

Statement

Fabienne Mani

There is no art without craft, no expression without technique - Richard Sennett.¹

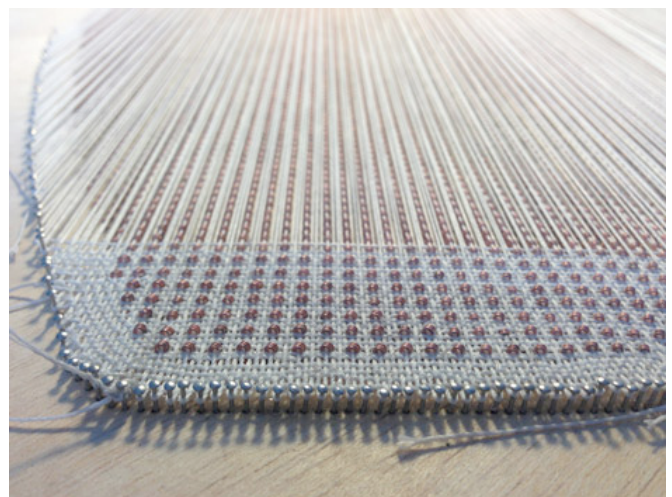
I developed a fascination for creating settings and objects with a focus on their influence on the different perceptions of human beings. In the best cases, it somehow results in a relationship between the work and the viewer. What is required to achieve a reaction is what interests and motivates me. This is especially the case, since we are constantly surrounded with high quality visual stimuli with often very effective impact.

I'm somewhere between different creative ways of working. I don't actually like to name, what I make as „art“ because it has an intimidating definition. Also, I truly don't think it is necessary to categorize it, as it means that some things will always be excluded. Working as a window dresser, I learned fast how to work with all sorts of materials and use them in settings which were not made to be there forever but still gave that idea. So, often I would encounter the danger of unintentionally being tinkered. In some way I consider myself as an amateur because I have not committed myself to one single discipline. But that is only because when I start something new I try out a new, different way of working. This has its good sides as well as its bad. This gives me more freedom to find more results. And I try to allow myself to fail, and try again. Even if it is not always easy to reconcile with the expectations of school, critics or myself.

I'm struggling with giving a clear definition of my work. I feel that this last two semesters of my studies could be crucial in order to come closer to an explanation. At least I hope it will be. How much I love to do many different things (figuring it out, while doing), I feel a need to specialize more into one direction. Not so much in terms of techniques, but of themes.

For me, the process of working with materials brings with it a certain responsibility: I want to make the actual usage of the material worth the process, both for maker and viewer. This does not exclude experimentation at all. It is rather more about details and finding the essence in everything than about following rules or guidelines.

Craft can bring physicality and texture to an object. A traditional craft can even add a historical context to the design. An example of a successful transformation of a common technique into a new way of usage, is „The Tactile Treatment“, designed by Izzy Parker. The object, which is something between garment and jewellery. It's made from 11'570 acupuncture needles. The needles are hand woven into the textile base as a flat piece, a process that took Parker over 300 hours. Draped over the shoulders, the spikes open out. When the wearer moves, the needles reflect the light as they move.



This reminded me of a project I did in the past, where I made a jacket out of toothpicks. The toothpicks were stuck into soft foam. By using an existing technique, Izzy Parker is achieving a way more refined result.

¹ http://yalepress.yale.edu/yupbooks/discussionswith/richard_sennett.asp

An inspiration in terms of material use, is Lucy Mcrae. Her way of treating all kinds of materials to create settings for films or photos with an approach on the human silhouette, seem free and advanced. She uses simple objects and by combining and deforming them, free from their initial purpose, she achieves unexpected outcomes. Her methods are playful and humorous. I ltry to always add some humor or ambiguousness to my work. I think humor is a good way to reach people.



Out of necessity but also because of its personal appeal, I often use cheap everyday objects for my materials and want to make something exceptional out of them. I find inspiration in unusual places. There is an aspect of surprise to it, as well as the joy of simplicity. Although I am interested in crafts of all sorts, I have a preference for hand crafts; those of which require a lot of patience and care. The struggle to achieve the concepts in my head, require me to adapt different techniques. Perfecting my technique allows my concepts to be as clear the viewer as they are in my own head. If I feel that in a experiment is something valuable in the creation, I can get lost in the work. Like the work is a meditation and I stop worrying, than the outcome is mostly something interesting. By using these materials like plastigbags, I'm not trying to make comments on the usage of such items. My curiosity is based on the material it self and on the challenge to make something out of it. Simply rely on the nature of something. In case of the installation with the white plastic bags, I was using the character properties to creat sound and movement. My goal was, that the viewer wouldn't recognize them as plastigbags in the first place.



White shiver, WDKA 2013