characterized by a desire to encourage crafters at all levels or skill and experience, and to share their own knowledge.

In relation to the context of this thesis, researching community within textile-based crafts gave me an opportunity to connect in this new stage and place during my life, as a woman, newly embracing queer identity in a straight-facing relationship, who felt isolated in a new-to-me city now known as Toronto. During the first year of my graduate degree, I experienced an identity crisis; it was the people I met during this time (fellow students, queer identifying folk, and craft-community members) who showed me how to allow myself to be my authentic self - that’s where there is strength in community. It is this same strength that I sought to investigate in this thesis, to show how the power of community is working to keep textile-based crafts alive.

CURATORIAL ESSAY

THE CRAFT(Y) REVIVAL

"*As individuals we are strands; as communities we are interwoven.*"[2] - John Chaich

Wrapped in cloth at birth, seated on upholstered furnishings, sleeping in cotton sheets, dressed in linen, or bundled in knitted yarn, textiles are a constant presence throughout our lives. The history of textiles dates back over 50,000 years: their importance is evident in the historical and anthropological record, in addition to their continual presence in material culture up to the present moment.[3] While our experience with this material is individual, the series of processes involved in creating textiles, their passing through the hands of many individuals from origin to end, can be considered a record of communal experiences. Whether a piece is made for us or by us, purchased from a retail store or independent artisan, newly-made or gently-used and thrifted, the life of a textile is also collective.

Situated inside an old textile factory,[4] now a building for OCAD University's School of Graduate Studies, the OCAD Graduate Gallery in 205 Richmond Street West hosts *The Craft(y)*

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[2]John Chaich, *Queer Threads: Crafting Identity & Community: January 17-March 16, 2014* (New York, NY: Leslie + Lohman Museum of Gay and Lesbian Art, 2014), 3.

[3] Elizabeth Wayland Barber, *Women's Work: The First 20000 Years: Women, Cloth and Society in Early Times* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1994), 43. Identifying the emergence of textiles in history is difficult due to the perishable characteristics of fibre, however, it is believed that textiles existed in the Upper Palaeolithic period: one piece of "neatly spun and plied cordage has made it through from about 15,000 $_{B.C.}$"
Additionally, Kassia St Clair presents that "a tiny sliver of twisted fibres – just 0.7 millimetres long – was found in a site occupied by Neanderthals 90,000 years ago," suggesting that Homo sapiens were not the first species to have made thread. This is supported by Virginia Postrel's writing on paleontologist Bruce Hardy, who found that Neanderthal people had made string using fibres from the inner bark of conifer trees. Kassia St Clair, *The Golden Thread: How Fabric Changed History* (London, UK: John Murray (Publishers), 2018), 33. ; Virginia Postrel, *The Fabric of Civilization: How Textiles Made the World* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2021), 9.

[4] Architect Benjamin Brown was commissioned by the Gelber Brothers in 1923-1924 to construct a textile factory - the brothers founded the Imperial Clothing Company, which later became Gelber Brothers Woollens. There is no evidence they used the building for their own operations, but instead leased it out to other garment manufacturers; Ontario Jewish Archives, "The New Textile Building at 205 Richmond St. W.," The New Textile Building at 205 Richmond St. W. | Ontario Jewish Archives (Ontario Jewish Archives), accessed November 15, 2022, https://search.ontariojewisharchives.org/Permalink/descriptions282570.

Revival: Community and Knowledge-Sharing in Textile-based Crafts, from March 2nd-9th 2023. *The Craft(y) Revival* celebrates contemporary textile-based practices that focus on participant engagement, knowledge-sharing, and community: the works in the exhibition, by Lizz Aston, Amy Bagshaw, and Sarah Zanchetta, and the programming organized around the exhibition, all serve to highlight these themes, which I identify as key to contemporary textile-based crafts.

The idea of community has expanded and evolved through the introduction of contemporary tools, such as social media and the internet. Where textile-based craft communities[5] were previously defined by physical and social proximity (family, neighbours, church groups, etc.), there is now the expansion of community via online and social-media means across the globe, allowing crafters at any skill-level to (virtually) locate other like-minded and creatively-charged individuals. This expansion of practicing craft and knowledge-sharing, has allowed marginalized individuals to find community – and even family – where they have not previously been able to do so. Textile-based craft communities have adapted as well, transforming the online spaces they share, the methods of knowledge-sharing, and attracting more diverse communities.[6]

In gendered histories of textiles – both inside and outside of traditional gender binaries – there is strong evidence of textile-based practitioners establishing and fostering communities, and of knowledge-sharing, although the modes of their practice may vary.[7] Today,

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[5] Throughout this paper, the term 'crafter' can be read as synonymous with 'maker,' in addition to 'crafting' being synonymous with 'making.' I discuss hierarchies between craft and art – these distinctions are important, however, I believe the findings in this thesis can be applied to communities of both professional and amateur craft practitioners: see pages 7-11.

[6] This new model of community holds particular promise for queer-identifying folk, whose use of textiles has a long history of offering safety, acknowledgment, and expression of their identity: see pages 20-24. For further reading, look to Daniel Fountain, "Survival of the Knittiest: Craft and Queer-Feminist Worldmaking," MAI, December 13, 2021, https://maifeminism.com/survival-of-the-knittest-craft-and-queer-feminist-worldmaking/.

[7] In Barber's chapter '*Courtyard Sisterhood*,' *Figure 3.5., 3.6.*, and *3.8.* depict women weaving together throughout different times in history – for example, a model of Middle Kingdom Egypt made in the Eleventh Dynasty, ca. 2000 B.C. (*Figure 3.5.*, 80); a Greek vase of about 560 B.C. (*Figure 3.6.*, 82); and a "scene incised on a vase of the Hallstatt culture (mid-first millennium B.C.), from Sopron, Hungary" (*Figure 3.8.*, 88). Barber also discusses the act of 'settling' and building communities which allowed "the women [to] bring their smaller crafts out into the communal

knowledge-sharing in textile-based crafts has evolved alongside the rise of social media communities; while some elements and methods of previous craft eras remain, the online shift in craft practices has offered crafters access to globally-sourced knowledge which in turn fosters global communities.[8]

Feminist Fibre Arts (1960 - 1980)

The contemporary revival of textile-based craft cannot be discussed without acknowledging the modern history of textile movements within Western-culture that paved the way for current craft communities and knowledge-sharing practices. Prior to the 20th century, few had the luxury to participate in making textiles for their own pleasure rather than making them for the necessity of the item, in particular lower and middle class women.[9] As amateur textile-based practices became more public in the latter half of the 20th century, professional female practitioners struggled to gain artistic recognition as their work was delegated to a lesser status of art, being begrudgingly accepted as a 'hobby art.'[10] In "Something from Nothing (Toward a Definition of Women's 'Hobby Art')", art critic and activist Lucy R. Lippard discussed the legitimation of women's fibre art in 20th century institutions, and credits to some extent the feminist art movements in the later-half of the 20th century that forefronted this

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yard in good weather, to chat together and help one another as they worked and watched the children play."(85). Barber, 71-100.

[8] While the communities themselves are open to all participants globally with access to the internet, my research here primarily focuses on Westernized, English-speaking communities, globally located within North America. Other online communities serving local and global communities in other languages or in parts of the world would perhaps give different results, although the themes presented in my thesis, of community fostering and knowledge-sharing, would likely still hold true.

[9] Lucy R. Lippard writes that the shift in leisurely practices came due with the indoctrination of labour-saving devices: "Now that the homebound woman has a little more leisure, thanks to so-called labour-saving devices, her pastimes are likely to be cultural in character. The less privileged she is, the more likely she is to keep her interests *inside* the home with the focus of her art remaining the same as that of her work." Lucy R. Lippard, "Something from Nothing (Toward a Definition of Women's 'Hobby Art')," in *Craft: Documents of Contemporary Art*, ed. Tanya Howard (London, UK: Whitechapel Gallery, 2018), 31.; See also Rozsika Parker, *The Subversive Stitch: Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine*, 3rd ed. (London, UK: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2010).

[10] Lippard, 34.

acceptance.[11] It is not surprising that heteropatriarchal society accepted/legitimized male artists working with fibre – such as Claes Oldenburg[12] – prior to female fibre artists, even when Anni Albers, one of the most influential textile artists of the twentieth century, was the first weaver to exhibit solo at the Museum of Modern art in 1949.[13] Where female members of the Bauhaus weaving workshop[14] – such as Anni Albers, Gunta Stölz, and Otti Berger – can be examined as an foundational force for female-made fibre art to be considered legitimate forms of art,[15] rather than being perceived as 'hobby art' or functional domestic work used to pass the time. Female artists working with textiles and fibres in the 1960s and 1970s – for instance, Lenore Tawney, Sheila Hicks, Judy Chicago, Eva Hesse, and Harmony Hammond, to name a few found throughout this period – continued this battle of legitimization.[16] Through ways of building community and passing knowledge between each other, a textile revival began in the late 20th century, led by women who no longer accepted their predetermined roles of domestic housewives and hobby crafters assigned by heteropatriarchal society.[17]

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[11] Lippard, 33.
[12] Lippard writes: "It took a man, Claes Oldenburg, to make fabric sculpture acceptable, though his wife, Patty [Patricia Muchinski (Mucha)], did the actual sewing." Lippard, 33.
[13] Brenda Lin, "Textiles: The Art of Women's Work | Sotheby's," Sotheby's , March 7, 2020, https://www.sothebys.com/en/articles/textiles-the-art-of-womens-work.
[14] The longstanding identification of the Bauhaus school (1919-1933) with avant-garde art, architecture, and design, primarily by male artists and designers, has been challenged in recent decades, with a reappraisal of the role of women in the school's history, and particularly with respect the weaving workshops and the textile works produced there. See, among others, Sigrid Wortmann Weltge, *Women's Work: Textile Art From the Bauhaus* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1993).
[15] For further reading on this, see: T'ai Smith, *Bauhaus Weaving Theory: From Feminine Craft to Mode of Design* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2014).
[16] Elissa Auther, *String, Felt, Thread: The Hierarchy of Art and Craft in American Art* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 21.
[17] Barber studied Judith Brown's "Note on the Division of Labour by Sex" including Brown's discussion of child care, that "nowhere in the world is the rearing of children primarily the responsibility of men…," (29) thus women were often assigned jobs compatible with child watching and raising. Barber continues that this led to women building skills in textile crafts that did not require them to leave home often, crafts that were considered "repetitive, easy to pick up at any point, reasonably child-safe, and easily done at home." (30) Barber, 29-30.
Art historian Rozsika Parker's writing *The Subversive Stitch* can be used to examine the lack of change in these positions between genders, as she writes that during the renaissance "the model merchant's wife was to be entirely subservient to her husband and to practise domestic crafts," confirming how long women had been in assigned domestic roles. Parker, 63.

It is important to note that the call for female-made fibre art legitimization coincides with the social movement of second-wave feminism[18]; as some scholars have noted, community textile movements have their own forms of revival during – and parallel to – political movements. As artist and scholar Sabrina Gschwandtner comments in her 2008 essay "Knitting is…" : "Knitting has, afterall, become popular during every major American war. During wartime, knitters have used their craft for civic participation, protest, therapeutic distraction and even direct attack."[19] The second-wave of feminism could be compared to a form of war for women's rights, in a time of fighting for reproductive rights and equality, and fighting against female-targeted domestic violence and sexual harassment.[20] While women were demanding autonomy and safety in their existence, female fibre artists set to differentiate their practice from that of hobbyist crafters which became an issue due to the popularization of crafts, as Elissa Auther writes, "... fibre gained new visibility in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s outside the high art world in a variety of other social and artistic contexts and practices that fostered the revivals of the traditional crafts of hand-weaving, quilting, embroidery, dyeing, knotting, and basketry."[21] In addition, curators Mildred Constantine and Jack Lenor Larsen "established themselves as leading experts of the fibre movement,"[22] through *Wall Hangings*, an exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in 1969 that introduced audiences to an "international

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[18] The second-wave of feminism coincided with the fibre-art legitimization movement from the 1960s-80s. In generalized terms, where the first-wave fought for the right to vote, second-wave feminists fought for equality of the sexes in all areas - home, workplace, etc.

[19] Sabrina Gschwandtner, "Knitting Is...," in *Craft*, ed. Tanya Harrod (London, UK: Whitechapel Gallery, 2018), 217.

[20] This summary applies to second-wave feminist movements found in Western-culture, specifically America; Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2007).

[21] Auther continues: "These contexts and practices included the back-to-the-land movement and hippie self-fashioning, the renewed interest in folk art around the time of the American Bicentennial, new trends in the personalization of clothing (including the adoption of African dress by African Americans), the feminist recuperation of women's craft traditions, the revival of traditional arts of minority communities in the South and Southwest, and the popular craze of macramé," 25.

[22] Auther, 32.

survey of primarily large-scale abstract woven and off-loom work in fiber."[23] In Constantine and Larsen's book, *Beyond Craft: The Art Fabric*, they write: "The artists who create with fiber have united creativity and intuition, principles and skills to form an aesthetic entity. They have molded and extended the meaning of their medium and transcended technique and materials; they have liberated their work from tradition and thus heightened their recognition by critics and public."[24] With this, they seek to separate the fibre art movement from the domestic connotations it is often associated with.

Second-wave feminism is mentioned here to signify the unification of women for a common cause at this historical moment, but the same unity applies to textile-based communities and their knowledge-sharing practices during this time. This era is evoked in contemporary textile artist Lizz Aston's *Beginning to Macramé* (2009),[25] which highlights the macramé craze that emerged in the late-1960s and 1970s; Aston credits the inspiration of the work to instructional 'how-to' diagrams from that time, engaging directly with these during her process.[26] As Elissa Auther notes, during the late-1960s and early-1970s, a multitude of macramé-making resources were produced and distributed throughout North America:

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[23] Auther continues: "Planned since 1966, the exhibition toured eleven cities in 1968 and 1969. In February 1969, it returned to MoMA, where it was installed, at Constantine's insistence, in the museum's first-floor special exhibition galleries, rather than in the Department of Architecture and Design. To the American fiber triumvirate of Leonore Tawney, Sheila Hicks, and Claire Zeisler, Constantine and Larson added Kay Sekimachi, Walter Nottingham, and Ed Rossbach, among others. Generally speaking, the most advanced work in the exhibition came from outside the United States, including that of Yugoslavian (Croatian) Jagoda Buic and the Poles Magdalena Abakanowicz and Wojciech Sadley, whose woven forms radically departed from the conventions of tapestry undergoing revival in Europe at the time." 32-33.

[24] Mildred Constantine and Jack Lenor Larsen, *Beyond Craft: The Art Fabric* (New York, NY: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1972), 7. It is worth noting that Constantine and Larson do not use the term "fibre artist" in their book.

[25] Auther defines macramé for readers as: "The term *macramé*, which denotes a specific form of lateral knotting thought to be Arabic in origin, referred in the late 1960s and 1970s to a particular genre of useful objects (jewelry, belts, lampshades, plant holders, and hammocks, for instance) produced in a variety of "decorative" knotting techniques," 26.

[26] Aston bridges domestic/amateur craft and professional fibre work through inviting audience members to enact the process of learning macramé knotting with instructions from a time that sought to differentiate the two. Aston's work itself is distinctly classed as professional, using Constantine and Larsen's definition: "The Art Fabric is a construction, individually created by an artist. It may be woven on a loom or free of a loom or may be produced by knotting, knitting, crochet, or other techniques."; Constantine and Larsen, 7.

> The macramé trend was enormous, its popularity attested to by the sales figures of fiber artist and macramé specialist Mary Walker Philip's best-selling how-to book *Step-by-Step Macramé* (1970), which had sold 700,000 copies by 1972 and more than a million copies by 1976. … Macramé kits and advertisements for supplies and lessons were ubiquitous in the period's craft magazines and local newspapers and could even be found in issues of *Craft Horizons*, the most exclusive of periodicals devoted to contemporary, nonfunctional work in traditional craft media.[27]

Aston invites audience members to engage with this past knowledge through participatory play with the soft-sculpture: hanging from the ceiling are soft-sculptures representative of macramé knots in shape, that have rope textures printed on the front but written instructions on the reverse. Through the separation in the strings, and combining of knots, the instructions do not create a 'whole picture' of how to complete the macramé technique. The instructions on the reverse of the piece are broken due the shape of the work – viewing this in a contemporary context can, Aston suggests, demonstrate broken or lost knowledge from previous generations and eras, even as it passes to the next.[28] During the heightened time of fibre art legitimacy from the 1960s - 1980s, there was also a shift in the amateur/hobby practices and generational transmission of textile-based skills that often relate to the domestic realm.

Generational Knowledge

Through their shared practice of producing functional wares – such as clothing, regalia, bedding, curtains, among other items, and the act of mending such items too – women created social communities with each other where they could gather, share knowledge, and practice together.[29] Knowledge of these practices was also traditionally passed through intergenerational

[27]Auther, 26-27.
[28] Lizz Aston, artist interview during a studio visit by Paige Lauren Stephen, January 17th, 2023.
[29] It is important to note that while many gain their initial textile-based skills from senior, female family members this is not always the case. Additionally, I would like to acknowledge the professional and formal training that many textile-based and fibre-artists have undertaken. While I discuss textile-based craft at large in this thesis, with the hopes that many themes can be applied to both amateur and professional practitioners, all three artists featured in

teaching and observing, from older female relatives to younger ones. As Sonali Thakkar offers in *Knitting Lesson*:

> Contemporary knitting culture is marked by a generational break, for while in my mother's life knitting was something one learned in school, a necessary skill upon which one could rely, for women of my age, at least in certain class, knitting signifies pleasure, leisure, and disposable income. Its practitioners and enthusiasts discuss and celebrate the art in sometimes arch tones, frequently through the frame of feminist reclamation.[30]

Thakkar's description of this shift from a common skill set based in intergenerational transmission and grounded in necessity, to a leisure practice dominated by a particular class whose conscious reclamation becomes an expression of personal politics, is common to much contemporary craft practice, beyond knitting alone.

In *The Craft(y) Revival*, contemporary fibre-based artist Amy Bagshaw draws on these traditions, considering both past and present in her project *Spools 2* (2022), which is a reflection on her earliest introduction to fibre arts through spool knitting (also referred to as spooling, corking, French knitting, or tomboy knitting). The small-scale repetitive action of spooling, taught by her grandmother, was used in producing each of the thirteen sculptures, which when displayed together produce dialogue between the works, and the space they occupy.[31]

Producing the work through juxtaposed materials (thrifted thread and constructed acrylic rods that have been fabricated by machine), Bagshaw provides commentary on the historical development of craft and its technologies. Formerly, spooling was done by wrapping threads around a number of nails that had been placed into a circle to form stitches; the nails were later

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The Craft(y) Revival: Community and Knowledge-Sharing in Textile-based Crafts are academically-formally trained and engaged in education. Nonetheless, what drew me to their work was that they engaged with themes found in this thesis not only in a formal way, but also with knowledge-transmission in their work as educators.

[30] Sonali Thakkar, "The Knitting Lesson," *WSQ: Women's Studies Quarterly* 36, no. 1/2 (2008): 174-180, https://doi.org/10.1353/wsq.0.0032, 177.

[31] Bagshaw's work often responds to space as she creates site-specific installation works engaging with architectural design(s). The first iteration of *Spools* was created amid the initial lockdown period of the coronavirus pandemic; as she responded to altered scale and time capacities available to her while balancing life in 'unprecedented times,' *Spools* offered an intimate approach to her usual large-scale fibre works. *Spools 2* is presented vertically to reflect the lineage that was considered while producing the work.

replace with wooden pegs, then plastic alternatives, and now Bagshaw has continued this evolution to produce an acrylic spool with acrylic rods protruding out of the 5x5 inch bases. The repetitive motion of producing knit-stitches by pulling each thread over-and-off of the spool has been supplemented by the artist, who instead implemented a structured pattern to be left remaining on the rods, slowly building and growing in a continuous motion. The collection of thread on the beam, is seen as reflecting the artist's own collecting of knowledge, and the act of doing so with her grandmother and sister, as represented by the three rods holding the threads.

The textile scholar Emma Shercliff notes that resurgences of popular craft traditions tend to "coincide with periods when craft skills are perceived to be almost in danger of being lost, or in transition to become something else through the introduction of new technologies, economics, or politics."[32] Bagshaw's return to spooling, as learnt from her grandmother but with an altered approach, could occupy both these positions. From an individual perspective, it is preserving a heritage crafting-process that has been passed down from a family member and that may be otherwise lost; from a cultural-technological perspective, however, *Spools 2*'s shifting materials, and shifting modes of production, join past and present modes of creation in craft.

In research interviews conducted in support of this thesis, the majority of participants in the project credited their foundational skill set as having been taught by a female family member (mother, grandmother, aunt, etc.). There may be at work here both a pressure, albeit subtle, to continue a generational practice, or to conform to a tradition; Lippard argued that craft constituted a social pressure for women, presumably asserted by one's surrounding physical community but also an intentional desire for connecting to these traditions, or what Lippard

[32] Emma Shercliff, "Hidden Values and Human Inconsistencies in Hand Stitching Processes," in *Crafting Textiles in the Digital Age*, ed. Nithikul Nimkulrat, Faith Kane, and Kerry Walton (London, UK: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020), 153-169, 153.

describes as an "emotional necessity to make connections with women in the past,"[33] as women "are resurrecting our mothers', aunts' and grandmothers' activities."[34]

Sustainability

Current creation cannot be discussed separately from contemporary social realities; often at the forefront of these discussions is the use and impact of social media. In relation to textile-based crafts, social media offers a myriad of uses, but most prominently community building and skill-sharing. At the same time, these forums also permit discursive engagement with political and economic themes reflecting larger social trends. One issue that frequently comes up in practitioner-led textile discussions, is the environmental impact of textiles and how crafters and textile artists might be able to continue practicing with sustainable considerations.

While thrifting is one excellent means of engaging with sustainable shopping (lightly) used goods rather than new, Zoe Edwards, host of the popular *Check Your Thread: Sewing More Sustainably* podcast, suggests that her listeners first "shop their stash,"[35] meaning they use scraps from projects or other fabrics they already have at home in their collection, before purchasing new or used fabric from a store.[36] Through her podcast, Patreon,[37] and other engagement

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[33] Lippard, 33.
[34] Lippard, 34-35.
[35] Zoe Edwards hosts "#62: Made My Wardrobe With Lydia Higginson," *Check Your Thread: Sewing More Sustainably*, October 17, 2022. https://checkyourthread.com/podcast/62-made-my-wardrobe-with-lydia-higginson/
[36] Throughout her episodes, Edwards features different guests, varying from artists to DIYers, business owners to suppliers, all who promote sustainable work. While, like many creatives who balance content creation for audiences, folks are invited to join on Patreon, the push for community doesn't exclusively include those who 'buy-in' to it.
[37] Toni Matthews-El contributor to Forbes magazine defines Patreon as "a subscription-based platform that connects content creators with either existing fans or those looking for creative projects to support. There are currently more than 200,000 active Patreon accounts and millions of patrons who support these members. While ad revenue earnings come from views and clicks, Patreon creators receive payment based on direct engagement. The site lets you incentivize patrons to take an active interest in your creations. For example, offering exclusive access to art not seen outside your Patreon account." Toni Matthews-El, "How Does Patreon Work? Here's What You Need to Know," ed. Kelly Main, Forbes (Forbes Magazine, August 18, 2022), https://www.forbes.com/advisor/business/how-does-patreon-work/.

activities, Edwards demonstrates another means of building a craft community through knowledge-sharing, in this case with a focus on sustainable practice.

Sustainable practices in textile crafts, which also form part of the knowledge-sharing and community building identified within online forums, derive from environmentalist tendencies but are also frequently anti-capitalist in nature. Through a survey of these online communities, and discussions with research participant interviews for *The Craft(y) Revival*, dissatisfaction with the commercial practices and capitalist industry were frequent themes: instead, these crafters assert the value –of both social and economic – of handmade or customized goods that better align with their own value system(s). In craft-focused curator and writer Gloria Hickey's words, the handcrafted object takes on a certain aura: "It is 'special' or rare because it is handmade and perhaps customised; sophisticated because the making of the object required skill; it is precious due to materials or time invested in labour; it is expressive – in terms of subject-matter, function, traditional or historical reference; and is enduring."[38] The value placed in craft communities on the handmade work is in stark contrast to the rise of rapacious 21st-century capitalism (online-giant Amazon saw a 220% rise in profits from the beginning of the global pandemic prior to the world 're-opening', for instance),[39] and also draws its particular power from the distinctness of the model it employs; against a demand for instant gratification and a changed relationship with material items, textile and craft practitioners challenge this with a return to traditional techniques and approaches, albeit with some key differences – such as a more self-conscious adoption of older techniques to new ends, for example.

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[38] Gloria Hickey, "Craft within a Consuming Society," in *The Culture of Craft: Status and future*, ed. Peter Dormer (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1997), 83-100, 85.

[39] Karen Weise, "Amazon's Profit Soars 220 Percent as Pandemic Drives Shopping Online.," *The New York Times*, April 29, 2021. https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/29/technology/amazons-profits-triple.html.

In partnering with textile artists and makers who work sustainably, such as Works-In-Progress Collective, The Textile Museum of Canada has been highlighting community leaders for those looking to work more sustainably / in eco-conscious manners.[40] To take one instance, Works-In-Progress Collective led a 'scraps' workshop at The Textile Museum of Canada on January 26th, 2022, that prompted patrons to alter their thinking about making; while the program was primarily about creating patches to mend or customize clothing, for both aesthetic and functional uses, the facilitators prompted conversation with participants to create a list of solutions for producing less textile waste, and dealing with the all-too-common excess or scraps left over from finished projects.[41]

Without abandoning their practice, like-minded textile workers and activists have sought ways to challenge the current crisis of textile-waste in landfills. Practitioners like Zoe Edwards or Works-In-Progress members provide solutions through facilitation and sharing knowledge: there are also entire organizations dedicated to sharing tools with individuals looking to be more connected and aware of their environment.[42]

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[40] The Textile Museum of Canada has been a leader in this initiative in Canada, offering free in-person and online workshops for their 'Sustainable Textile Teach-In' series. Works-In-Progress Collective is a group of artists and creatives based in Toronto and Hamilton, Ontario. The members are eco-conscious and believe that using recycled materials for upcycling projects creates a more enjoyable art-making experience. I attended a workshop hosted by the Textile Museum that was led by the collective, titled 'Sustainable Textile Teach-In: Fabric Scraps Challenge' on January 26th, 2022, facilitated by members Marnie Saskin and Tanya Murdoch. The program included sustainable solutions but also offered stories of the facilitators' practices and community work, in addition to virtual home-studio tours.

[41] Those who work in textiles or fibre, whether for hobby, DIY, or professionally as artists, know that a common predicament are the remaining textiles that were not used in the final project – for example, a sewing project often calls for a specific amount of fabric, leaving excess due to the cut or pattern of the project.

[42] A prominent example would be 'Fibreshed' organizations that can be found globally – these organizations focus on working with local (eco)systems (fibre, dyes, labour) support and educate people working with fibre, particularly textiles.

A more local example to this thesis includes YSM Double Take's thrift store not only selling (lightly) used goods but hosting 'Mending Mondays' – a free event which takes place every Monday and teaches patrons to learn how to mend clothing rather than disposing of it.

Environment(al) Awareness

Any discussion of the contemporary revival of textile-crafts cannot avoid acknowledging place, space, and environment. Despite navigating a virtual space, many contemporary textile-based craft practitioners are using this platform to draw renewed attention to physical environments, including the importance of the specific lands on which they live and create.[43]

In *On Walking: rhythm, repetition, movement* (2022), an OCADU thesis exhibition curated by Na'ama Freeman, we see how the framing of work by textile artists might prompt considerations of relationship with place and responsibility to shared land and one another.[44] Presenting two textile works, *Memory Map, w/ sounds* (2021-2022) by Naomi Boyd and *Raveling* (2022) by Anita Cazzola, Freeman expands the notion of connecting to land with the inclusion of fibre works.[45] Cazzola's *Raveling*, in particular, produces dialogue between natural materials and the tensions between developments on the land: in weaving pieces of found asphalt with silk fibre, the piece emphasizes not only the physical tensions created by the weight of the asphalt but also between urbanization and the landscape.

In *The Craft(y) Revival*, Sarah Zanchetta's work *for the presence of nymphs* (2023) is similarly grounded in tensions between urbanization and infrastructural development, and our

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[43] It is important to note, there is an ancient history of reciprocity with the land found within Indigenous cultures through respect and responsibility that is still practiced today. There is a growing acknowledgement of this land-based relationship within settler-based North American society as reconciliation and decolonization practices are enacted. For further reading on this, refer to: Eve Tuck and Marcia McKenzie, *Place in Research: Theory, Methodology, and Methods* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2015).

[44] Na'ama Freeman, "On Walking: Rhythm, Repetition, Movement," OCAD University Open Research Repository, 2022, https://openresearch.ocadu.ca/id/eprint/3609/1/Freeman_Naama_2022_MFA_CCP_THESIS.pdf, 9.

[45] Indigo farmer Rebecca Burgess has argued that our "disconnect[ion] from the impacts our clothes have on land, air, water, labour, and our own human health" must be repaired, to "create opportunities to build new relationships that are rooted in sharing skills, physical labo[u]r, and creativity, all of which carry meaning, purpose, and a way to belong to one another and to the land." Rebecca Burgess, Courtney White, and Paige Green, *Fibershed: Growing a Movement of Farmers, Fashion Activists, and Makers for a New Textile Economy* (White River Junction, VT: Chelsea Green Publishing, 2019), 4.

disconnection from the land and its rich flora. Zanchetta's textile-based practice is driven by her curiosity about lost knowledge and our estranged relationships to the land and plants which surround us.[46] Highlighting a poisonous plant, the lily-of-the-valley, that has recently become an icon of popular Nintendo video-gaming communities as a great marker of success,[47] *for the presence of nymphs* (2023) combines community-sourced embroidery depicting lily-of-the-valley plants, to produce a collaborative artwork.[48]

The embroidery workshop that facilitated the making of the piece *for the presence of nymphs*, was a second iteration of Zanchetta's ongoing project to educate and share awareness of poisonous plants; *leaves of three, will you remember me?* was a series of workshops presented in partnership with the Kortright Centre for Conservation in 2022 with a focus on poison ivy.[49] In these workshops, Zanchetta reignited oral histories that were previously told about the plant – native to both North America and Eastern Asia – and the identifiers to look for in order to avoid possible reactions to avoid the plant's poison.[50] Participants in the workshop ranged, in Zanchetta's telling, from "age two to ninety". As the series continued, participants were able to build rapport and connections with each other as they kept returning; becoming friends through participating in the workshop built excitement and appreciation surrounding the craft.[51] While *leaves of three, will you remember me?* remains on permanent display at the Kortright Centre for

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[46] Sarah Zanchetta, "About," Sarah Zanchetta, accessed November 7, 2022, https://www.sarahzanchetta.com/about-cv.
[47] In the popular Nintendo game, *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* (2020), folks achieve a five-star island – the highest rating possible – and begin spawning lily-of-the-valley plants. While players can check in with Isabelle at visitor services to confirm the rating, the plant is used as a visual achievement indicator as it cannot be purchased or germinated.
[48] The participants who aided the collaboration of this piece are listed in the acknowledgements of this document.
[49] Participants who helped produce this piece include: Simone, Kai, Bohdan, Lexi, Aly, Vibeke, Bethany, Teresa, Tansin, Lucia, Afsana, Jack, Carlo, Sarah, Sarah, Margaret, Julia, Michelle, Kadence, Elena, Cedric, Janine, Tasneem, and Vicky. Simone Granieri and Sarah Zanchetta, "Leaves of Three, Will You Remember Me?," Sarah Zanchetta, accessed November 7, 2022, https://www.sarahzanchetta.com/leaves-of-three-will-you-remember-me.
[50] Granieri and Zanchetta.
[51] Sarah Zanchetta, artist interview during a studio visit by Paige Lauren Stephen, University of Toronto, October 28th, 2022.

Conservation, those who participated also keep the skills they learnt and the community they built together.

As part of the curated programming for *The Craft(y) Revival*, Zanchetta facilitated an embroidery workshop in January 2023 with members of the public. Zanchetta's desire to share knowledge with textile-crafts audiences comes from her own experience in receiving such knowledge; she learnt from her grandmother and other artists, but also developed her skills through the use of social media and online tutorials, where she found an "openness to share."[52] The workshop began with a presentation on the lily-of-the-valley (including its history, identification, different names, poisonous attributes, and relevance in contemporary culture – featured in Nintendo's *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* and season four of *Breaking Bad*), before moving into the embroidery portion of the workshop.

Zanchetta taught participants some basics of embroidery, such as: stretching fabrics onto hoops, threading a needle, satin stitch, running stitch (also known as straight stitch), and for some more skilled participants, french knots. While the squares were created individually, the collaboration is not only found in their finished squares, but in the manner they were made; throughout the workshop, participants communicated between each other to help with colour choices, encourage each other, troubleshoot stitches, and even just to casually talk and share stories. At the end of the workshop, participants traded their embroidery work for a zine featuring Zanchetta's research that had been included in the presentation. This example of knowledge-sharing expands beyond the workshop, as the zine is presented alongside *for the presence of nymphs* for visitors of *The Craft(y) Revival* to take home with them, inviting them to exercise their identification skills and learn of the natural flora.

[52] Zanchetta, studio visit, by Paige Lauren Stephen, University of Toronto, October 28th, 2022.

Following the organized program, Zanchetta combined the individual embroidered squares into the final piece – *for the presence of nymphs* – presented in *The Craft(y) Revival*. The artist chose this title due to its relation to a Greek Myth, exploring alternative notions of knowledge-sharing:

> Greek Sun God, Apollo, created the lily-of-the-valley to cover the ground that nine nymphs had to walk on through the woods to reach Mount Parnassus. The numerous plants growing together became a soft and scented carpet which protected the nymphs' bare feet as they traveled across. After this the lily-of-the-valley began to symbolize delicacy and kindness.[53]

Through her research, Zanchetta found that "myths are so deeply tied to [the] lily-of-the-valley [plant]"[54] and was particularly interested in using it as a motif to represent the communal work of the embroidery workshop participants. The reverse side of the work is presented uncovered by the usual backing that would hide stitch work away from viewers – in Zanchetta's decision to present the work in this manner, she reveals the processes of participants and the actions made in creating each piece. Not only has Zanchetta passed on the knowledge to workshop participants of the plant and embroidery practices, but also to visitors of *The Craft(y) Revival*.

Fourth-Wave Feminism & Intersectionality

Contemporary textile-based practitioners engaging in online forums, meet-ups, workshops, and so on, have also expanded the groups of individuals included in these communities, beyond the traditional female crafting communities of proximate family, neighbourhood, and church. This inclusivity has frequently included a rejection of heteropatriarchal and cisnormative societies, and a corresponding acceptance of community-members whose very existence posed a challenge to normative Western culture.

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[53] Sarah Zanchetta, e-mail message to Paige Lauren Stephen, January 3rd, 2023.
[54] Sarah Zanchetta, e-mail message, January 3rd, 2023.

Thus, online craft communities have been particularly welcoming spaces to queer, non-binary, and trans* individuals, corresponding to longer historical associations and affiliations with craft and textiles; as John Chaich puts it, "craft has long been considered the queer stepchild of fine art."[55] Working in and with textiles have always played a vital role in queer identity and survival, in the face of resistance from heteropatriarchal society, and will continue to do so in many areas of the globe.[56]

As noted earlier, textile practitioners have often come together in response to social and/or political developments through "craftivism"[57]; where second-wave feminism saw a call for inclusion of primarily white, middle-class, female craft artists in art institutions, and third-wave feminism[58] tackling class and racial inequities, fourth-wave feminism[59], with its focus on intersectionality, has given rise to new forms of community engagement and knowledge-sharing.[60] Scholars Dr Elizabeth Evans and Dr Prudence Bussey-Chamberlain agree that fourth-wave feminism in the anglosphere was ignited and strengthened by new social media

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[55] Chaich, 3.
[56] Fountain
[57] Artist, writer, and curator Janis Jefferies defines "craftivism" as a political movement using online tools to gather activists (26). This provides a general definition, however, further interpretations of the term can be read here: Janis Jefferies, "Crocheted Strategies: Women Crafting Their Own Communities," *TEXTILE* 14, no. 1 (February 2016): 14-35, https://doi.org/10.1080/14759756.2016.1142788.; see also Sigourney Jacks, "The Power of 'Women's Work': Craftivism." NGV. The National Gallery of Victoria, April 24, 2020. https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/essay/the-power-of-womens-work-craftivism/#:~:text=The%20term%20%27craftivism%27%20was%20conceived,projects%20they%20were%20working%20on.
[58] Third-wave feminism began the expansion of the previous second-wave feminism which had privileged the perspectives of straight, middle-class white women, to consider equitable rights for racialized, working-class, and queer women.
[59] Fourth-wave feminism, following previous movements, promotes intersectionality to argue for equitable pay and opportunities for all persons, not just those who identify as women. Additionally, this wave includes internet activism as a key feature in its movement.
[60] Throughout research interviews conducted in support of this thesis, participants echoed that *everyone*, regardless of race, gender, sexuality, age, or skill, could be included in their textile-based communities due to the common thread of their mutual interest in handmade crafts. Instagram accounts (including individuals, artists, and cultural organizations) that support this drive for intersectional with textile-based craft communities include: @queercraftsbrighton, @queercraftsociety, @knotnaked, @queercraftclub.nl, @renee_brazeau, to name a few.

platforms – Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, Tumblr, and Reddit, and so on.[61] The emergence of these platforms, and their adoption by textile-based craft practitioners, provided not only global access to forms of knowledge associated with their practice, but also an increased agency in expressing their views on social issues, within the newfound communities gathered around craft.

In gathering and sharing their knowledge, some crafters became activists through expanded notions of resistance.[62] Research-creative scholar Stephanie Springgay argues that textile-artists were able to access activism within their practices through civic engagement, as "art is based on social relationships that make culture and creativity a central part of civic life. It is the processes of participation that *are* the works of art themselves."[63] While this can take many forms, this focus on these processes, and community work, is present in *The Craft(y) Revival* through the intervention of a community *Yarn Bomb!* within the space.[64]

As part of the curated programming associated with this exhibition, community-made yarn squares were collected through a public call posted on social media accounts; participants were invited to submit a 7 x 7 inch yarn square, and offered full creativity in how they wanted to approach their yarn square submission(s). 'Yarnbombing,' also known as guerilla knitting, is defined by art curator Sigourney Jacks as:

> a form of street art in which knitted or crocheted lengths of material are installed to cover an existing sculpture, pole or object. It may be something as small as a bench or electric pole or as large as a military tank that is concealed by a shroud of carefully constructed yarn. The craftivists behind this initiative want to beautify areas with dramatic and erratic

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[61] Elizabeth Evans and Prudence Chamberlain, "Critical Waves: Exploring Feminist Identity, Discourse and Praxis in Western Feminism," *Social Movement Studies* 14, no. 4 (2015): 396-409, https://doi.org/10.1080/14742837.2014.964199.
[62] Stephanie Springgay, "Knitting as an Aesthetic of Civic Engagement: Re-Conceptualizing Feminist Pedagogy through Touch," *Feminist Teacher* 20, no. 2 (2010): 111-123, https://doi.org/10.5406/femteacher.20.2.0111, 112.
[63] Springgay, 113.
[64] Participants of *Yarn Bomb!* are listed within the acknowledgements of this document. Find their individual squares documented in Appendix A.

> colour and text. The scale, detail and originality encourage the viewer to consider the maker and their reason for this statement.[65]

Community members who submitted yarn squares took the opportunity to challenge their skills, participate in civic engagement techniques, exercise sustainable practices in using their scraps, and use the space of their square to advocate for matters close to them through the public presentation of their square. Activist themes featured in the squares include queer pride, Iranian women rights, and female reproductive rights; pairing activism with yarn provides a soft introduction to these themes, but also offers comfort to those who connect with these concerns and communities. Notions of 'care' have long been associated with textiles, particularly handmade ones.[66] Within *The Craft(y) Revival*, the care interwoven in textiles is present through the participation of those across Canada, who contributed to the collaborative *Yarn Bomb!* that wraps the gallery pillar and intervenes in the space.[67]

Primarily in the form of clothing, textiles have allowed people to customize and alter what they were wearing, to affirm their body with their identity, express and experiment with their identity representation, or even just to communicate to other members of the community. In their text *Survival of the Knittiest: Craft and Queer-Feminist Worldmaking*, Daniel Fountain writes: "the practice of *crafting*, is an essential part of queer-feminist survival."[68] We can see this displayed, for instance, in the items collected within the Museum of Transology, curated by E-J Scott. In presenting material objects used in trans*, non-binary, and intersex people's lives, Scott offers a platform to those who donated items, and the greater queer community, by displaying

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[65] Jacks, "The Power of 'Women's Work'".
[66] Commonly seen as handmade blankets and quilts to knitted sweaters and scarves for loved ones. The Royal City Quilters' Guild (RCQG), founded in Guelph, are champions in textile-based community care. Partnering with Guelph General Hospital, RCQG donates quilts made by guild members to both the Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence Care and Treatment Centre and the Birthing Unit. Donations to the birthing unit are memory quilts made for grieving parents.
[67] I view the yarnbomb intervention in the Graduate Gallery as being similar in kind to the ways that feminist and queer existence 'intervenes' in and asserts itself against the normative spaces of heteropatriarchal societies.
[68] Fountain, "Survival of the Knittiest".

items like chest-binders, for instance, which are often concealed from the public eye by clothing.[69]

Queer community members, and some allies, are aware of the significance a binder holds to the individual using it – for some this can be the first step in affirming their identity or in their transition; due to the vulnerability of these moments, the first iterations of such tools for these individuals are often homemade.[70] Through online forums such as Reddit and YouTube tutorials, those who are looking to add/use a binder in their lives have found crafters (such as sewers and DIYers) who have created step-by-step instructions for binders through sewing or altering clothes they already have. In this instance, where individuals, often youth, would typically feel isolated in this process, they have instead found online communities to help them in their transition, as well as indicating that they are not alone.

While online craft communities are evidently not the first forms of resistance against Western-heteronormative society – Queer resistance goes back well before the Stonewall Riots, for instance – current practitioners have followed former advocates in continuing to foster communities, into the contemporary moment. It is important to note earlier forms of queer advocacy prior to the introduction of social media, in relation to community craft-based practice; most prominently, the *NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt (The AIDS Quilt)* (1985-ongoing) is

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[69] Items included range from fabric chest binders, to my little pony soft-toys, to train tickets from when someone first met their lover, to wigs used in drag, to underwear. Anecdotal tags written by those who donated the items, are also presented, providing the donor with autonomy over their experience; as Scott writes: "never again will the records of our lives be written by the media that spectacularise us, the legal systems that criminalise and the psychiatrists who pathologise us." E-J Scott, "About," Museum of Transology, 2020, https://www.museumoftransology.com/about; In an interview with Zing Tsjeng, Scott defines 'spectacularise' as: "We're all familiar with the idea of the male gaze, but [spectacularization is] the cis gaze looking down on us as abnormal, and as an object of interest, fascination, and titillation. It's the idea that we're absolutely under a spotlight and people are allowed to gaze into our personal lives and bodies." Zing Tsjeng, "The Museum of Everyday Objects That Makes Transgender Lives Visible," VICE, January 16, 2017, https://www.vice.com/en/article/gyxg34/museum-of-transology-ej-scott-curator-interview.

[70] For a further elaboration of this point, see Fountain, *'Survival of the Knittiest: Craft and Queer-Feminist Worldmaking'*.

one of the best-known examples of visualized queer community survival through craft, and has grown into the largest community art project to date.[71]

Casting Off

The Craft(y) Revival offers visitors a view into contemporary textile-based crafts, their modes of knowledge-sharing, and the online communities that are fostered through these. Through an extension of craft communities to encompass marginalized individuals across geographic regions, and different geolocated ones, the craft-based textile field today has expanded not only in its demographic but in the kinds of knowledge that is being offered and received within these communities. Contemporary textile communities – and those included within it – seek to be intersectional; to address wastage, sustainability, and environmental concerns; to push back against capitalist and extractive labour; and above all to foster forms of knowledge-sharing and community through online engagement. Through this, textile-based crafts have found new practitioners and challenged existing practitioners, but ultimately connected them all. While many have received their foundational crafting skills from a matriarch of their families, online communities have provided a means to learn new techniques, meet community members, and share knowledge of their own.

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[71] On the AIDS Quilt and its activist contexts, see: Cleve Jones and Jeff Dawson, *Stitching a Revolution: The Making of an Activist* (New York, NY: HarperCollins World, 2002).
Another queer crafter, Chris Marchini, has revitalized quilts in contemporary times through an online platform, to produce a community quilt in aid of 'The Trevor Project.' Marchini is a quilt pattern designer who has dedicated 2023 to a Year-Long Community Quilt project; through collecting different fabrics from his followers (he holds a large audience on TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube), Marchini will create a quilt to be raffled off to benefit 'The Trevor Project' charity. The charity's "mission is to end suicide among LGBTQ+ young people." In approaching the contemporary epidemic faced by the queer community, and youths in particular, through notions of care that textiles offer, Marchini embraces struggling community members and supports them through his work. Chris Marchini, "2023 Community Quilt Project," RoseCityOriginals, 2022, https://rosecityoriginals.com/pages/2023-community-quilt-project.

The artists featured in *The Craft(y) Revival* reveal a variety of knowledge-sharing methods while connecting to previous histories and contemporary issues. Lizz Aston's *Beginning to Macramé* prompts visitors to consider a former craft revival, found in the late-1960s, through her use of printed text from the time incorporated on the soft sculpture, but also by inviting them to participate in the tactile nature of the work. Amy Bagshaw enacts a process of knowledge-sharing through the revitalization of spooling skills taught by her grandmother, leaving viewers with the results of her practice in *Spools 2*. And, Sarah Zanchetta's facilitated embroidery workshop and textile-work *for the presence of nymphs* engages participants directly with an aim to foster both community and knowledge-sharing practices beyond the scope of the work and exhibition itself.

EXHIBITION SUPPORT PAPER

Introduction

In textile making, the practice of repetition and following patterns is customary to production - through weaving, knitting, and sewing alike. But there are other patterns at work in textile history as well: namely, the repeated patterns of knowledge-transmission, where techniques and skills are taught, work is produced in communal, social settings – traditionally through family or smaller community groups (sewing, quilting, knitting circles, and the like).[72] Today, a new pattern is emerging through social media – one that, while departing from the traditional models of knowledge-transmission and shared craft-work, is expanding and ensuring the survival of textile-based crafts. Historically through their textile practices until the first decades of the 20th century, women created and *curated* social communities with each other where they could gather, share knowledge, and practice together.[73] In the early 21st century, the gathering, sharing, and communal practice of textile-based craft is more likely to take place over social media circles; at the same time as this constitutes a revival of communal knowledge-sharing among textile-based practitioners, the makeup of the community, and its themes and concerns, have shifted.

The Craft(y) Revival: Community and Knowledge-sharing in Textile-based Crafts examines these contemporary modes of knowledge-sharing in a technological age between textile-based craft practitioners, and compares them with earlier modes of knowledge-sharing and community in textile crafts. The thesis exhibition comprises works by Lizz Aston, Amy

[72] Knowledge-transmission in craft can also take the form of formal education and employment-based training. My focus in this thesis is primarily on more informal modes of knowledge-sharing and knowledge-transmission in craft-based communities, which may encompass both self-taught and non-professional crafters as well as those with more formal training and experience.
[73] Barber, "Courtyard Sisterhood: Horticultural Society in the Neolithic," 71-100.

Bagshaw, and Sarah Zanchetta (who facilitated a workshop prior to the exhibition, to produce a collaborative piece with workshop participants), in addition to a community-driven yarn-bombing within the space, and a domestic setting integrated into the gallery space for the purposes of knowledge-sharing and individual or communal gathering purposes. While the starting-point of the thesis is the role of social media and online community in craft today, the exhibition also provides a physical space for the viewing of works, for gathering in person, and for communal activities that continually traverse this bridge between the online and the analog. In this sense, the exhibition also reflects my understanding of craft communities today; that they are rarely either solely face-to-face or solely online, but rather continually move between and embrace both modes of practice and being-together.

Thematics

Historically, textile-based work has both taken place within and helped to establish strong cultural communities. These communities provide space for individuals to gather, share knowledge, and practice together; for example, there is evidence from ancient Greece of women collaborating on weaving projects together, due to "the wefts in ancient cloth[s that] crossed in the middle of the textile,"[74] indicating "two people handing spools of weft back and forth to each other as they wove simultaneously on different parts of the same cloth."[75] Through community, knowledge-sharing is made possible, and subsequently, knowledge-sharing helps create community. Beyond the immediate sharing of knowledge within one's local, physical community, textile-based communities of practice had a range of analog means of sharing

[74] Barber, 24.
[75] Barber, 24.

knowledge, through print media (magazines, books), workshops, conferences, and associations. These latter had a range of members from professional academics and artists to self-taught makers, and took their mandate to foster and support national and international communities of craft. While recognizing these earlier contexts, my thesis concerns itself with knowledge-sharing in textile-based crafts as it has evolved alongside social media and the emergence of new forms of online skill-sharing over the past recent decades.[76]

The Craft(y) Revival seeks to answer three research questions:

1. What distinguishes contemporary textile-based craft communities from previous such communities? What might this shift have contributed to the current mainstream revival of craft and DIY?
2. How can queer and feminist art histories inform our understanding of community in craft movements today?
3. What kind of communities are being fostered in craft today – and how?

While these themes connect and interweave together, as stand-alone topics they hold important information for understanding the motivations of current textile practitioners. While some elements and methods of previous craft eras remain, the online shift in crafting practices has offered access to globally-sourced knowledge, which in turn fosters global communities – with increasingly diverse, intersectional memberships, and global concerns. Despite the widespread impact of these communities and new modes of knowledge-sharing on the contemporary craft

[76] There are various forums on the internet used by craft and textile-based practitioners for purposes of communication. While the internet emerged in 1983 and slowly began as a common tool in the 1990s, the thesis does focus more immediately on 21st-century social media tools utilized through fourth-wave intersectional feminist activists - Instagram and Facebook being the most common.

revival, there has been limited critical examination on the nature of these online communities and social practices, or their connection to earlier moments of community in textile-based crafts.

Methodology

In developing this thesis, I approached my topic through a process of collecting and assessing research material (both primary and secondary sources), guided interviews, exercising research-creation by participating in textile-based programs, and facilitated programming. These methodologies directly informed my research, as demonstrated by the results and reflections discussed below.

Research Interviews

As part of my research into 'community' as a key theme of *The Craft(y) Revival*, I sought to gather first-hand experiences from textile-based crafters (both amateurs and professionals). Following approval by OCAD University's Research and Ethics Board, I advertised an open call for research participants through my personal social media channels (Instagram and Facebook), and asked others to share the post to reach various networks, in order to gather contributors. Those who choose to participate were sent pre-screening questions to assess their participation and engagement in these online communities, what they provide to the research, and how they might assist in answering the primary thesis research questions.

While there was considerable interest and traffic to my email inbox from a larger pool of applicants, a total of 16 participants completed the guided research interviews. The questions for the interviews were as follows:

1. In regards to your craft practice, where have you found/made community?
2. Where or from whom did you learn your skill? What has your learning process looked like so far?
3. If you share textile-based knowledge, why is this important to you? What methods do you use to share knowledge?
4. How do you receive knowledge? What are your sources? What do you gain from them?
5. Have your methods for collecting and/or sharing knowledge changed? If so, how? Have your methods been affected, and how, by new modes of social interaction?
6. How do you utilize social media in regards to your practice or community? What drew you to this?
7. Can you reflect on the positive and negative effects of social media towards art/craft practices? What do you feel is most positive about online craft communities?
8. Who do you feel is included in your community/society that you interact with?[77]

I developed this survey to better understand how members of craft communities perceived their own relationship with textile craft(s), community, social media and modes of knowledge-sharing, in their own words. While the questions above were provided to the participants, the open-ended nature of the questions allowed participants to discuss topics in the manner they wished, to be as brief or in-depth in their responses as they wanted to be (most participants provided very thorough answers, giving multiple examples for each answer, and so on).

The results from the research interviews indicated that no matter their perceived age or disclosed comfort with technology, all participants saw the internet and some form of online community as aiding their practice in one way or another. The extent of their use with online

[77] These questions were included in an application submitted to OCAD University Research Ethics Board. The Research Ethics Board conducted a delegated/full board review of the application, and approved the application on September 12th, 2022. The R.E.B. number is: 2022-56.

communities, and the ones they chose to partake in, varied depending on what they were using the application for: be it sharing knowledge, collecting knowledge, trouble-shooting difficult sections of their projects, or looking for affirmations on a finished or in-progress piece. Facebook, Instagram, Ravelry, and YouTube were the most commonly-mentioned applications, with a few mentions of independent blogs. Pinterest was mentioned once.

Many participants acknowledged the convenience that online access to community grants them. Where they previously may have placed holds on books from libraries or awaited a copy of a knitting magazine bringing new patterns and yarn suggestions, the online alternative brought them 24/7 access to their creative outlets – and to a community willing to provide feedback and advice. One subject commented "access online to a wide variety of patterns, reviews of materials and advice has been interesting. This was all in books or magazines in the past so it is now more widely available and video tutorials are a good way for me to learn new things or refine my own skills."[78] Another seconding this notion, saying:

> knowledge from the [world wide web] has been a huge change. Before that [it] was books and more books. Always a challenge to get your name on the waiting list at the library or the Guild library. It is so much easier to search the [world wide web] for the answer you are looking for. These new social medias have changed everything. I can't tell you the last time I bought a book.[79]

All participants echoed the shift in their methods of collecting knowledge in relation to their craft. Where they previously found patterns and techniques in analog materials, access to the internet and online social forums has allowed their demand for knowledge to be easily met, with most participants emphasizing the ease and accessibility of these media(s). However, some found access to this extensive knowledge affected productivity negatively as they engaged online for

[78] Interview with Mariane Martin, October 31st, 2022.
[79] Interview with Karen Rowe, October 30th, 2022.

long periods of time rather than practicing, and/or compared themselves to others within the online community, failing to motivate themselves to practice.

While the shift to online in craft-communities had predated the Coronavirus outbreaks of 2019-2022, all participants mentioned the effect that COVID-19 restrictions had on their craft communities, and how they solved it through seeking online replacements. In trying to connect to their community and share knowledge, this participant commented on how the pandemic led them to engage with technology, out of necessity:

> The pandemic made me have to learn how to use Zoom, upload my videos to YouTube, manage a website, and use a camera that points down to my handwork. Since our members are so spread out, we need our classes and meetings and events to be accessible online. I've learned a lot more about online stuff than I ever thought I would. It connects me to people I never would have met otherwise.[80]

Through a desire to retain access (and remain accessible) to their community members, this research interviewee ended up expanding the range and number of people with whom they interacted with about their craft practice.

Interviewees also shared a deep appreciation of learning from one another in social groups. Analog forms of knowledge-sharing, as found in past craft communities, were also noted throughout interviews, with foundational knowledge often coming from a female family member. One participant articulated this thusly:

> ... crafting was a way for women to pass knowledge to their daughters under the guise of work. So by looking at crafts that we make, we can often trace patterns and traditions back through families. For example, I know how to knit because my mom knows how to knit, because her mom taught her, and her mom taught her before that. The things that I make today are a direct result of the labour of many generations of women in my family.[81]

This interviewee, among others, could trace their knowledge back through their family ties, something that is integral to understanding current processes of sharing knowledge. While many

[80] Interview with Christine Manges, November 11th, 2022.
[81] Interview with Ashley Hemmings, November 29th, 2022.

gain foundational knowledge of craft practices through their family, they may go on to share it with their *chosen* family or community. Many commented that the way in which they first received their knowledge, handed down from a parent or an elder, encouraged them to share this knowledge in turn, with other community members.[82]

While this research participant stated that they do not participate in social media outside of the limited groups they belong to, they also acknowledged that "there are legions of knitters out there now who have been drawn into the worldwide community due to online connections."[83] These connections surrounding a mutual love of craft(s) provide users to trust in each other and the community they've built online.

While some elements and methods of previous craft eras remain, the online shift in crafting practices has offered access to globally-sourced knowledge which in turn fosters global communities; one research participant comments: "Today, my most frequent connection with knitters is within the online community. The benefit and value of being able to connect with knitters from around the world, even just to see the different patterns and colour combinations, as well as to learn more about the history of craft in their communities is endless."[84] It is evident that the ability to join online communities has offered users expanded knowledge of their respective craft(s). Being able to connect globally and discover techniques, patterns, materials or prints that are uncommon, and unknown to them, is akin to having an endless, globally connected sewing/knitting circle of mentors and mentees at their fingertips – or keyboard.

Although participants varied in the extent to which they used the internet and social media platforms, the fact remains that *all* research participants did use them in some manner for

[82] As mentioned earlier, not all who practice with textiles or fibre initially learn this way – others are self-taught, have pursued some level of formal education in craft, or learned skills in an employment context.
[83] Interview with Mariane Martin, October 31st, 2022.
[84] Interview with Marjorie Wilcox, November 4th, 2022.

their craft, and expressed the convenience in using the internet and social media in comparison to analog methods of knowledge-collecting. Those who shared knowledge found they reached more people and grew their communities, expanding across regions and globally. The majority verbalized that their community was open to anyone who practiced and had a passion for their craft, without discrimination. And, finally, all of the participants noted a sense of finding connection, through the communities they had joined, fostered, or observed through their screens.

Searching For Community

While I was researching and examining textile-based practices and communities, I found myself distanced from my own practice; wanting to feel more connected to the community participation I was studying and analyzing here, I decided to join a virtual crochet workshop series and a virtual knit night.

The crochet series was organized by Scarborough Arts as part of their COMMUNITY+Connects programming, and was hosted by Chason Yeboah.[85] I originally discovered this workshop through Instagram, as Scarborough Arts was advertising their annual "creative and professional development workshop series that aims to provide audiences of all ages and skill levels with free access to arts-based instructions…"[86] thanks to funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation. The announcement declared that Scarborough Art's programming aimed to "build lasting social connections and mental health benefits through meaningful local creative engagement."[87] As someone who moved to a new city in 2021, I have since been

[85] Chason Yeboah can be found on Instagram at the handle @knotnaked.
[86] Scarborough Arts, "COMMUNITY+Connects 2023," Scarborough Arts, n.d., https://www.scarborougharts.com/programs/communityconnects-2023.
[87] Scarborough Arts.

searching for more local community members and believed the COMMUNITY+Connects programming presented this opportunity.

I had no experience with crochet but had always wanted to learn, as I have seen the great patterns and designs that can be made with it. One summer my partner's mother tried to teach me, but immediately pulled out a YouTube tutorial to show me the stitches – while I had the basic understanding (through this combination of analog and digital instruction), I wasn't really taught how to follow a pattern or continue onward in a project. Yeboah was an excellent facilitator, able to make crochet accessible to participants through our screens by showing various techniques to find which method(s) work best for each individual, and making herself approachable to answer questions from participants.

Joining the virtual knit night, hosted through Facebook Live by Sweet Yarns,[88] appealed to me as I would be able to join from the comfort of my own home, practicing a skill I was already comfortable with. This event was brought to my attention through being tagged in a comment on Facebook; I would not have known about the event had I not been tagged,[89] as I did not previously know of the store, nor would I have been able to attend in person as it is located in Sudbury. Being able to access the community event online invited people who were not local to the store, such as myself, to join and engage with the already existing community. I have almost a decade of knitting experience so chose to join purely for the social aspect as I had never experienced a virtual knitting night, although I had read and heard about them in my research. In the one-hour event, the facilitator presented new programs and materials that could be found

[88] Sweet Yarns is a yarn store located in Sudbury, Ontario. They are "Helping crafters create beautiful fibre-related projects from idea to completion through quality products, encouragement and education." Sweet Yarns, "About Sweet Yarns," Sweet Yarns, 2016, https://shop.sweetyarns.ca/pages/about-us.

[89] "Tagging" someone in/on social media posts is another form of knowledge-sharing, in the sense that it allows the person who was "tagged" to be made aware of the post and information that is being shared.

in-store, but more importantly encouraged everyone to show their projects to each other and celebrate our accomplishments.

These two experiences with virtual communities helped ground my research to my own practice as a textile-based crafter, and affirmed many of the ideas that had been communicated in the interviews; I emerged feeling more connected to my own textile-based craft practice, and through the facilitators' encouragement of participant projects, to a sense of community, fostered as we interacted and learnt from each other.

Facilitated Programming

My thesis included two instances of public programming, advertised via online social media: a public yarnbombing call, and Sarah Zanchetta's facilitated embroidery workshop. The *Yarn Bomb!* was advertised using Instagram and Facebook, then shared by others, and Zanchetta's workshop was promoted through Instagram which was then shared through various accounts, and found through Eventbrite as the host website for participant registration.

The desire to introduce a yarn intervention into the exhibition space was inspired by activists' use of yarnbombing for public engagement. While I had originally intended for it to be used in promoting the exhibition through the streets of downtown Toronto, I instead saw the opportunity in wrapping the gallery's permanent pillar structure with community-made work.[90] For this, I found community members through social media and online forums who then reached out to me to participate. Participants mailed in their squares from across Ontario, with some from across Canada – thus exemplifying the reach social media has, but also the motivation

[90] Within the Graduate Gallery at OCAD University, a structural pillar stands in the middle of the space which has often posed curatorial issues for those working within the space. Rather than avoid the pillar and ignore its existence, I chose to engage with it within the physical space by yarnbombing it, all while maintaining core themes found within my thesis of community craft connections.

textile-practitioners have to share and collaborate. Once all the squares had been collected, my mother and I sat together combining the squares, echoing older modes of analog gathering by craft communities. Participants were only given the instructions that their yarn squares had to be 7x7 inches – determined by pillar measurements, but otherwise were granted full creativity in how they could produce the pieces; in joining the squares together individually, my mother and I were able to appreciate each piece and the care that went into it.

Similarly, Zanchetta combined embroidery pieces from participants who attended her workshop on January 19th, 2023. As part of my thesis, Zanchetta and I partnered to organize an embroidery workshop for members of the public to learn basic embroidery skills, and to then have their pieces joined for a collaborative piece that would then be exhibited in *The Craft(y) Revival*. The theme of the workshop was 'lily-of-the-valley' – a poisonous plant with many hidden meanings. The workshop hosted 20 participants with varying experience in embroidery, which Zanchetta was able to mediate by introducing the steps of the process slowly for beginners, incorporating additional techniques for those more experienced. While some participants came alone, others joined the workshops with family, friends, and partners; however, over the course of the program a larger collective discussion emerged. There was lots of communication and skill-sharing among participants, folks were helping with colour choices, encouraging those who were doubting their abilities, and even troubleshooting stitches and knots. Parallel to my own experience with learning a new textile-based craft, as discussed above, one participant commented that they had tried many times to learn through YouTube but felt that they needed someone in front of them to teach them the skills, suggesting that it could be due to the tactile nature of the work.[91] Once the class had finished, the embroidery hoops were brought to the front of the room and placed together for everyone to view the collective work – many

[91] Conversation with embroidery workshop participant, January 19th, 2023.

commented on the collective work and were excited to have the pieces joined together to commemorate their experience at the workshop. Joining an in-person event, that was organized and promoted through social media, bridges the gaps in skill transmission that are often difficult to solve via online videos; Zanchetta was able to respond to participant's needs quickly without disrupting others progress, as well as offer adapted approaches to skills where participants required them.

The research interviews, online events, and facilitated co-production programs with members of the public, all spoke to the exemplary significance of fostering textile-based craft practices, and forming communities, in the contemporary moment. Supported by a growing academic and scholarly literature on craft revivals, and on community, and in conversation with recent and ongoing curatorial projects, *The Craft(y) Revival* demonstrates the essential role of online technology and social media in shaping early 21st-century textile-based crafts.

Literature Review

Community and knowledge-sharing practices have always been at the forefront of my thesis research, however, as displayed in this literature review, I also sought a greater understanding of the history and movements found within modern and contemporary textile-based craft disciplines, to assist with evaluating current communities. In developing my comprehension of textile-based crafts, and their influence on communities, I sought literature that would grant me a historical review of the discipline and materiality, theoretical texts discussing social and economic influences, and contemporary writing on craft to assess the

current state of discourse in the field. Approaching my thesis with an intersectional feminist lens, I located texts of a similar perspective that discussed the course of textile history.

Lucy R. Lippard's "Something From Nothing (Towards a Definition of Women's 'Hobby Art')" was a key early text for my thesis research, as a clear articulation of the marginalization that the craft-field had experienced from fine art, and the difference in reception that male textile-artists had experienced to women practicing in the same discipline. As Lippard's text was originally authored in 1978, I also sought contemporary writers who continued this research with a deeper historical view: Elizabeth Wayland Barber's *Women's Work: The First 20,000 Years, Women, Cloth, and Society in Early Times* (1995), Kassia St Clair's *The Golden Thread: How Fabric Changed History* (2019), and Virgina Postrel's *The Fabric of Civilization: How Textiles Made the World* (2021). These three texts, while similar in explaining historical context of textiles on humanity with subtle feminist criticism, vary in their approach of discussing textiles and the impact on society. Barber's text covered non-westernized history, examining the inclusion of women in the history of material culture, their work having been reduced to inauspicious 'busy work' in comparison to the achievements of men. Barber makes it evident that past women's work was important and valuable, but had a further impact on social structure and societies. *The Golden Thread* and *The Fabric of Civilization* benefit in being discussed together, due their factual addressing of individual fibres and movements found within textile-based practices. Both St Clair's and Postrel's texts lead the reader through the evolution of fabrics, from weaving to contemporary innovations. While both valuably discuss economic influences on the historical development of textiles, they are also lacking an articulation of the social importance of textiles to an individual person.

In comparison, Gloria Hickey's *The Status of Craft within a Consuming Society* (1997) directly addresses western society's economic relationship with crafts and material objects. Hickey's text connects the ideology of material culture to human values and aesthetics of taste. Offering a consumer perspective on handmade objects, Hickey evaluates the desire of the handmade, promoting skill and technique as opposed to mass-produced products that are the result of capitalist agendas. In this, she echoes postmodern and feminist makers in the 20th century, and contemporary practitioners who continue to fight against commodification and mass production. Intriguingly, at the same moment as they applaud social media for granting accesses to community-based craft knowledge, some participants decried the pressure online to commodify one's practice; as described by a handful of participants from my research interviews, there is a pressure online to turn your hobby into a "side-gig," and create content which is untrue to the actual process: "video editing and time-lapse videos can lead to a false sense of how long a process can take, and it can make people feel unproductive if they take longer to work."[92] Social media's demand for content creation and textile practitioners' responses to this, has impacted the relationship between crafters and their online audiences, and on a greater scale their communities and modes of knowledge-sharing.

I also sought out sources that emphasized new forms of community in craft, and particularly the importance of textile-based crafts for queer community members. These include Daniel Fountain's *Survival of the Knittiest: Craft and Queer-Feminist Worldmaking* and John Chaich's *Queer Thread*s, both of which demonstrate the importance textile-based crafts hold to community building for queer folk. Where crafts discourse has long asserted the gendered histories of textiles, Fountain demonstrates the need for craft as a strategy of queer peoples'

[92] Interview with Ashley Hemmings, November 29th, 2022.

survival. Textiles have offered, and continue to offer, queer people the freedom to express themselves and affirm their identities; while Chaich's *Queer Threads* exhibition text discusses the manner in which queer artists work with fibre to produce political and social activated work, Fountain's writing offers accounts of individuals' use of textiles to conform and resist normative cultures.

Against the restricted understanding of textile history as 'women's history,' these readings altered my sense of historical lineage, as I came to understand many earlier texts of textile history had failed to recognize the role queer people had in history, and the role of textile-based arts within expressions of queer identity and community. Applying the above literature in conversation with those who foster online communities displays the importance of social media's influence on textile-based craft and craft practitioners; for instance, while Queer Craft Club NL (@queercraftclub.nl on Instagram) is evidently geographically-located in Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada, and does offer in-person experiences, their online presence not only offers a (virtual) safe space for queer craft practitioners to connect but provides resources to aid both patrons craft practices but also their knowledge of queer theory and history.[93] This method of sharing knowledge is carried through many online presences', allowing space for those marginalized within heteropatriarchal society to share their own insight, voices, and experiences, which in turn fosters these communities.[94]

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[93] Through a public google-drive that is linked through Queer Craft Club NL's Instagram page, the community has shared resource files on 'Sewing/Knitting/Quilting Patterns,' 'Queer Community Resources,' 'Articles/Texts/Essays,' that are accessible to non-members too. "Queer Craft Club (Shared Folder)," Google Drive (Google, 2022), https://drive.google.com/drive/mobile/folders/1bE52Fax8NuWtuH7aQuWT5d3HO7kgnADg?usp=sharing&fbclid=PAAab0By6lwT4EqGtc8PZMcjpnnbKwYbn6pnugqwIldYIZYlwEB6ho2AriqxU.

[94] For example, Fashion and Race Database (fashionandrace.org, and @fashionandracedatabase on Instagram), Social Justice Sewing Academy (sjsacademy.org, and @sjsacademy on Instagram), Crafting The Future (@crafting_the_future on Instagram), Critical Craft Forum (@criticalcraftforum on Instagram), Chris Marchini (@rosecityoriginals on Instagram), to name a few.

Exhibition Review

When establishing the exhibition design and analyzing the potential contribution that *The Craft(y) Revival* could make to our understanding of knowledge-sharing and community in contemporary textile arts, I looked to curatorial projects that similarly focused on my converging themes of queer and feminist theories, community, and knowledge sharing in textile-based practices. I narrowed my exhibition reviews to four curatorial interventions: Sarah Quinton's *Close To You: Contemporary Textiles, Intimacy and Popular Culture*, 2007 (Dalhousie Art Gallery, Textile Museum of Canada), which considers contemporary textile practices in the technological age of pop-culture messaging;[95] John Chaich's *Queer Threads: Crafting Identity and Community*, 2014 (Leslie-Lohman Museum) which examines the resurgence of textiles synchronizing with the cultural breakdown of gender and sexual binaries[96]; Line Dufour's *Fate, Destiny and Self-Determination*, 2022 (Mississippi Textile Museum), which facilitated a community initiative using various modes of social interaction to foster collaboration;[97] and Kelsey Street's *Kelsey Street: Weaving Back and Forth*, 2022 (The Rooms), in which Street presented works produced in response to her late Grandmother's quilting practice.[98] These exhibitions have been fundamental in guiding my own thinking and approach to exhibition design and concept in this thesis.

In *Close To You: Contemporary Textiles, Intimacy and Popular Culture*, Quinton offered audience members an analytical display of contemporary craft engaging with popular culture

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[95] Sarah Quinton, *Close To You: Contemporary Textiles, Intimacy and Popular Culture*, 19 October - 25 November 2007, Dalhousie Art Gallery, Nova Scotia, supported by The Textile Museum of Canada, Toronto, Ontario.
[96] John Chaich, *Queer Threads: Crafting Identity and Community*, 17 January - 16 March 2014, Leslie-Lohman Museum, New York.
[97] Line Dufour, *Fate, Destiny and Self-Determination*, 1 October - 18 December 2022, Mississippi Valley Textile Museum, Almonte, Ontario.
[98] The Elbow Room Residency Series, *Kelsey Street: Weaving Back and Forth*, 15 October 2022 – 22 January 2023, The Rooms, St. John's, NL.

social thematics through her choice of artists who addressed icons and images used for communication in current online media.[99] Perhaps most important to my thesis work is Quinton's devotion to the history of material culture and past roles of craft, which is reflected through the selection of exhibiting artists and their works, as they harness art-world biases in reference to past 'norms.'[100] This exhibition, with its "historically-informed and conceptually-driven"[101] artworks – by Ai Kijima, Scott Kildall, Allyson Mitchell, Mark Newport, and Michèle Provost – acknowledges the social connotation of the works, but also the importance of communal social interaction in the history of craft. Quinton states "Craft is expressed socially; we engage with it in the course of daily life because of its functionality."[102] While the documentation of *Close To You: Contemporary Textiles, Intimacy and Popular Culture* demonstrates a traditional installation of the works in terms of artwork being hung on a white wall, it is the thematics and ideology behind the curatorial vision that are useful to my thesis exhibition.

For instance, Zanchetta's work within *The Craft(y) Revival* explores contemporary iconography that was made well-known due to the popular Nintendo game, *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* (within the game, a lily-of-the-valley flower is received as a celebration of your island being deemed a five-star island). I see Zanchetta's use of the lily-of-the-valley within the facilitation of a community-workshop to create her piece *for the presence of nymphs*, as resonating with aspects of *Close To You*; like the artists in that exhibition, Zanchetta is commenting on the community that emerged around *Animal Crossing*, while educating workshop

[99] This exhibition was originally mounted in 2007 in response to NeoCraft: an International Conference on the Crafts and Modernity. It is important to note that 'current' refers to the time when the exhibition was originally mounted, not referencing 2022 when the exhibition was examined for this thesis.
[100] Sarah Quinton, *Close To You: Contemporary Textiles, Intimacy and Popular Culture* (Halifax, NS: Dalhousie Art Gallery, 2007), 6.
[101] Quinton, 9.
[102] Quinton, 9.

participants on the reality of the flower[103] and paying homage to the historic practices of textile crafts. The act of having participants embroider this flower especially engages participants to appreciate the time and care involved in producing craft works, and the value of shared community practice.

Chaich's *Queer Threads: Crafting Identity and Community* is an exhibition that focused upon queer experiences and relationships with bodies, cultures, and spaces,[104] through textile-handicrafts, challenging heteronormative histories of textile work. Research participants who self-identified and disclosed themselves as queer within the interviews I conducted for this thesis, revealed the importance of textile history in queer life: handkerchief codes, the AIDS quilt project, the opportunities offered by textiles (clothing) in experimenting with queer identity, to name just a few, that often seem to go unacknowledged in textile histories. John Chaich offers guidance into the contemporary, intersectional discourse of present community-charged fibre work: elements I hoped to include in my own exhibition and written thesis. Originally mounted in 2014, *Queer Threads*, and the work of artists included in this exhibition,[105] with its emphasis on identity and intersectional social commentary, has continued to provoke important conversation in the fibre art discipline and contemporary art world.[106]

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[103] As discussed in the accompanying exhibition catalogue [see above], lily-of-the-valley plants are highly poisonous if consumed.
[104] John Chaich and Todd Oldham, *Queer Threads: Crafting Identity and Community* (Los Angeles, CA: Ammo, 2017), iv.
[105] Artists in the first iteration of *Queer Threads* include: Cris Bogia, Melanie Braverman, Jai Andrew Carrillo, Chiachio & Giannone, Liz Collins, Ben Cuevas, Pierre Fouché, James Gobel, Jesse Harrod, Larry Krone, Rebecca Levi, Aubrey Longley-Cook, Aaron McIntosh, Allyson Mitchell, John Thomas Paradiso, Sheila Pepe, Maria E. Piñeres, Allen Porter, L.J. Roberts, Sonny Schneider, Buzz Slutzky, Nathan Vincent, and Jessica Whitbread.
[106] The exhibition *Jagdeep Raina: Chase* (2021, Shauna McCabe) at The Textile Museum of Canada could prove to be an example of this, as the artist uses embroidery to document parallels of migrating to a new country and assimilating to an alternative culture, all while maintaining their identity. In viewing Raina's exhibition, we can see evidence of *Queer Threads'* grander thematic, but also of Chaich's methodology being carried forward into different contexts and artists.

Dufour's exhibition *Fate, Destiny and Self-Determination*, was important here for its facilitation of collective experience and co-production via community engagement and participation. The exhibition displays a tapestry made of three panels – the first was produced by Dufour to demonstrate contemporary tapestry-weaving practice; the second was woven by visiting participants; and the third featured individual woven pieces that were collected through a global open call.[107] For the third panel, as Dufour collected each piece, she documented the work to share on dedicated social media pages which included further information about the provenance of the piece and where to find the artist's online presence.[108]

The inclusion of artists from around the world in Dufour's installation is evidence of global communities of creators linked through online networks; additionally, the care that Dufour offers each piece – in documenting, providing provenance, and sharing artist's social media accounts – assures the makers that their efforts of producing the works are recognized, allowing a bridge of trust to be built between both artist and organizer. I have adopted similar strategies in *The Craft(y) Revival* with the implementation of *Yarn Bomb!*; In my own exhibition the yarnbombing intervention found within the gallery space functions similarly, with participants' names and locales featured in the show, and individual photographs of each square being shared on my own public Instagram account. Likewise, Dufour releases control of the second panel to visiting participants, as I have released control of the production methods participants use in approaching the squares, helps to build an appreciation and awareness of the craft. The community engagement and representation in this exhibition has been influential to my

[107]Adam Kant, "Fate Destiny & Self Determination," Line Dufour, 2023, https://www.linedufour.com/fate-destiny-self-determination.
[108] Works included in *Fate, Destiny and Self-Determination* can be found on a dedicated Instagram account, with the handle @tapestryline.

exhibition design and artist selection process, while the call for participants directly influenced my call for crochet and knitting squares in the *Yarn Bomb!* element of my exhibition.[109]

Street's exhibition, *Kelsey Street: Weaving Back and Forth*, which showcased the outcome of her residency at The Elbow Room Residency Program, includes beadwork pieces created in direct response to her Grandmother's traditional quilts. Street describes her process as "a way of collaborating with [her] Newfoundland settler and Indigenous heritage simultaneously,"[110] – the quilts reflecting the former, the beadwork the latter. While the artworks produced by Street are not textile-based as such (apart from inspiration provided by quilting), the dialogue between the traditional quilts and the beadworks offers audiences a visual example of applied generational knowledge, aspects that are integral to my thesis. The importance of generational histories and knowledge-transmission can also be found in *The Craft(y) Revival* through Amy Bagshaw's *Spools 2*, which the artist created through the repetitive motion of spooling that was taught to her by her grandmother. As discussed in the methodology section of this text, the foundational knowledge of textile-based crafts is *traditionally*, though not always, learnt from a female family member (today, this could be through online community members). I have further discreetly presented reference to generational knowledge pieces by including my own maternal great-grandmother's crocheted quilt[111] and paternal grandmother's crocheted blanket within the domestic setup included for the community space.[112]

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[109] See **Exhibition Design & Concept** for further discussion on *Yarn Bomb!*
[110] "Kelsey Street: Weaving Back and Forth," *Kelsey Street: Weaving Back and Forth* (St. Johns , NL: The Rooms, 2022), https://www.therooms.ca/sites/default/files/final_kelsey_street_brochure_no_cropmarks_0.pdf.
[111] My great-grandmother passed away before she was able to finish making the crocheted quilt for my then-pregnant mother – my mother's aunt, Alex, finished making the quilt on her behalf. Similarly, Loose Ends is a project founded by Jennifer Simonic and Masey Kaplan that gathers volunteers to help complete knitting projects by late loved ones. Keena Alwahaidi, "Volunteer 'Finishers' Help Complete Knitting Projects Started by Late Loved Ones | CBC Radio," CBC News (CBC/Radio Canada, February 15, 2023), https://www.cbc.ca/radio/asithappens/loose-ends-knitting-program-1.6748295.
[112] See **Exhibition Design & Concept** for further discussion on Community Space.

Exhibition Design & Concept

The exhibition design of *The Craft(y) Revival* comprises three sculptural works, one community-driven intervention, and one domestic-style setting, within the space of the gallery. While Amy Bagshaw's *Spools 2* is wall-mounted, both Lizz Aston and Sarah Zanchetta's works are suspended from the ceiling; the spatial accessibility surrounding the pieces was important to me to allow audiences access and viewing from multiple perspectives. As Aston's work *Beginning to Macramé* invites interaction from audience members, having sufficient space around the work to encourage and facilitate visitors feeling comfortable in doing so was a requirement. Additionally, Zanchetta's work highlights both the 'finished' front and 'unfinished' reverse of the piece, and thus required the work to have access to both sides. Also included, and first seen by visitors as they prepare to enter the space, is *Yarn Bomb!* – a participatory collection of community yarn squares, combined to wrap a pillar standing within the space. *Yarn Bomb!* is beside a community space area set up in the gallery, a domestic-style corner that invites visitors to sit and learn about the themes found within *The Craft(y) Revival* and other textile-based knowledge.

The works presented within *The Craft(y) Revival* are activated by their relationship to community and histories of knowledge-sharing: Aston's work connects to the 1970s feminist aesthetics of macramé, and allows current audiences to share in the knowledge-sharing; Bagshaw's work relates to the knowledge passed down by her grandmother, a familiar mode of learning textile-skills; Zanchetta's piece highlights the relationship between community fostering and modes of knowledge-sharing; *Yarn Bomb!* is a collective piece that garnered participants through social media; and the community space directly promotes a relationship with

textile-based knowledge resources. Placing these items in a space together allows each of these relationships to thrive in conversation with one another.

Community Space

From the onset of this project, I knew I wanted to implement an open research/knowledge-sharing space in the gallery. I had first encountered a similar display in the exhibition *Elusive Desires* at The Varley Art Gallery of Markham (The Varley), where curator Marissa Largo had included a space to rest and learn; in the hallway, prior to the exhibition entrance, Largo included texts that discuss queer art, placemaking and land, and sexual identity – all which related to the themes found within *Elusive Desires*.[113] This display established a resource list for audience members, in addition to providing curatorial transparency by displaying and circulating the texts that Largo, and possibly even the artists themselves (Ness Lee and Lan Florence Yee), used in researching and producing the exhibition.

While inspired by this example, the resource repository in *The Craft(y) Revival* introduces non-textual resources relating to textile-based practices, including various thrifted sewing patterns, various tools used when practicing textile-based crafts, Lizz Aston's artist book the features explorations surrounding the creation of *Beginning to Macramé*, and QR code scanning which leads to online resources (such as videos and podcast episodes). Including these items within *The Craft(y) Revival* exhibition supports an examination of the knowledge each object holds, and shares with visitors who choose to investigate them.

[113] Marissa Largo, *Elusive Desires*, 25 September 2021 - 2 January 2022, The Varley Art Gallery of Markham, Markham, ON.

Lizz Aston – *Beginning to Macramé*

Once I stumbled upon Aston's *Beginning to Macramé* through online research on Toronto-based fibre artists, I knew I wanted the work to be included in *The Craft(y) Revival* exhibition; its interactive nature contributes to the knowledge-sharing thematic. Aston was originally inspired by instructional diagrams that guided crafters in traditional macramé practices, and has built upon this to produce the soft sculptures which allow users to "add or subtract knots and play with different configurations while learning about the names and word histories associate with macrame and knotting."[114] Due to the interactive aspect of the work, it was essential to consider likely audience paths through the exhibition, and the space requirements for visitors to participate with the piece.

To guide audience members through the space, I chose to situate the work close to the windows to draw them in. I assumed that both the Community area, hosting knowledge-sharing tools, and *Beginning to Macramé*, with its participatory component, have the possibility to be high-traffic and high-activity areas due to their interactive nature. Choosing to have them as far away from each other as possible would help to manage this traffic, but also aid in guiding audience members through the exhibition.

Amy Bagshaw – *Spools 2*

While Bagshaw's work, being wall-mounted, may seem more straightforward in its spatial requirements and placement with the exhibition design, it is still an installation piece that

[114] Lizz Aston, "Increasing Your Knot Vocabulary," Lizz Aston, n.d., https://www.lizzaston.com/increasing-your-knot-vocabulary.

includes thirteen individual sculptures, and thus presents a complex set of concerns. In the first installation of the work at *be contemporary art gallery*, in Innisfil Ontario, Bagshaw utilized a corner to display the sculptures, placing them as though they were conversing with each other and inviting the viewer to join them. This configuration allowed viewers to be encapsulated by the sculptures, as the works emerged from the corner outwards along the walls. However, for the installation in *The Craft(y) Revival*, Bagshaw wanted to explore an alternative iteration of the installation by displaying the sculptures in a vertical line from floor-to-ceiling, an arrangement I agreed with based on Bagshaw's rationale.

Spools was created amid the initial lockdown period of the coronavirus pandemic in 2020: Bagshaw's practice had to retreat indoors, with her practice adapting to the scale and time demands and her available capacity while juggling working from home and parenting two sons. For the artist, *Spools* thus constituted a more intimate approach to her typical larger thread installations, and allowed her to revisit the skill of corking taught to her by her grandmother when she was younger. The reconnection to her family lineage during a global pause was reflected in her choice to install the work vertically in *The Craft(y) Revival*: this choice allows viewer to stop and have an individual experience with the work, rather than having the work situated horizontally, an orientation that pushes viewers through the space and allows for multiple visitors to examine the work at the same time. The enforced intimacy of the vertical presentation in this exhibition also reflects the intimacy Bagshaw experienced in producing the work.

Sarah Zanchetta – *for the presence of nymphs*

for the presence of nymphs is a collaborative work as a result of the embroidery workshop facilitated by Zanchetta as part of the programming for this thesis: following the workshop, Zanchetta combined participants' works into one communal piece to be included in *The Craft(y) Revival.*[115] I chose to situate *for the presence of nymphs* in relation to the large window, with enough space for visitors to walk around the whole work, to highlight the 'unfinished' back of the piece where you can see how participants created their individual squares. The light from the window also allows the reverse to be seen from the front of the piece, demonstrating the labour and care of participants, and allowing the community to not be removed from the presentation of the final work. In presenting the work, Zanchetta and I discussed how important it was to the both of us for the community contributions to be acknowledged. Therefore, Zanchetta embroidered the initials of each participant to their work, while I collected their names to be included in the accompanying exhibition label.

Included with *for the presence of nymphs* are paper zines that I designed, in collaboration Zanchetta and her research, that feature information on the lily-of-the-valley plant. I originally came up with this idea as an exchange of goods between the workshop participants and organizers, as we received their embroidered pieces and they received zines filled with lily-of-the-valley facts. Through discussions, Zanchetta and I decided it would be beneficial to display these, and have them available for visitors to the exhibition to take home (for free), as a further gesture of knowledge-sharing. As Zanchetta dedicates her practice to the study of poisonous plants and human's relationships with them, the zines extend her mission of educating members of the public about the plant.

[115] See **Methodology** for further information on the embroidery workshop facilitated by Sarah Zanchetta.

Yarn Bomb!

Yarnbombing, and its history of public engagement, has been a fascination of mine throughout my thesis research and I was intent on having some form of it within or related to *The Craft(y) Revival* exhibition. Around mid-November, 2022, I had access to the Graduate Gallery to begin imagining the exhibition design and was met by the white pillar in the center of the room – I knew this was my opportunity. In mid-December, 2022, I sent out personalized invitations to some people who I knew knitted and/or crocheted to contribute to the project, and later in early-January, 2023, I launched a call for participants through my social media accounts (Instagram and Facebook). The only restraints I put on the call were for the yarn square to be 7x7 inches, with no other instructions save an invitation to be as creative as they liked! The collection of these squares became a community effort, as my mother, my partner's mother, friends, and myself shared the call and collected from all who chose to submit. My mother and I combined the squares together on Canada's Family Day holiday weekend, which felt concluding to the community practice of creating the piece. Once installed, the accompanying exhibition label included all the names of participants and their locales. I saw this project as somewhat of a social experiment to see how far and how many squares could be collected, and to support my research on the use of social media within textile-based crafts. Among the *Yarn Bomb!* contributors, I have only worked previously with two of them in my own textile practice, I knew some other participants personally or through mutual connections, and others I had never met either virtually or in-person. The *Yarn Bomb!* project in *The Craft(y) Revival* is directly supporting my approach to the gallery space, as the unspoken relationship between each square and each participant is essential to the greater piece.

Conclusion

Ultimately, what distinguishes contemporary textile-based craft communities – and their modes of sharing knowledge – from their predecessors is the integration of social-media technologies. From my research interviews for practicing crafters (the majority of whom define themselves as hobbyists), the inclusion of social media into their process of creating has become a normative exercise. Social media applications, like Instagram and Facebook, offer users the opportunity to connect with people from across the country, and even globe, that they would not have been able to before. Whether craft practitioners searching for like-minded people, different patterns, troubleshooting praise, or encouraging praise, the access to the internet has given them the convenience to do so. While analog knowledge-sharing practices remain alive within the textile-based craft community (meeting up with people to craft together, talking to a yarn store owner, or the passing of knowledge between generations), the integration of internet and subsequent use of social media, has expanded the notions of community to include the global public – and to expand the composition of these groups, as younger, older, racialized, queer, feminist, nonbinary folks come together around a shared interest in learning and connecting.

The Craft(y) Revival demonstrates textile-based crafts modes of knowledge-sharing: through the presentation of both fibre artists and community participant work, the contemporary role of communal knowledge-sharing is evident. Lizz Aston's *Beginning to Macramé* invites audience members to connect with feminist textile practitioners from the 1970s, as the participatory work includes printed instructions from historic pattern instructions on the reverse. Although the visitor may not be able to read the instructions to follow them, due to the printed writing breaking between strands of the soft sculpture, the notion of knowledge is there, and they can explore their own methods of creation. In comparison, Amy Bagshaw's *Spools 2* asks

viewers to intimately discover the practice of spooling that was passed down to her through her grandmother's knowledge. In the repetitive action of wrapping each strand around the acrylic rods, Bagshaw is able to have an individual connection to the work. However, in presenting them to the public, Bagshaw is also revealing this knowledge and inciting investigation from visitors. Sarah Zanchetta's *for the presence of nymphs* also reveals the passage of knowledge, through leaving the reverse of the piece 'unfinished' and collaborating with community participants. Zanchetta's act of knowledge sharing expands through the inclusion of zines that hold her research on the lily-of-the-valley plant, prompting audience members to learn more. And the community space and *Yarn Bomb!* are integral to the presentation of *The Craft(y) Revival*, as they show the connection between modes of community and knowledge-sharing. The community space offers non-textual resources and tools that visitors can use and investigate to gain a greater understanding of textile-based crafts, whereas the *Yarn Bomb!* demonstrates the reaches of the internet to online craft communities.

In researching community in textile-based craft, I thought it imperative to hear from these members themselves, to activate my research and see it applied rather than an attempt at applying my own narrative. Through inviting research participants into this thesis project, I was able to enact knowledge-sharing practices. While I had and asked prepared research questions for the interview process, natural conversations occurred and stories were shared between the participants and myself, and I believe that we connected and added each other to our considered communities I have found this claim to be supported by ongoing relationships through email and social-media where we share textile related programming, events, and resources between us. This also holds true for some participants from the embroidery workshop facilitated by Sarah Zanchetta, and those who contributed to the *Yarn Bomb!* project.

In another way, I extended knowledge-sharing further by being present each time the exhibition was open to the public. In my presence, I was able to pass information to visitors about topics found within my thesis, the works, and how they relate to each other. Additionally, I was able to collect knowledge from visitors through conversations where they shared stories, interpretations, and ways in which they connected with the works; reflecting upon the exhibition, I have found that it prompted the possibility of expanding the textile community by allowing visitors to find themselves or their skill set mirrored in the works. As I considered visitor engagement with the space and works while planning *The Craft(y) Revival*, I was pleased to see the 'community space' – a space filled with both textual and non-textual resources that I have been passionate about and fascinated by throughout my research – activated throughout the course of the exhibition.

During the opening reception of *The Craft(y) Revival*, multiple visitors engaged with and within the community space. A visitor, Jade, picked up knitting needles and cast-on, producing a square which remained a part of the space during the mounted exhibition. Throughout the week, a friend brought their knitting to OCAD University with the intention to knit within the space, so we sat and knit together. Another visitor of the space asked if I knew how to knit and asked if I thought they would be able to learn; I picked us each a pair of knitting needles and sat teaching them a slip-stitch, to cast-on, and a basic stitch. Since that short lesson, the visitor had since told me that they had brought themselves a pair of knitting needles and wool, and are continuing to teach themself through YouTube tutorials.

In concluding the exhibition and reflecting upon its success through the community reached and created, as it is only one interpretation of community and knowledge-sharing in

textile-based crafts, I have begun to consider this as a first iteration with more to come, much like John Chaich's initial display of *Queer Threads*.

In conclusion, the integration of social media into the process of craft has benefited the discipline and its communities. Where there once might have been concern for the future of textile-based craft practices and the communities they foster, today we see the opposite: practices have been revived, new participants are coming together, sharing their knowledge, invoking older histories, and addressing different concerns. It is this confluence of contemporary practices that the works and programming within *The Craft(y) Revival* seek to address, celebrate, and continue.

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APPENDIX A
Thesis Documentation

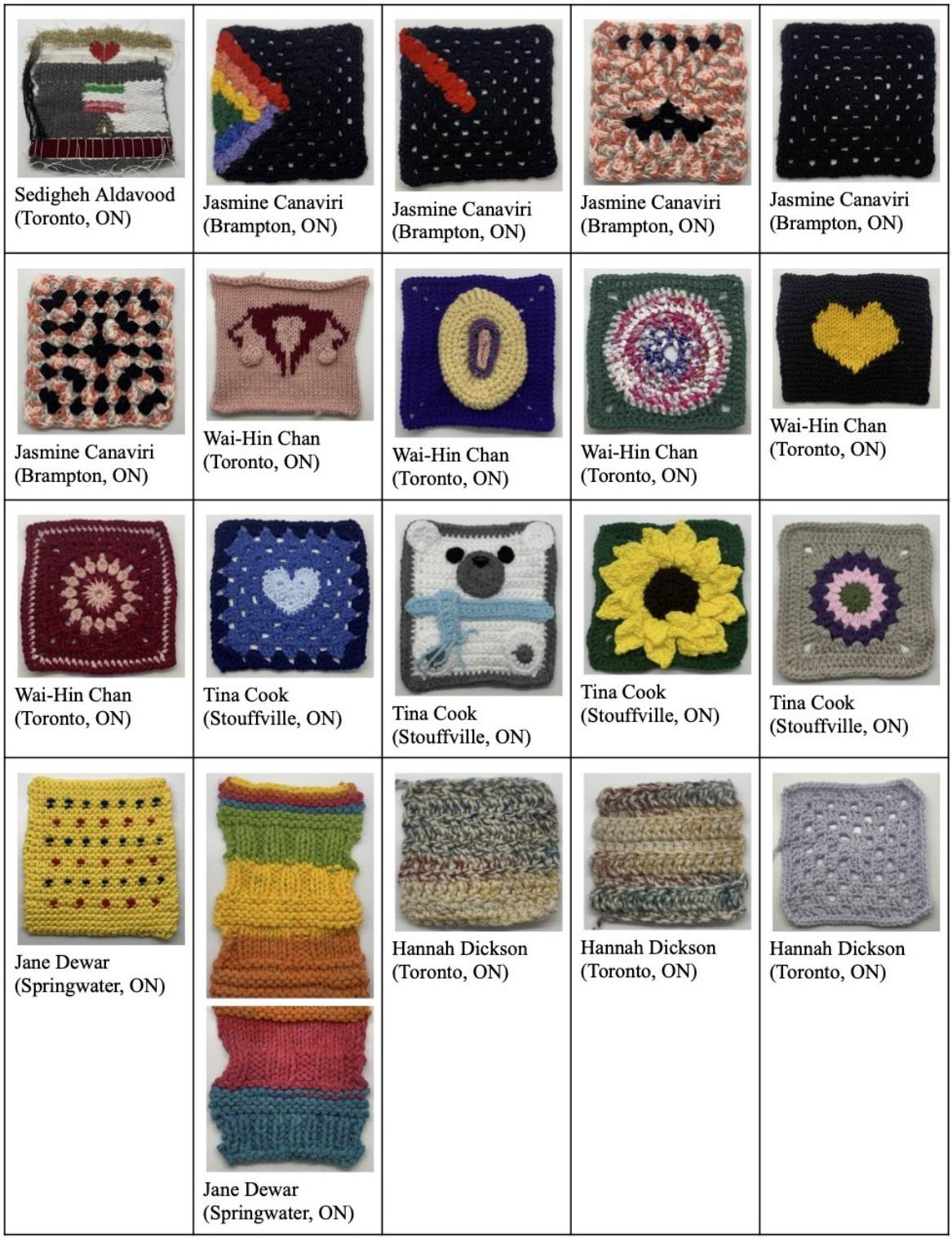
Call For Research Participants:

A promotional poster seeking participants in a research study conducted to support *The Craft(y) Revival* thesis.

Yarn Bomb! Call For Contributors:

A promotional poster seeking seven-by-seven handmade yarn-squares from members of the public.

Yarn Bomb! Contributions:



A collection of images documenting yarn squares donated by members of the public. Featured in this image are squares created by: Sedigheh Aldavood from Toronto, Ontario; Jasmine Canaviri from Brampton, Ontario; Wai-Hin Chan from Toronto, Ontario; Tina Cook from Stouffville, Ontario; Jane Dewar from Springwater, Ontario; and Hannah Dickson from Toronto, Ontario.

A collection of images documenting yarn squares donated by members of the public. Featured in this image are squares created by: Hannah Dickson from Toronto, Ontario; Lisa Hazelwood from Toronto, Ontario; Molly Farquharson from Orillia, Ontario; Christina Fillipozi from Barrie, Ontario; Ashley Hemmings from St. Johns, Newfoundland and Labrador; Hamideh Jalili from Thornhill, Ontario; Jennifer Jones from Newbury, Ontario; Esther Kelly from East Oro, Ontario; Breeann Keogh-Chin from Canmore, Alberta; Diana Kirkaldy from Oshawa, Ontario; Praneti Kulkarni from Toronto, Ontario; and Wendy Lubniewski from Innisfil, Ontario.

A collection of images documenting yarn squares donated by members of the public. Featured in this image are squares created by: Wendy Lubniewski from Innisfil, Ontario; Jessica Lui from Toronto, Ontario; Virginia McLaughlin from Cobourg, Ontario; Kevin Melanson from St. Johns, Newfoundland and Labrador; Kelly Mills from Barrie, Ontario; William Oliveira from Toronto, Ontario; Parinaz Pourreza from Richmond Hill, Ontario; Parisa Pourreza from Richmond Hill, Ontario; Yalda Sabet from Thornhill, Ontario; and Sam Stephen from Innisfil, Ontario.

A collection of images documenting yarn squares donated by members of the public. Featured in this image are squares created by: Sam Stephen from Innisfil, Ontario; Amy Szermirska from Barrie, Ontario; Victoria Tozer Butler from Miramichi, New Brunswick; and Lucia Wallace from Toronto, Ontario.

A collection of images documenting yarn squares donated by members of the public. Featured in this image are squares created by: Lucia Wallace from Toronto, Ontario; Jill Warman from London, Ontario; and Marjorie Wilcox from Barrie, Ontario.

Embroidery Workshop with Sarah Zanchetta
Social Media Post:

A promotional poster advertising the organized embroidery workshop, facilitated by Sarah Zanchetta.

Embroidery Workshop with Sarah Zanchetta
Documentation:

A collection of images taken by Paige Lauren Stephen during the organized embroidery workshop, facilitated by Sarah Zanchetta.

The Craft(y) Revival: Community and Knowledge-Sharing in Textile-based Crafts Exhibition Promotional Materials:

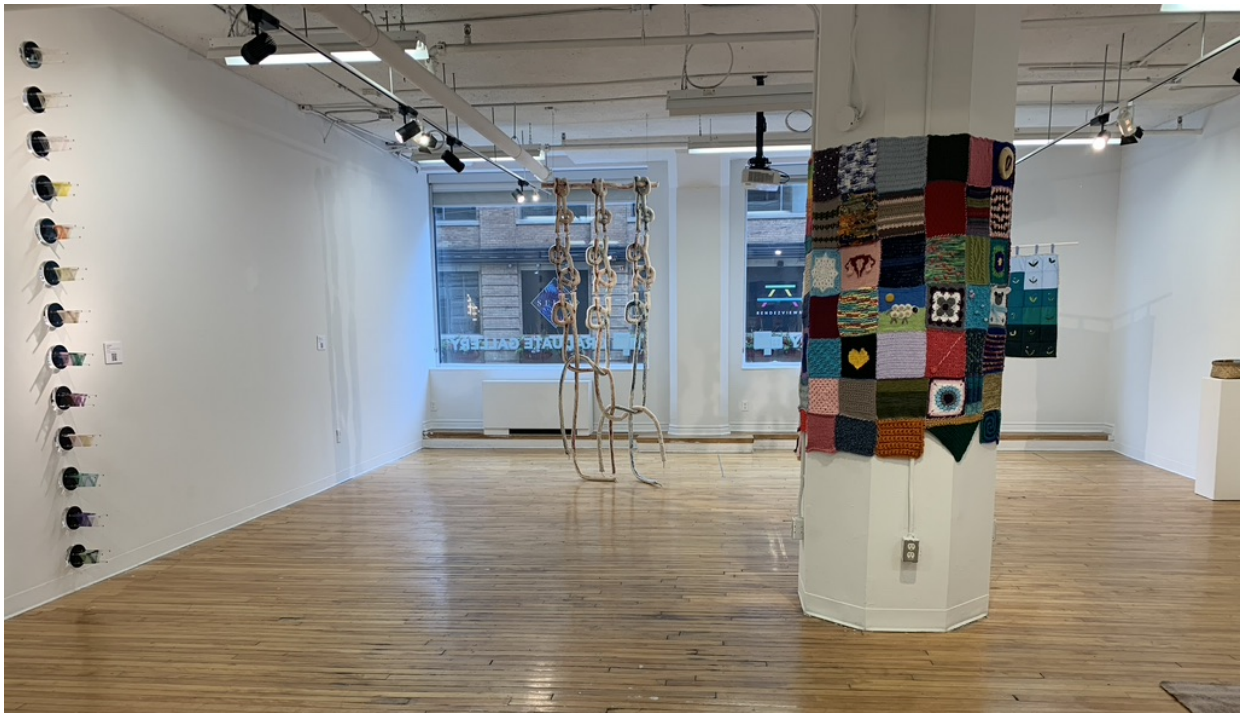
A promotional poster advertising the exhibition for *The Craft(y) Revival: Community and Knowledge-Sharing in Textile-based Crafts*, taking place at OCAD U Graduate Gallery.

The Craft(y) Revival: Community and Knowledge-Sharing in Textile-based Crafts Exhibition Installation Photos:
Below images by Paige Lauren Stephen:

Photo of the title wall located inside the OCADU Graduate Gallery space. A plinth is located below the title with curatorial essays and *Yarn Bomb!* Catalogues on top. A QR code with a link that leads to the exhibition catalogue is attached to the side of the plinth.

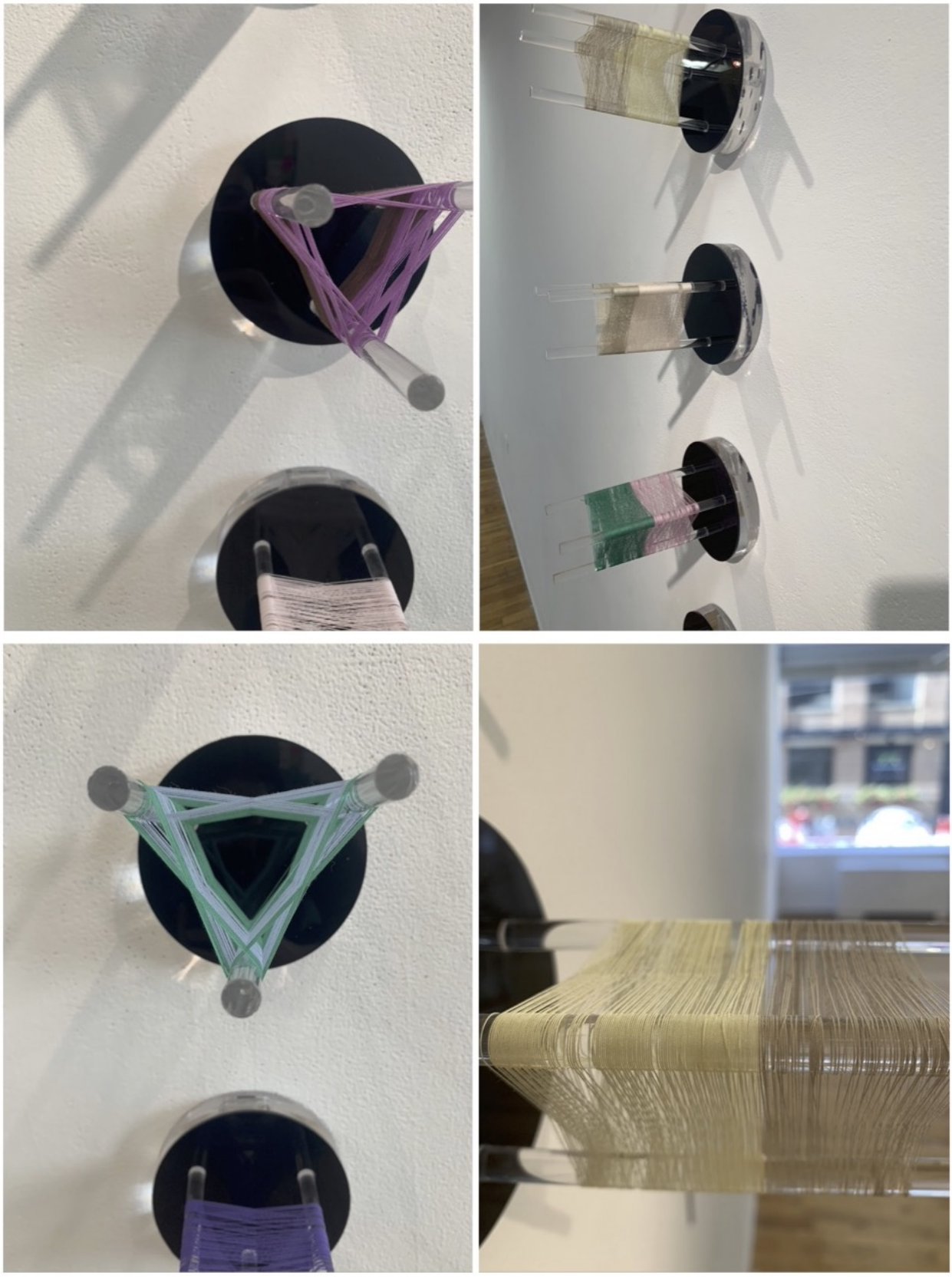
Installation photo of the community space installed within the gallery space.

Detail photo of a large commercial fabric spool that is used as a side table within the community space inside the gallery.



An installation shot of *The Craft(y) Revival* exhibition.

A collection of images of Amy Bagshaw's artwork, *Spools 2*, installed within the gallery space.



A collection of detail photos of Amy Bagshaw's installed artwork, *Spools 2*.

An installation shot of *The Craft(y) Revival* exhibition.

An installation shot of *The Craft(y) Revival* exhibition, highlighting the *Yarn Bomb!* Wrapped pillar.

Image of Lizz Aston's *Beginning to Macramé* installed within the gallery space.

A collection of detail photos of Lizz Aston's installed artwork, *Beginning to Macramé*.

An installation shot of *The Craft(y) Revival* exhibition.

An installation shot of Sarah Zanchetta's artwork *for the presence of nymphs*, and presented zines from the embroidery workshop.

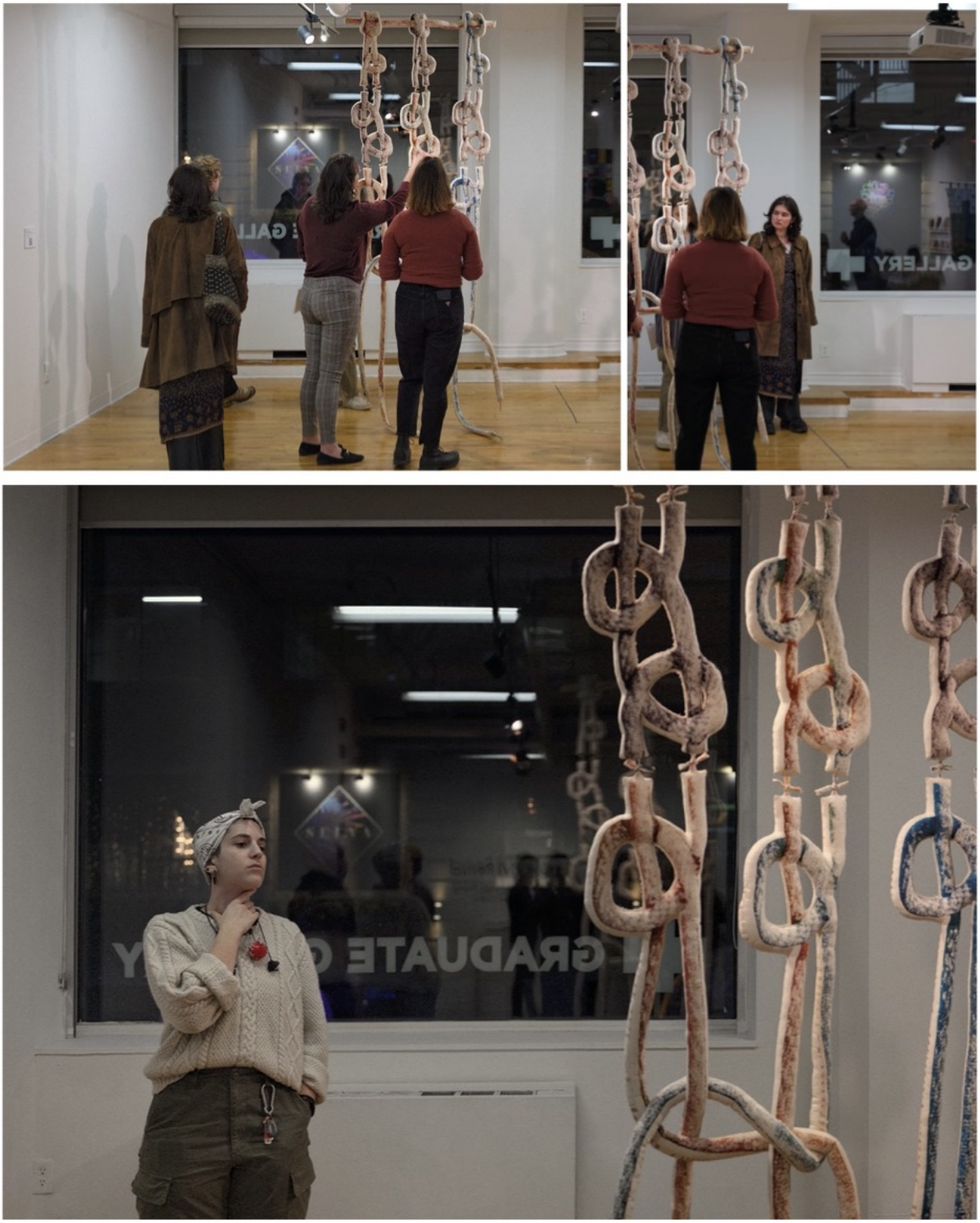
A collection of detail photos of Sarah Zanchetta's installed artwork, *for the presence of nymphs*.

A collection of detail photos of Sarah Zanchetta's installed artwork, *for the presence of nymphs*.

The Craft(y) Revival: Community and Knowledge-Sharing in Textile-based Crafts Exhibition Reception:
Below images by Wenwei Chen / Mew:

Image of Lizz Aston sitting in the community space within the gallery, reading the curatorial essay.

A collection of images featuring visitors viewing Amy Bagshaw's artwork, *Spools 2*.



A collection of images featuring visitors viewing Lizz Aston's artwork, *Beginning to Macramé*.

A collection of images featuring visitors viewing Sarah Zanchetta's artwork, *for the presence of nymphs*.

Image of curator, Paige Lauren Stephen, talking to visitor, Kashfia Arif, while viewing *Yarn Bomb!*

Image of curator, Paige Lauren Stephen, talking to visitors Laura Moore and Paige Bowen.

A collection of images featuring visitors engaging with the community space.

APPENDIX B
Artist Biographies

Lizz Aston

@lizzaston | lizzaston.com

Lizz Aston is a textile artist, educator, human-centered designer and pigment worker. She holds an Advanced Diploma in Crafts & Design from Sheridan College and a Bachelor of Design in Industrial Design from OCAD University. She is an alumna of the Craft & Design Studio at Harbourfront Centre (Textiles, 2009-2012). Aston is the recipient of numerous grants and awards, including the RBC Emerging Artist Studio Set-up Award from Craft Ontario. She has been commissioned to complete public artworks for Harvard University, Holt Renfrew and Lululemon and has worked on sponsored projects with H&M Canada, the City of Toronto, 3M and the Japanese Paper Place. Her work is represented in public and private collections and has been exhibited across Canada, the US, Australia and South Korea. She currently teaches as a Sessional Instructor in the Crafts & Design program at Sheridan College. Lizz Aston is represented by The Canadian Guild of Crafts, Montreal, QC. Caviar20, Toronto, ON. and Boston Art, Boston, MA. USA.

Amy Bagshaw

@amesbagshaw | amybagshaw.ca

Amy Bagshaw (she/her) is a visual artist and educator. She earned her BFA from Queen's University, and MFA from Stony Brook University, New York, with a focus on fibre installation and intermedia. A Graduate Gender Studies Scholar, her art practice extends to Intersectional Feminism and contemporary craft practices. She has exhibited in North America and Europe and has created public art works for the City of Barrie and Alliston, ON. Amy has received numerous

grants, participated in a residency at The Banff Centre and her work can be seen on the cover of *Feminist Time Against Nation Time* (Dietrich and Hesford, 2008). Her paper "Notes from the Portal: Feminist Teaching Strategies in/post-pandemic Art and Design Classrooms," was published in *Teaching in a Post-COVID Era* (Springer, 2021). She is faculty in the School of Design and Visual Art, Program Coordinator of the Museum and Gallery Studies Program at Georgian College, Director of Georgian College's Campus Gallery, and volunteers on the Board of Directors for the MacLaren Art Centre. She lives in Alliston with her family.

Sarah Zanchetta

@zanxetta | sarahzanchetta.com

Sarah Zanchetta (she/her) is a textile artist and writer based in Toronto, Canada. Her curiosity driven practice researches lost knowledge in connection to the land and plants which surround us, specifically our fringed relationship with poisonous plants. She is currently enrolled in her second year at the Master of Visual Studies in Studio Art at the University of Toronto, and holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from OCAD University. Zanchetta's work has been presented in both national and international venues including Garden Variety (2022), Queen Elizabeth Cultural Centre (2020), Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery (2019), Gladstone Hotel (2019), and ON-ART Gallery (2017) among others. Her most recent work *leaves of three, will you remember me?* is displayed at and is part of the Kortright Centre for Conservation's permanent collection.

APPENDIX C
Additional Resources

Exhibitions:[116]

Angela Aujila, *My Grandmother's Dress*, 17 February - 21 May 2023, MacLaren Art Centre, Barrie, ON.

Ashley Hemmings, *Tell Me How to Be Here*, 29 September - 23 October 2021, Tina Dolter Gallery, Corner Brook, NL.

Brenda Reid, *Behind the Mask*, 21 May - 29 August 2021, Homer Watson House and Gallery, Kitchener, ON.

Camila Salcedo, *listening and making: a (Zoom) call and response*, Community Makers 2022 Program Exhibition, 25 June - 25 September 2022, The Textile Museum of Canada, Toronto, ON.

Erin Szikora, *Homecoming*, 14 September - 31 December 2022, Art Gallery of Guelph, Guelph, ON.

Katherine Pill, *Gio Swaby: Fresh Up*, 28 May - 2 October 2022, The Museum of Fine Arts St. Petersburg, Florida, U.S.A.

Marissa Largo, *Elusive Desires*, 25 September 2021 - 2 January 2022, The Varley Art Gallery of Markham, Markham, ON.

Molly Channon, *Serious Sparkle*, 10 August 2019 - 5 January 2020, Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery, New York, U.S.A.

Ryan Doherty, *Simone Elizabeth Sauders: u.n.i.t.y.*, 12 October 2022 - 29 January 2023, The Textile Museum of Canada, Toronto, ON.

Shaheer Zazai, *Afghanistan My Love*, 8 October 2022 - 10 April 2023, Aga Khan Museum, Toronto, ON.

Shannon R. Stratton, *Tanya Aguiñiga: Craft & Care*, 8 May - 2 October 2018, Museum of Arts and Design (MAD), New York, U.S.A.

Shauna McCabe, *Jagdeep Raina: Chase*, 15 September 2021 - 9 April 2022, The Textile Museum of Canada, Toronto, ON.

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[116] Please note this list is not extensive. The exhibitions listed, in relation to the ones discussed in **Exhibition Review** and the themes found in *The Craft(y) Revival*, provide further discussion and examples of curating textiles with themes of community, identity, and social discourse.

Dana Snow, Ignazio Colt Nicastra, and Paulina Padilla, *Stitching In Your Shape*, 5 January - 4 February 2023, Riverdale Hub Gallery, Toronto, ON.

Zarina Laalo, *Weaving Cultural Identities: Celebrating Heritage and Traditional Textiles*, 2018 - 2022 Vancouver Biennale “re-IMAGE-n”, Vancouver, British Columbia.