

This site uses cookies to offer you an improved and personalised experience. If you continue to browse, we will assume your consent for the same.

LEARN MORE

AGREE



Kostianovsky's work on view at Smack Mellon
Image: Etienne Frossard; Courtesy of Smack Mellon

The **Israel**-born artist focuses, with concern, on the plight of the livestock industry and its part in shaping the consumerist culture of our food today. Her material of choice is intrinsically a vote against today's cruel meat industry - reused fabric discarded into the crevices of the city she lives in, **Brooklyn**, New York. Kostianovsky tells us about the origin of this practice in her work saying, "I make sculptures and installations using discarded clothing which come mostly from **textiles** I find in my home, like old t-shirts, kitchen rags and worn-out sweaters. I started working with this unusual material through my own experience of immigration from **Argentina** to the **US** about 20 years ago. In fear of the winters in the East Coast of the US, I had brought many sweaters and warm clothes which I accidentally shrunk in the drier within the first few months of living here. The shrunk clothes had memories imprinted in them and I saw them as a potential material to make art with."



Animal carcasses are a common motif in Kostianovsky's work
Image: Etienne Frossard; Courtesy of Smack Mellon

Her body of work uses cloth to reflect forms of decay seen in nature, wood stumps and cow carcasses to name a few. She continues to say, "Over time, the use of this media became political: I was not buying art supplies and was instead 'up-cycling', something that otherwise would end up in a landfill. Most importantly, I saw clothing as a surrogate for my body, a type of second skin. The inclusion of my clothes gave a performative aspect to the work."

Words like up-cycling, recycling and reusing are quickly associated with the conversation around **climate change**. It circles the topic of overconsumption, an industrial conditioning of the masses. The discussion begins at fast food, fast fashion and fast living and continues on to the export of garbage from industrially developed 'First World nations' to less commercially developed countries. I use the word 'developed' lightly here, in recognition of the skewed perception of the idea which has pervaded our economies. Kostianovsky tells us about her experience coming face to face with the exploitation of consumerism. She says, "One of the most shocking aspects about emigrating from Argentina to the US was becoming immersed in the extent of the American consumer culture. I am still appalled by the number of discarded items I find on the street in the city during my evening walks and have a hard time reconciling the enormity of that waste with the scarcity of pretty much everything that I witness growing up in South America. For that reason, I work with textile items that I 'save' from ending in the trash, asking the question whether art has the power to transform garbage into something critical and redeemable."



Similar Articles

Art
07
mins. read

Exhibition
Each/Other values collaboration and creativity as the two definitives of art

by Dilpreet Bhullar
Jul 25, 2021

Art
06
mins. read

El Museo del Barrio presents 'Estamos Bien - La Trienal', a survey of Latinx artists

by Shraddha Nair
Aug 10, 2021

Art
08
mins. read

Vibha Galhotra's 'Beyond the Blue' in New York explores the ideas of cycle of evolution

by Rahul Kumar
Apr 17, 2020

see

think

inspire

reflect



A view of the show at Smack Mellon
Image: Courtesy of the artist

Kostianovsky brings a gentle and graceful aesthetic to a difficult conversation using bright colour schemes and detailed imagery. The narrative woven into her work is a continued effort, making the presentation at Smack Mellon a recollection of over a decade of work. Kostianovsky reiterates the critical aspect of the meat industry repeatedly. Generating 7.1 gigatonnes of greenhouse gases, the meat industry by itself is responsible for over 14 per cent of emissions per year. The urgency to move to plant-based diets is imminent, bordering on desperate. Kostianovsky’s keen works make the chaos of the situation more approachable. She tells us about the oeuvre on display at the New York gallery saying, “*Between Wounds and Folds* draws together threads from the past 15 years, connecting issues of gender-based violence, personal memory, and ecological destruction through consumption. These soft, brutal sculptures combine discarded fabric with industrial materials, often borrowing forms from mutilated fauna and flora in various states of decay... As I mentioned earlier, the fabric covering the surface of her works first originated from my own cannibalised wardrobe, and I later used material from my late father’s clothing and upholstery remnants. In this exhibit, I viscerally position the plant and animal forms in relation to human bodies, connecting the destruction of the earth by consumer waste to bodily harm. By creating immersive environments out of the remnants of consumer culture, the work goes beyond trauma to encompass the pervasive destruction by capitalist consumption on the natural world. The works create a visual proposition for a future in which images of desecrated bodies are transformed into receptacles of regeneration and rebirth”.



A cow carcass constructed using discarded cloth
Image: Courtesy of the artist

Another showcase by Kostianovsky titled *Fibrous Landscapes* is on view at **Galerie RX**, in Paris, France, till November 14, 2021.

Comments

what do you think...

Post

Argentina

Climate Change

contemporary art

Contemporary Artist

Ecology

Exhibition

Installation

Israel

Sculpture

Textile

Textile Artist

United States

see

think

inspire

reflect



About Author



Shraddha Nair

Contributor

Shraddha is a writer and curator based in Bengaluru, India. Her curatorial practice is a method by which she negotiates with and navigates the complexities of human behaviour, an interest which flows into her writing as well. She believes that art and collective experience hold immense capacity in the cultivation and development of action and emotion.

Recommended

DRAWING BOARD

DRAWING BOARD

DRAWING BOARD

DRAWING BOARD

Architecture
05
mins. read

Architecture
03
mins. read

Architecture
04
mins. read

Architecture
04
mins. read

Spasm Design brings Rajasthani stepwells to an educational building in Mumbai

by Devanshi Shah
Oct 07, 2021

Mumbai-based Spasm Design’s winning proposal for the new building on the KJ Somaiya campus analyses Indian architectural typologies...

BIG-designed fashion village in Portugal reveals a manmade extension of the hillside

by STIRworld
Oct 02, 2021

Bjarke Ingels Group (BIG) reveals their design of *Fuse Valley*, an art-filled “smart valley” for the creative community, imagined along Porto’s...

Cagbalete Sand Clusters consists of prefabricated hyperbolic structures

by Devanshi Shah
Oct 01, 2021

The Cagbalete Sand Clusters by Carlo Calma Consultancy combines the ideals of sustainability to create a new typology for eco-tourism on an island ...

OMA New York’s Jojutla bridge in Mexico enters development phase

by STIRworld
Sep 28, 2021

The 145m pedestrian bridge is to be constructed in the 2017 earthquake-hit Jojutla de Juárez town in Mexico, connecting urban centres around the...

LOAD MORE



reflect

Zhu Pei’s performing arts centre in China defies the traditional imagery of theatres

by Zohra Khan
Sep 14, 2021

Digital Legacies: Switch

by Julius Wiedemann
Aug 31, 2021

The Arc by IBUKU at Green Square

by Anmol Ahuja
Aug 17, 2021

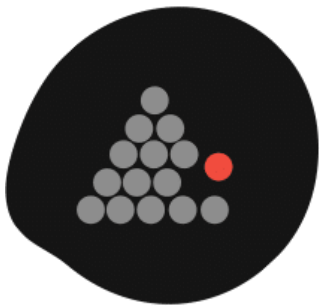
Keep it stirring

get regular updates

SIGN UP



Collaborate with us



want to
contribute
at STIR



want to be
published
by STIR



want to
advertise
with STIR

ABOUT US
ADVERTISE
CAREERS
TERMS OF USE
PRIVACY POLICY
CONTACT US

see

FEATURES
NEWS
LIFESTYLE

think

OPINIONS
COLUMNS
BOOKS & MOVIES

inspire

PEOPLE
VISITS
CONVERSATIONS

reflect

AWARDS
COMPETITION
EVENTS
SUBMIT ENTRIES

© Copyright 2019-2021 STIR Design Private Limited. All rights reserved.



think

inspire

reflect