

WASSAIC PROJECT

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DARNstudio

(David Anthon + Ron Norsworthy)

HEIRLOOMS: Works from the Another Country Quilt Cycle

January 18 – March 28, 2020

Opening Reception:

January 18, 3:00 to 6:00 PM

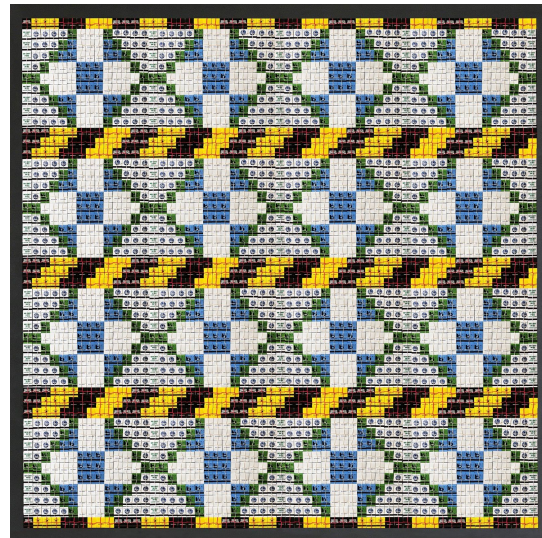


image: DARNstudio, *Nu, Shoo, Fly*, 2018, custom matchbooks, cotton thread, recycled felt, 92" x 100"

The Wassaic Project is pleased to present *Heirlooms: Quilts from the Another Country Quilt Cycle*, a solo exhibition of works from DARNstudio based in Litchfield County Connecticut. *Heirlooms* features a series of quilts and smaller process works that present multilayered narratives, each encoded with a pattern that invites us to unpack and investigate the tangled cords of systemic racism that have betrayed America's proclaimed values since its inception.

Referencing inherited objects and traditions, DARNstudio creates dialogue around ideas and beliefs passed down that are insidious and morally abject. Our national inheritance includes an altogether darker component that is at the root of, or exacerbates every societal ill that plagues our contemporary social consciousness. This inheritance is our history of slavery; it's lasting, ongoing impact; and the racism invented and indoctrinated to justify it.

On the surface, the work, much like the erstwhile grain elevator in which it is installed, invokes timeworn agrarian ideals centering human industry and a sentimental yearning for days past. Both the traditional quilt, a precious keepsake passed down through generations, and the grain elevator, once rising steeple-like in small towns across our rural landscape, speak to a simplified, homogenized notion of America depicted in art and music and reified as national identity. This show, removed from a traditional art context and sited in this mill-cum-gallery, opens itself to alternate, more nuanced, if not challenging, interpretations.



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[DARNstudio](#) embarked upon [Another Country: A Quilt Cycle](#) in 2016. A series-in-process of thirteen quilts made of custom made souvenir matchbooks, the project is inspired by the Underground Railroad quilts whose secret codes were alleged to be used as signposts to help the enslaved seeking freedom and safe(r) haven in the North.

Each quilt in the cycle is composed of approximately 2800 matchbooks whose covers bear logos memorializing the place where an unarmed black victim of police violence, stand-your-ground policy, and/or racial terrorism was killed. The backs of the matchbooks contain alphanumeric codes comprised of the first and last initial of the victim and date of their deaths. Like their abolitionist antecedents, these quilts serve as talisman-like artifacts, with their stitched together matchbooks acting as a kind of map, inviting us to decipher their patterns and meanings.

Heirlooms: Quilts from the Another Country Quilt Cycle brings together six of the "Another Country" quilts into reclaimed space, made sacred by holding room for reflection and remembrance while asking us to contemplate: "what heirlooms will we leave for future generations?"

DARNstudio is a collaboration of multidisciplinary artists, [David Anthon](#) and [Ron Norsworthy](#). Their work explores, exposes and critiques American cultural myths and historical narratives. Through the vehicle of art-making, they excavate and examine the space between a conditioned understanding and interpretation of history and objective facts and actual events. Their work aims to make visible the links between what is remembered and what is forgotten.

The [Wassaic Project](#) uses art and arts education to foster positive social change. We nurture connections between our artists and our neighbors facilitating a mutual broadening of perspectives and respect across economic and cultural boundaries. The Wassaic Project exists to provide a genuine and intimate context for art making and strengthening local community by increasing social and cultural capital through inspiration, promotion and creation of contemporary visual and performing art.

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