

# ANOMALOUS BEING

Monday, February 08, 2010

## Exhibit @ ICA : By a thread:

Friday February 5th was a day of art for the bay area, thanks to "First Friday's" where Downtown San Jose opens their door for free artist receptions of their new exhibits. San Jose's Institute of Contemporary Art's anticipated new exhibit titled "By a thread" featured contemporary artists who used unconventional materials usually defined for art labeled as crafts; sewing materials, pipe cleaners, and the obvious ... thread.


In the beginning I had no expectations of what was going to be shown. As I arrived I was blown away from all the beauty that exuded from what was displayed. All the artists were brilliant in their concepts and methods creating new work unlike that I've seen. Artists that stood out to me were Diem Chao, Beili Lu, and Allison Watkins.

Diem Chao is a beautifully talented Vietnamese artist that created porcelain cups with a silk overlay which she threaded with black and red thread to symbolize connections. a silhouetted hand threaded over a cup is connected by a thin red strand of thread that is sewn into two figures on another cup.

Beili Lu's "Bound #1" was one of the most talked about and praised pieces in the show. The piece was based on the Chinese philosophy of the "red thread of destiny". There was pins tacked into the wall into the form of a silhouette of a human figure. In a corner there was a human figure on the opposing wall, connecting the figures were single pieces of red thread strung from one pin from one silhouette to another pin on the other figure. The figures were strong in form and yet were "connected" by by such fragile threads of destiny.

Allison Watkins made one of the most enchanting pieces. It was a mesmerizing simplistic yet intricately woven piece of work. The piece was based off the histories of old linens from her grandmother. It looks as though she captured a fading memory from her closet. The most inspiring part of her work for me was that this most recent graduate had taught herself to do this at grad school.

It is a great exhibit for all artists of any media. The exhibit runs through May 15th, 2010.

Posted by J. at [8:42 PM](#) 0 comments 

## **Exhibit: Conceptual Landscapes: recent work by Castillo and Mariana Garibay**

Macla: Movimiento de Arte y Cultura Latino Americana, is a wonderful contemporary museum that focuses on artists in the Chicano/ Latino movement. Their current exhibit is called Conceptual Landscapes: recent work by Castillo and Mariana Garibay. Castillo's piece was an installation of sugar bags with her image printed on them. There was no artist statement provided, so one had to ascertain the meaning. She had her own image printed on these brown burlap sugar sacks, then hung them from the ceiling in huge circular columns. She also had large 11x14 photographs with repeated images of herself wearing the sacks as a dress. I had wondered if she was supposed to represent the sugar cane fields that perhaps her people had worked on?

The more moving piece to me was the beautiful landscapes of Mariana. She brightly painted on the walls, and had paper images that resemble map-like strokes upon them. She used mixed media of papers, paints, and other materials to create abstract images of the idea of a landscape. As a viewer, each wall evoked a sense of a place. A red-hued palette gave an air of love, hate, and fire, while the green-hued wall had an almost floral, vegetative, alluring essence. They were all naturally beautiful to look at and gave a great sense of environment.