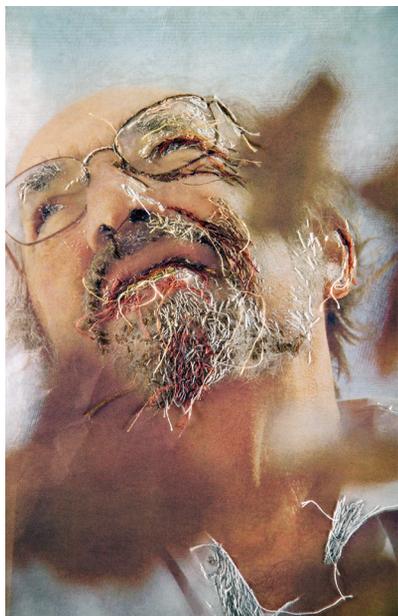


Association of Israel's Decorative Arts BY JESSICA HEMMINGS

AT THIS YEAR'S COLLECT fair at the V&A Museum in London (February 9–13), one of the textile highlights was the work exhibited by the Association of Israel's Decorative Arts (AIDA). Established to assist the development and awareness of Israel's decorative arts, AIDA first showcased work at SOFA Chicago in 2003.

Several artists who exhibit through AIDA work with fiber in refreshing ways. For example, Gali Cnanni's simple silhouettes of garment shapes created through burnout printing leave the copper wire weft intact but erase all trace of the surrounding red cotton warp.



These strikingly graphic weavings reveal, on close inspection, the torn edges of each pick at the spot where the burnout process has eaten away the fiber. Particularly in the larger works, the copper weft threads, suspended like closely packed stripes, feel both precarious and provocative.

A world apart from Cnanni's spare designs are the embroideries of Lotus Peles-Chen, whose thready style adds stitches to photographs from newspapers as well as unusual materials such as foam. In her works, the stitch is allowed to tangle and hang free, employed as an accent to an existing image. The work feels hairy and gives the impression that the placement of stitches is random, even verging on the uncontrolled. But from a distance, the threads blend into each image to act as the perfectly placed accent, inseparable from Peles-Chen's found images.

What is remarkable about the artists represented by AIDA is the breadth of approach and style they exhibit. No suggestion of a national style is evident; instead each artist is entirely individual. www.aidaarts.org.

ABOVE RIGHT: Gali Cnanni, Untitled, 2004; cotton, copper; handwoven, kasuri dyed, burned out; 28½" x 12½". LEFT: Lotus Peles-Chen, Archeolog, 2005; embroidered image; 10" x 10½".



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