

Artist Statement

Ellen November

My artwork expresses my love for the infinite communicative possibilities of pattern, texture, shape, and color. As a trained illustrator, I am motivated to convey ideas and perspectives and to engage the viewer in my vision. As a fiber artist, I utilize the power and depth of mixed media to create a compelling statement that reaches out to viewers on multiple levels.

I create my art by pulling from images and ideas that resonate with me personally: locations with which I am familiar; places I would like to visit; moments in history; and social causes and topics. The subject and intent of a piece guides the selection of materials I use, including textiles acquired from many sources, fabric I dye or print myself, and my own photographs edited and printed on fabric. In my work, materials help tell the story, and prompt the viewer to deeper and more reflective exploration.

Aerial views feature prominently in many of my works. Cartography, which has informed a number of my pieces, is graphic in nature and I am intrigued by bird's eye views of streets, boundaries, and geographical footprints and their relationship to angle and perspective. I created a series of work based on interpretations of the *Rand McNally Thomas Guidebook* of maps. Using a map as the foundational first layer, I build an interpretive statement through additional images relevant to the area. Each piece in the series represents a coastal area of Los Angeles County from Malibu to Long Beach.

Social causes that I am passionate about are the inspiration for other series of works. Addressing gun violence, in a piece titled "House of Guns" I depict the US Capitol building created out of automatic weapons. In "American Bald Eagle," images of bullets replace feathers. In a series focusing on the aftermath of war I juxtaposition views of unscathed cities with images of those same cities after war has destroyed the architecture, artifacts, and beauty that characterize and define civilization.

In Hebrew, *tikkun olam* means "world repair," a Jewish concept that today is increasingly applied to acts of social responsibility and the goal of leaving the world a better place than one found it. Integrating tenets of my Judaism into my work as an artist is both a joy and a commitment to *tikkun olam*. I have recently curated *Keeping the Faith: An Artistic Celebration of Judaism*, an art and film exhibition that explores Jewish heritage, culture and traditions. In my own series of work displayed in this exhibition, I explore Judaic tradition through interpretations of Jewish holidays. In this series I let go of my more literal representations and used ice dyeing and more free form stitching to convey mood and expression.

Through my work I strive to demonstrate a new way of looking at both the familiar and unfamiliar. Seen from above, from straight on and from a new angle.