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April 2006

art of the STITCH & SCHOLAR

The sixth biennial art of the STITCH opens at the Royal West of England Academy, Bristol on Sunday 14 May (closing 18 June), accompanied by SCHOLAR.

art of the STITCH is the Embroiderers' Guild's major open international biennial exhibition featuring work stitched or derived from stitch, presented in association with Coats Crafts UK. Out of 453 submissions by 311 artists from 21 countries, 50 works were chosen for art of the STITCH 2006. Selected by a panel made up of representatives from the arts and business world, the exhibition represents 42 artists from 10 countries, including Australia, the USA and the Netherlands.

From Mark Beecroft's interwoven studio stools to Mary Cozens-Walker's domestic stitched scroll, Colin Jenkins' muscular forms to Alice Kettle's angels and the "obsessive telephone pad quality" of Tilleke Schwarz's work, this exhibition promises something for every visitor, presenting a wide range of work from the traditional to the unexpected. As exhibition selector Kate Lynch, artist and Royal West of England Academician said:

"The breadth of original, innovative, contemporary embroidery represented is inspiring. The artists in this show redefine embroidery as a potent expressive medium, from emotive graphic expression, raw colour abstraction and tactile lyrical poetry, through to conceptual statements and three dimensional spatial forms."

Accompanying art of the STITCH in 2006 is SCHOLAR, an exhibition celebrating the achievement of Embroiderers' Guild Scholars during the lifetime of art of the STITCH.

The exhibitions can also be seen at The Hub: National Centre for Craft & Design 7 July to 28 August and the Williamson Art Gallery and Museum, Birkenhead 17 September to 19 November. Coach parties are advised to inform venues of the date of their planned visit. A fully illustrated colour exhibition catalogue is available from the Embroiderers' Guild and venues priced at £5.00.

A programme of education events will be offered at each venue, including PICK UP THE THREAD, presented by the Embroiderers' Guild in association with Coats Crafts UK. To book please contact venues for details.



Shopping Mall Day of the Dead Caroline Marcum Dahl
Photographer: William Matthias



Samples (2005) detail Nahid Ghafoor
Photographer: The Artist



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Editors Notes

The **Embroiderer's Guild** is the UK's leading crafts association and a leading educational charity, catering for all levels of skill, from the beginner to the professional artist (or embroiderer), and for everyone interested in embroidery. It is also a registered museum with a lively programme of exhibitions, events and workshops, City & Guilds courses, as well as lectures and tours (UK & overseas), specialist library, bookshop and two successful magazines. The Guild has a network of 25,000 adult and young Members and subscribers, and 332 Branches and Young Embroiderers Groups. It has enjoyed Royal Patronage since 1924, presently that of HRH The Duchess of Gloucester, and is proud to celebrate its 100th birthday in 2006, having been initially set up in 1906.

Coats Crafts UK is the largest needlecraft, handknitting and haberdashery company in the UK, offering products to craft businesses across the UK and exporting to 22 countries. Market leading own brands within the portfolio are Anchor, Sylko, Drima, Opti and Patons. Coats Crafts UK is part of the world leading thread company Coats plc, which has operations in 63 countries.

Venue contact details

Royal West of England Academy, Queen's Road, Bristol BS8 1PX

T: 0117 973 5129 www.rwa.org.uk

Open 10.00 to 5.30 Mon to Sat, 2.00 to 5.00 Sun: last admission half an hour before closing.

Admission £3, concessions £2 (includes Members of the Embroiderers' Guild on production of a Membership card).

Press are invited to preview the exhibition at the Royal West of England Academy on Thursday 11 May. To make an appointment please contact Fiona Swadling Davies at the RWA on 0117 9735129 or email fiona.swadling@rwa.org.uk

The Hub: National Centre for Craft & Design, Navigation Wharf, Carre Street, Lincs NG34 7TW

T: 01529 308710 www.thehubcentre.org

Open 9.00 to 5.00 Tue to Sat, 10.00 to 5.00 Sun to Mon and Bank Holidays. Free entry.

Williamson Art Gallery and Museum, Slaty Road, Birkenhead CH43 4UE

T: 0151 652 4177 www.visitwirral.com

Open 10.00 to 5.00 Tue to Sun, closed Mondays. Free entry.