

MAGGIE SCOTT : NEGOTIATIONS

NEGOTIATIONS, BLACK IN A WHITE MAJORITY CULTURE
NEW TEXTILES BY MAGGIE SCOTT

A SHORT EXTRACT FROM A CONVERSATION WITH LIZA CODY

LIZA CODY It seems to me that the work in this exhibition is both highly personal and very political.

MAGGIE SCOTT Yes, for as long as I can remember I seem to have always been involved with politics. As a child – whatever colour you are – you are aware that things are not quite right and you want them to be different, to be fair. But it's not always easy to know where to put those feelings. Gradually, as you become aware of systems, you are driven to try and change them.

LC So when did that happen for you?

MS It was even before I went to St Martins School of Art in the '70s. I was 14 and going to Saturday morning classes at Farnham School of Art. One of the other students was involved with *OZ*, the underground magazine, and we used to hitchhike to London to their offices in Portobello Road. I think that's when I first got a sense of an alternative view. Several years later (and many earnest discussions into the night) I was the student rep at St Martins for my year. I wrote for the student magazines and hit the streets protesting.

continued →

Right: Maggie Scott in the studio with *Her Hair Grows* in the background (part of *Early Messages*, series 1)

Front cover: detail of *Wedding Day* (from *Negotiations*, series 1)



LC Amazing – studying textiles and changing the world...

MS Yes absolutely! My time has always been divided. As an active feminist in the '80s I was very busy writing and even publishing. For example we produced *Springboard*, the Women's Yellow Pages for London. I also belonged to various women's groups and was very preoccupied with the interactions between race, class and gender. But I always kept a studio space and continued to make knitted and woven textiles. I was just as passionate about the clear, insightful writing of the American feminist writer and social activist Gloria Jean Watkins who is better known as bell hooks, as I was about the astounding colour-work of Israeli sculptor Yaacov Agam and the extraordinary weaving of Anni Albers at the Bauhaus.

LC That takes care of some of the art and the politics. How about the personal?

MS When I was approached about the bursary it was just at a time when I needed a break from the limitations of making textiles to wear.

I decided I wanted to work on a wall piece, and to work with materials purely for their colour or texture. I didn't want to be concerned, as I would be for a fashion collection, about how they'd feel on the skin or whether they'd be marketable.

For several years I had been working with a new technique of felting digital printed silks. So when I found an old photograph of my parents' wedding I had it enlarged and printed onto silk. I decided to concentrate on memory, and also that I would only colour, felt or stitch things which I could remember.

Everything in the piece had an intensely personal meaning. But when other people looked at it, it seemed that it touched them in different and very particular ways.

It was inspiring to listen to their comments. It made me think that this very personal statement might become a vehicle for conveying other ideas.

LC It seems to me that you have the instincts of a storyteller. You put out powerful images that mean a lot to you, but you leave enough space for other people to insert themselves – like readers do. They read the symbols you give them in their own way. And then they come to you...

MS Yes, with their own stories. It was fascinating.

LC It's what good art should do. But it seems that art nowadays is far more concerned with itself and less open to interpretation. Artists don't seem to be using the symbolism ordinary people can relate to. But you have found this storytelling, narrative way of using your own experience.

MS Well, that's an important part of this body of work. I've been very concerned, of course, with the political – for example the overt political aspect of skin lightening or of the mental health system. But I'm also thinking about who the audience is. Because one of the biggest challenges to any person of colour making art in a white majority culture is that the viewer invariably will be white.

The way you're taught about art – certainly my art education – the orientation was always

Eurocentric. So the challenge was to make a piece of work for my own community.

The people who awarded the bursary were interested in how to attract more people of colour to exhibitions and actively encourage them to participate in making Art/Craft. For me the simplest and most obvious solution is to have art that is about the people you want to attract.

Something that touched me deeply was *The Other Story*, an exhibition of black British artists at the Hayward Gallery in 1989. There was a beautiful poster by Sonia Boyce¹. It was a picture of a woman plaiting a child's hair. The child is between her knees, and if you're black and have hair like hers you know that picture because that's where you sat, as a child, to have your hair braided.

It was an extraordinary thing to see in a major exhibition space. It was just so moving and for once – perhaps for the first time – I felt included.

LC Someone was telling your story.

MS Yes, and I realised it was something that had been missing for me. And that I couldn't be the only one.

LC You weren't. But it seems to me that black artists do get lost and forgotten.

MS That might be a reality for most minority groups. History is so often the story of the winners and not the losers, those put in the oppressor role, not the oppressed. The challenge, I think, is to resist the ways in which we have internalised the racism that sees us always as 'the other'. It's

also necessary to resist the pull to explain blackness – which I see as a key part of the way the oppression works.

LC That's a good segue into the remarkable piece about Josephine Baker and the description 'exotic.'

MS It's part of a series called *Mixed Messages*. I wanted to talk about how confusing it was as a young person to have, on the one hand, this rather extraordinary image of the entertainer – not only the black entertainer but the exotic and supposedly desirable entertainer – alongside black people being attacked and indeed murdered².

In my early childhood we lived near Notting Hill Gate and Ladbrooke Grove – then a black community. But at the time it was also a stronghold for Oswald Mosley's Union Movement. So my newly-wed parents, looking for somewhere to live, were often confronted by signs saying, 'No blacks, No dogs, No Irish.' My mother, Norma, talked about being spat at in the street.

Trying to make sense of those contradictions when I was very young was almost impossible. So the Josephine Baker piece is really about that.

LC Why is *Keep Britain White* in the *Wedding Day* series?

MS When I was making the first piece I became curious about the period. While I was researching in archives I came across this photo of a National Front rally in Trafalgar Square. It was taken just a few months before my parents got married.

As a young child I was aware that things were not right. But I had no idea about what they were having to put up with, or just how hostile their environment was.

In their wedding day portrait my mother is looking up with such joy and hope. They both look so hopeful. I was struck by the juxtaposition of that hope with what was going on in Trafalgar Square.

LC It's one hell of a statement. What about the series called *Towards The End*, the jigsaws?

MS They're based on a picture of my mother the month before she died when she was in quite a deep depression.

People's response was interesting. They say, 'Oh how beautiful your mother is.' And I want to say, 'Actually she's looking really unwell in this picture.' And if you look closely, she has covered her face in very light shades of powder.

LC You can see the different texture and colour of her neck and hairline.

MS What's interesting is that so often when black people are struggling, unwell or in distress it goes completely unnoticed.

Anyway, I wanted to find a visual metaphor to talk about how many people of colour end up in the mental health system. The latest statistics reveal that black people are three times more likely than the rest of the population to be admitted to mental hospitals. It's a major issue, and alarming to see the disproportionate number of particularly African-Caribbean people who are sectioned in this country.

When I first started looking at this issue back in the '90s it was mainly African-Caribbean men who were being incarcerated and over-medicated but now they have been overtaken by black women.

I wanted to talk about that because it's so frightening. I don't think I know any African-Caribbean family that doesn't include someone who has had dealings with the mental health system.

LC And here is Norma, your mother – there are going to be four jigsaws?

MS I think images 2 and 3 of this series are important because you can still see her, but bits are dropping out of place and peeling away. I wanted to illustrate the slow disintegration and the attempt to 'keep it together'.

LC And the white face powder?

MS I think she was just losing the plot and covering her face.

LC I'm nearly in tears...

MS Remember I talked to you about whether to include my own family?

LC I think you had to. Looking at the jigsaw series, this is your story too. And it's precisely the melding of the political with the personal. It's another very private image which has enormous implications for everyone.

MS I hope that's what I achieve.

LC And with luck loads of people of colour will come and be included.

MS Ideally what I'd love is for black people to come and be inspired to share their stories.

LC Meanwhile I'm looking at images of Norma and thinking again about the pressures on women to be beautiful... and pale, or whatever the notion is of beauty. And beauty is so often whiteness, blondeness. I remember us talking about skin lightening.

MS Yes, this is an issue I have addressed in an installation called *Step Out Of The Shadows*. It focuses on skin lightening which is such a clear example of how powerful and insidious white racism can be.

We are so often made to feel we're not okay. We internalise this misinformation. It is very easy to be seduced into thinking that if we can be whiter we will be 'better'. This is heavily re-enforced by the racism that still permeates society. It so often favours a lighter skin over a darker one. Like the children's rhyme says:

If you're black, stay back.

If you're brown, hang around.

If you're white, you're all right.

It's a clear example of internalised racism. I do not accept for one moment that it's about choice.

LC I agree. Are there any solutions, any hope.

MS Well I think one of the key antidotes is the unconditional support for and love of blackness. Simple but self-evident. I hope the piece called *No Mirrors* will address that.

LC It's absolutely central. What about the last piece you see as you leave the exhibition?

MS Ah, you mean *Making Modern History*? The work is inspired by a poem by Eveline Marius called *Let's Make History*.

So we know about slavery

We write about it

We sing about it

So we know about slavery, so we unearth our history

Alright. What next

When do we draw the line and say, to the best of our ability

Come let's make modern history³

The piece takes the form of a kind of giant notice board with images of friends who are, in their own way, shaping modern history – a kind of celebration and acknowledgement of the work black people are doing and the lives we are living.

LC These are wonderful images. For you, self-reference is only a starting point – an act of generosity. You're telling your own story, but in such a way that it shows you've chosen to include everyone else as well.

MS I hope so.

Liza Cody

Writer & Artist, February 2012 (extract from a conversation with Maggie Scott)

¹ Sonia Boyce MBE, b. 1962, British African Caribbean Artist

² Kelso Cochrane was the victim of a vicious racist attack in 1959

³ Marius, E. (1988) *Let's Make History* in Grewal, S. et al From 'Charting the Journey – Writings by Black and Third World Women', London, Sheba Feminist Publishers, p.315



Wedding Day (from Wedding Day Portraits)

MAGGIE SCOTT : NEGOTIATIONS

Maggie Scott is an artist who creates her artwork from her selfhood as a black woman, a feminist, a mother, a daughter, an activist, an artist and a British person. She has chosen to make work that draws on her own life and addresses the subject of Britishness through the act of remembering. Having made her mark with her intensely coloured, wearable felted textiles, her latest work also engages with photography as a site of memory, and with the need to address a profound sense of loss in the face of the Black British experience of displacement, inequality and marginalisation.

In the work developed with her *shape of things* bursary, Scott engages with the politics of representation and the experience of being black and British. Edward Said writes of the exile's 'double vision', of the sense of estrangement within their experience of home, the dual sense of belonging and not belonging¹, so Homi K. Bhabha insists in his essay *DissemiNation* on a double narrative movement as essential to narrating a nation, 'the nation's people must be thought in double time'². The contradictory impulses of a nation's history demand a split narrative, doubles that can never be harmonised, rendering national events of celebration into sites of political dispute. This sense of ambivalence and estrangement in relation to nationhood and narratives of belonging can be found in many of Britain's postcolonial cultural developments, in particular literature but also in the work of visual artists such as Maggie Scott who reflect on the interaction of personal and collective histories and the negotiation of the terms of

cultural engagement for both individuals and communities.

Maggie Scott's textile work *Wedding Day* from the *Wedding Day* series, pictures this double time in a double aspect image that juxtaposes personal and political, a mixed race 'white wedding' (the artist's parents) and a National Front 'Keep Britain White' rally in Trafalgar Square, both events coexistent in the history of the British nation, two national narratives that may never be reconciled. *Wedding Day* was the first of Scott's new body of work that uses a technique of felting printed silks, and the beginning of a series of works that move between both personal and communal narratives. The lengthy labour involved in producing her textile works combines with her use of photographs, personal and historic, to enact a different awareness of time and history, one which emerges from the experience of social marginality. There is not only an urge to reclaim the past but also as Bhabha

proposes, an attempt at renewal, 'refiguring it as a contingent in-between space that innovates and interrupts the performance of the present'³. In making the *Wedding Day*, Scott felts and stitches only the things she can remember, the sensuous surface of the felted fabric conjuring up touch and bodily presence, drawing in the viewer only to obscure recognisability as the felted surface abstracts the image.

Susan Sontag writes in *On Photography* of photographs as seeming to be 'miniatures of reality'⁴ or 'pieces' of the world, pieces that no longer exist except as absences. In the series of felted portraits *Towards The End*, Scott depicts her mother in poignant images based on a photograph taken a month before her death after a period of depression, her face betraying her sense of dislocation and sadness, veiled by pale face powder. The portraits recall American photographer Carrie Mae Weems' classic interrogation of photographic portraiture in relation to black women in *Mirror, Mirror* (1987–88) from her *Ain't Jokin'* series⁵. Weems reconfigures Snow White's most famous line, presenting a photograph of a melancholic black woman looking into a mirror that does not reflect her image but instead pictures a white woman shrouded in whiteness. The cruel punch line underlined as a written call and response joke beneath the image. The *Ain't Jokin'* series juxtaposes straight portraits of black Americans with racist jokes; using incongruity to point to internalised narratives of racism.

Scott's approach, also touches on internalised racism – a subject she returns to in her installation *Step Out Of The Shadows* in which

the visitor participates in the seductive environment of a skin lightening salon – but the fragmentation of her felted jigsaw of portraits comes closer to the process of remembering described by bell hooks in *In Our Glory: Photography and Black Life*, in which hooks articulates the role of photography in the process of decolonisation, the necessity of reclaiming the past through the 're-membering' of fragments into a whole⁶. *Towards The End* reclaims an identity erased by the social forces of disenfranchisement as much as by illness, through not only the photographic image, but through the re-presentation of the image through the medium of felting. If photography seems to freeze time – Sontag's 'neat slice of time'⁷ – then the process of felting as with weaving enacts time through the drudgery of repetitive action – women's work; an act of love.

Kimberly Lamm writes in *Portraits of the Past, Imagined Now*⁸ of the portraiture of black women by American artists Carrie Mae Weems and Lorna Simpson, of the use of techniques of de-familiarisation in works such as *Mirror, Mirror* by Weems and *Twenty Questions (a sampler)* by Simpson, which evoke the historical genre of cameo portraits to confront the viewer with a series of anti-portraits that question the historical frameworks of beauty and female identity. Lamm argues that in these works Weems and Simpson 'grapple with portraits of the past to reimagine black women's places in the visual dimensions of the American symbolic order'⁹. This is against a historical ordering of black identity as captured by photography

through racial classification, criminal profiling and objectification such as through the daguerreotypes of slaves.

Scott chooses also to reinterpret and reclaim the black female subject in portraiture through focusing on the internal rather than the physical body, on the collective process of calling up memory and shared emotion. Through the use of her felting techniques, Scott also introduces a form of defamiliarisation but softens it with the intimacy of family snapshots, the warm materiality of felted fabric and the evocation of human connection through touch. In *Mixed Messages //1*, Scott depicts family photographs as a flow instead of a frozen instant, a fluidity of unfinished histories and emotional connections that resist erasure and the fixity of official history. In the works *Mixed Messages //1* and *Early Messages //1*, Scott also introduces images of blackness fed back to her as a child by British popular culture: Josephine Baker, the Black and White Minstrels, images of how the black community were perceived and images over which they had no control. In contrast, the work *No Mirrors* presents an image of unofficial history, a portrait of black female connectedness. Scott's intention is not only to break down the static boundaries of identity but to contest the hierarchies between artist and audience, institution and community, by providing points of cultural reference that draw in black audiences to a communal act of remembrance.

Kathy Fawcett

Exhibitions Manager

¹ Said, E. (2001) *Reflections on Exile: And Other Literary and Cultural Essays*, London, Granta, p.xxxv, 173

² Bhabha, H. (1994) *The Location of Culture*, London and New York, Routledge, pp.139–170.

³ *ibid*, p.7

⁴ Sontag, S. (1977) *On Photography*, New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, p.4

⁵ Lamm, K. (2007) *Portraits of the Past, Imagined Now, Reading the Work of Carrie Mae Weems and Lorna Simpson* in Davis Acampora, C. and Cotton, A. (ed.) 'Unmaking Race, Remaking Soul, Transformative Aesthetics and the Practice of Freedom', New York, State University of New York, pp.103–109

⁶ bell hooks (1995) *In Our Glory: Photography and Black Life*, in hooks, b. 'Art on My Mind: Visual Politics' New York, New Press, pp.54–64.

⁷ Sontag, S. (1977) *On Photography*, New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, p.17

⁸ Lamm, K. (2007) *Portraits of the Past, Imagined Now, Reading the Work of Carrie Mae Weems and Lorna Simpson* in Davis Acampora, C. and Cotton, A. (ed.) 'Unmaking Race, Remaking Soul, Transformative Aesthetics and the Practice of Freedom', New York, State University of New York, p.103

⁹ *Ibid*, p.109

Right: *Mixed Messages*, series 1



ARTIST'S STATEMENT

The shape of things bursary has given me the opportunity to develop a new body of work that aims to explore and reflect, for an ethnically diverse audience, on the question of national identity and what it means to be British, in particular for those who identify as Black.

The title *Negotiations* is significant. Clearly everybody, regardless of race, ethnicity, class or gender has had, at some time in their lives, to adjust, compromise and effectively become socialised into the prevailing dominant culture. However, the extent to which our group is required to negotiate, alter and transform itself is contingent on the power relationship we have been assigned within the culture.

When trying to discuss the way in which we, as black people, are forced to negotiate our place within a white majority culture and the ways in which these negotiations manifest themselves, it is impossible not to talk about racism.

For me, it is evident that racism plays a key role in maintaining a capitalist, oppressive society – people of colour are the vast majority of the world. The economies of the 'over developed' world are, and have been for hundreds of years, dependent on harnessing the strength and muscle power of the world's non-white population.

Even a rudimentary knowledge of the history of slavery and colonialism leaves no doubt about the extreme lengths to which Europeans have gone to develop and maintain ideological justifications for the continued exploitation of black people. However, the laws and practices enforced by the state were sustained through social representations and controlling images

that suggested that this treatment was not only justifiable but also inevitable and natural. The idea that black people are not the same as white people, (physically and emotionally), has been consistently used as a prime excuse to treat us differently.

The stereotype of black people as Other, as outsider, as inherently different, has been in existence for almost as long as black people have been in Britain¹. This is, of course, a label we have shared over the last 300 years with Jews, Chinese, Irish and 'Gypsies'. The creation of the outsider, (the individual or group deemed Other), as strange and inferior also allows for the construction of the insider. All those deemed not to belong to the group

labeled different can be reassured of their normality!

So how do you negotiate to be normal?

Can the definition of 'normalcy' be broadened and fully embracing or do we continue to internalise the racism that excludes us?

In the majority of the pieces for the exhibition I have identified some of the ways we have been forced or sometimes seduced into negotiating and settling for less.

The images are a small selection, a snapshot, of some of the ways we internalise our oppression; to put it simply, we are fed the misinformation, the racism that distorts who we are and our true nature. How the misinformation makes us feel and how those feelings make us act is internalised racism.

Using images from my own life, growing up in Britain in the '50s, and '60s I have looked for visual metaphors, memories and symbols to illustrate some of the early messages I and countless other young black children received at school, in the playground and – in the case of *The Black and White Minstrel Show*² – on television in our homes. How confusing it was to try and make sense of the often-contradictory images.

The body of work also includes an installation called *Step Out of the Shadows*, a critique of the beautification industry and the seduction of skin lightening. We need to look at the ways in which we are invited to testify against ourselves, against our beauty³.

The ways in which we have been so skillfully targeted, allowing extreme and often

dangerous treatments to be presented as entirely normal and reasonable, is alarming.

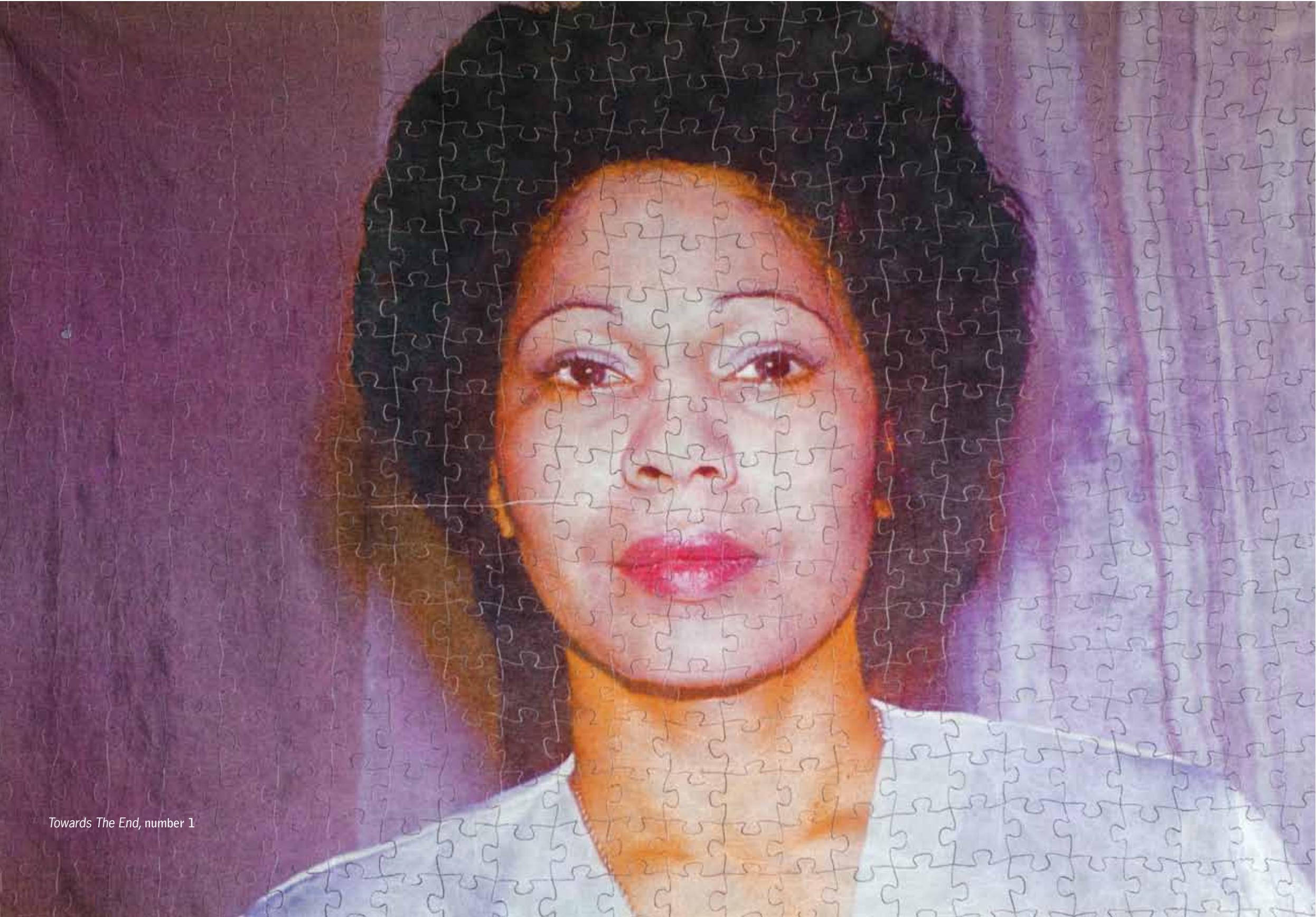
To have an opportunity to broaden the dialogue and challenge the view that the desire to lighten one's skin and be as white as possible is about 'personal choice', or is the same as white people going to the tanning booth, could not to be missed!

Maggie Scott

¹ Fryer, P. (1984) *Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain: Black People in Britain Since 1504*, London, Pluto Press

² A British light entertainment show that ran on BBC television from 1958–78 presenting songs performed in black face make up which were widely deemed to be offensive in their stereotypical characterisation of black people.

³ Lorde, A. (1988) *Frontiers* in Grewal, S. et al From 'Charting the Journey – Writings by Black and Third World Women', London, Sheba Feminist Publishers, p.121–131



Towards The End, number 1

THE SHAPE OF THINGS PROGRAMME

The shape of things is a contemporary craft initiative that with the generous support of Arts Council England is taking place over six years. Providing bursaries to artists to make new craftwork *the shape of things* explores the distinctive contribution artists make to influence or reflect national identity, the intercultural nature of British society and its connection with global cultures through a series of exhibitions, installations and events between 2006 and 2012. Maggie Scott's exhibition is the last in the series.

The origins of *the shape of things* are in a report for Arts Council England South West into the potential for creating a contemporary crafts exhibition as part of Decibel, Arts Council England's national initiative to promote diversity in the arts. The report recognised a relative under-representation of Black, Asian and minority ethnic craft practitioners and audiences for contemporary crafts and recommended that exhibition should be used strategically to explore diversity within contemporary craft practice.

As a consequence, with the financial support and partnership of Arts Council England, and in partnership with Bristol's Museums, Galleries & Archives, the ceramicist Takeshi Yasuda, jeweller Vannetta Seecharran and weaver Rezia Wahid were invited to make new exploratory works and in the process to consider the role of personal cultural identity within their practice.

The artists presented the new commissions at a symposium organised by the Museum in Bristol in 2006 where discussion took place with invited delegates chaired by ceramicist Magdalene Odundo.

The success of this with further encouragement and invaluable financial support from Arts Council England enabled us to move forward. *The shape of things* has worked nationally and has received guidance from organisations engaged with the crafts including the Contemporary Arts Society, National Society for Education in Art and Design, Craftspace, SHISHA, Crafts Study Centre, Crafts Council and Audiences Central.

The shape of things is privileged to be working with an exceptional group of artists and venues. Our first bursary was to Rezia Wahid who had in the interim been awarded an MBE. The artist's response to the earlier commission was an important influence on the potential of *the shape of things*. The resulting exhibition *Woven Air* took place in 2007 at the Crafts Study Centre enabling a test of the bursary-exhibition model. It was subsequently remade in September 2009 for the exhibition space at City Gallery, Leicester; this, one of our original venue partners, closed its doors in January 2010.

In January 2009 eight bursaries were awarded to artists working with craft media to partner with curators to create new work for exhibition in public spaces. The ambition

and scale of each artist's work is realised through their relationship with the curators of the public museums and galleries taking part.

The shape of things exhibition programme in 2010 presented *The Gifts*, work by Alinah Azadeh and *Still Living*, work by Rosa Nguyen at Bristol Museum and Art Gallery; *Earth|Atmosphere*, new installations by Halima Cassell and Seiko Kinoshita made for Bilston Craft Gallery; *Cut, Stitch, Adorn*, work by Tanvi Kant and *Disparate Nature*, work by Taslim Martin at Touchstones Rochdale.

The shape of things at flow, exhibited the work of all our artists in London at flow gallery promoted as part of the 2010 London Design Festival. The works shown were mostly especially made for the smaller scale of the gallery spaces at flow with the aim of introducing the work to private collectors. The participation of a privately run independent gallery in a joint initiative with public museums is unusual and indicative of the strategic aim of *the shape of things* to connect the work of artists with collectors and curators of public collections of contemporary art and craft.

At the end of 2010 *the shape of things at flow* transferred for exhibition to the Crafts Study Centre and in 2011 *Earth|Atmosphere* was remade for Touchstones Rochdale.

Finally, Chien-Wei Chang and Maggie Scott show new work made especially for installations at The New Walk Museum & Art Gallery, Leicester to conclude *the shape of things* exhibition programme in 2012.

These exhibitions provide curators from our museum and gallery partners a rare opportunity to work closely with an artist from the inception of the artist's work through to its presentation to their audiences and communities. The creative context and ambitious scale of each artist's response to both the opportunity of *the shape of things'* bursary and the substantial exhibition spaces of the venues, challenges ideas of the crafts as being simply decorative. Each exhibition offers audiences a dimension to the crafts as a visual art form able to convey meaning with distinct attributes that inform our understanding of the dynamic, shifting social context of identity.

Through its support of artists, exhibition partnerships with museums and galleries, and a series of discussions, workshops and events *the shape of things* aims to encourage a practice, audience and market for contemporary crafts representative of the society we live in today. Best described in the words of the author and playwright Bonnie Greer who chaired a debate at the launch of *the shape of things* programme in November 2009: '*This is some of the most intelligent and articulate explanations of diversity in art that I have ever heard ... This initiative, this collection of people is important now ... This is a movement, this is the beginning*'.

David Kay

Director, *the shape of things* (2006–11)



Mixed Messages, series 2

MAGGIE SCOTT : CURRICULUM VITAE

www.maggiescott.co.uk

Born London, 1955

1971 Berkshire School of Art (Fashion)

1972 Farnham School of Art (Foundation)

1973–76 St Martins School of Art (Fashion BA Honours)

Assisi, Italy – assistant knitwear designer to John Ashpool for *Ellesse*

Clear plastic and wool knit collection for relaunch of *Mr Freedom*, London

1977–80 Paris, France

Menswear designer

Launches first limited edition knitwear through *Alexander De Rome* boutique

1981–90 UK and USA

Freelance knitwear designer and maker

British Crafts Council touring exhibition

Limited editions of knitted and woven throws, shawls and luxury evening knitwear

Kinetic sculpture commission, Laguna Beach California, USA

1990–2000 Interior decorating commissions, Amsterdam and London

Papier-mâché vessels exhibited in Amsterdam

Founder member of NEMH (*'non essential must haves'*) promoting the craft and design work through private home events and parties

1999–2006 London-based studio

2006 Studio in Ceze valley in Southern France

Annual textile collection exhibited at design shows and craft fairs including:

- British Crafts
- Craft In Focus
- Dulwich Craft Fair
- Craft Movement
- Country Living
- Farnham Maltings
- Midland Grand Projects
- Ropewalk Gallery
- Origin
- Brighton Craft Fair
- Eunique – Karlsruhe

2008 Collaboration with designer Monica Boxley to produce exclusive accessory range

2009 Awarded bursary from *the shape of things* to create new textile work

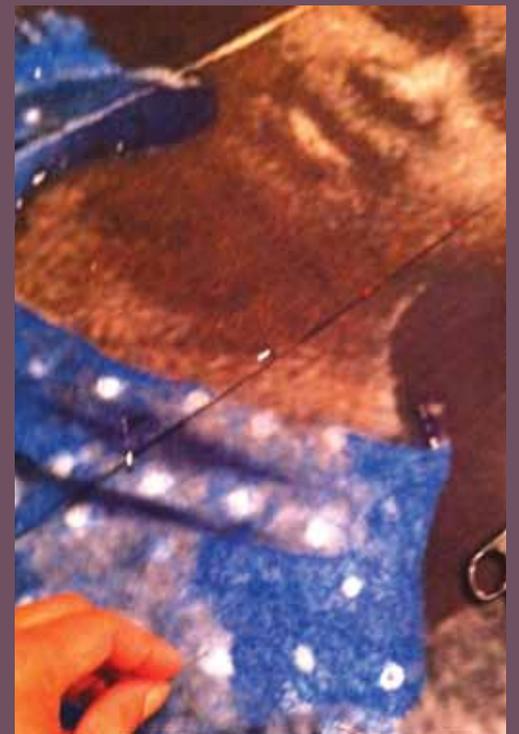
Trunk Show in New York, USA

2010–11 *the shape of things at flow* touring exhibition: flow gallery, London and Crafts Study Centre, Farnham

2012 *Negotiations, Black in a White Majority Culture* – new textiles by Maggie Scott, New Walk Museum & Art Gallery, Leicester

Right and overleaf: work in progress





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the shape of things: *Negotiations, Black in a White Majority Culture* – new textiles by Maggie Scott

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The shape of things

Craftspace, 208 The Custard Factory, Gibb Street, Birmingham B9 4AA

www.theshapeofthings.org.uk

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The shape of things provides bursaries to artists to make new craftwork. Its programme explores the distinctive contribution artists make to influence or reflect national identity, the intercultural nature of British Society and its connections with global cultures through a series of exhibitions, installations and events from 2010 to 2012.

The shape of things is a not for profit company limited by guarantee and registered in England, No. 6534926. Craftspace is the managing agency, Ruth Hecht is the Director, David Kay was the Director between 2006 and 2011 and there is a formal steering group comprised of stakeholders and specialists able to advice on development and implementation.

The shape of things programme receives funding from the National Lottery through Arts Council England, investment by our

partner museums and galleries and the Athene Trust.

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Back cover: *Perfect Skin* (from *Step Out Of The Shadows*)

The shape of things exhibition programme:

Rezia Wahid MBE
Crafts Study Centre, Farnham
25 September 2007 – 5 January 2008

Alinah Azadeh / Rosa Nguyen
Bristol Museum and Art Gallery
6 February – 18 April 2010

Halima Cassell / Seiko Kinoshita
Bilston Craft Gallery, Wolverhampton
1 May – 10 July 2010

Tanvi Kant / Taslim Martin
Touchstones Rochdale
17 July – 3 October 2010

Work by all the artists
Flow Gallery, London
9 September – 6 November 2010

Chien-Wei Chang
New Walk Museum & Art Gallery, Leicester
11 February – 25 March 2012

Maggie Scott
New Walk Museum & Art Gallery, Leicester
7 April – 20 May 2012

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