

Caren Garfen

Curriculum Vitae

"Caren Garfen's practice is not solely about her virtuosity with stitch. She undertakes meticulous research and often seeks out everyday objects (dolls house furniture, capsules, key rings) to incorporate in her pieces, which when combined act as a powerful conduit for the message." Jo Hall - Editor Embroidery magazine, 2018

CREATIVE EMPLOYMENT Artist (2007 onwards)
Self-employed Craftsperson (1992 - 2006)

EDUCATION BA (Hons) Applied Arts, First Class (2007)

EXHIBITIONS

2021

Art Textile Biennale, East Gippsland Art Gallery, Victoria, Australia (22 Jan – 5 Mar)

Art Textile Biennale, Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery, Queensland, Australia (3 Apr – 31 May)

Art Textiles Biennale, Barometer Gallery, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia (11 June - 11 July) The

Vlieseline Fine Art Textile Award Gallery, The Knitting & Stitching Show, Alexandra Palace, London (date to be confirmed)

The Vlieseline Fine Art Textile Award Gallery, The Knitting & Stitching Show, Harrogate Convention Centre, Harrogate, Yorkshire (date to be confirmed)

The Vlieseline Fine Art Textile Award Gallery, The Knitting & Stitching Show, Simonscourt, RDS, Dublin, Ireland (date to be confirmed)

2020

Nothing Less! 100 Years of Women's Suffrage, Austrian Cultural Forum, London (until 31 Jan)

UDHR Quilt Project, Museum of Australian Democracy, Canberra, Australia (until 10 Mar)

The Mr X Stitch Guide to Cross Stitch, British Textile Biennial, Towneley Hall Museum, Burnley, Lancashire (until 19 Apr)

Ctrl/Shift, 62 Group of Textile Artists, 20-21 Visual Arts Centre, Scunthorpe, N.Lincs (until 29 Feb)

What's Going On Upstairs, Gray MCA Gallery, Bath, Somerset (18 May - 13 Jun) postponed

The Diana Springall Collection, Sunbury Embroidery Gallery, Sunbury-on-Thames (17 Aug-20 Sep)

2019

Ctrl/Shift, 62 Group, National Centre for Craft & Design, Sleaford, Lincolnshire (1 Feb - 21 Apr)

14th Int'l London Eating Disorder Conference, QEII Centre, Westminster, London (20 - 22 Mar)

Image and Narrative: Illness, Recovery, Change, The University of Nottingham (29 Apr)

Threaded, Envision Arts Show, International Online Gallery (1 - 31 May)

The Women's Library, London School of Economics and Political Science, London (2 Jul - 8 Sep)

The Vlieseline Fine Art Textile Award Gallery, Festival of Quilts, NEC, Birmingham (1 - 4 Aug)

First Steps Eating Disorders, East Midlands Conference, University of Derby (4 Sep)

The Vlieseline Fine Art Textile Award Gallery, Knitting & Stitching Show, London (10 - 13 Nov)

Nothing Less! 100 Years of Women's Suffrage, Austrian Cultural Forum, London (10 Oct '19 - Jan '20)

The Vlieseline Fine Art Textile Award Gallery, Knitting & Stitching Show, Dublin (7 - 10 Nov)

The Vlieseline Fine Art Textile Award Gallery, Knitting & Stitching Show, Dublin (28 Nov - 1 Dec)

Construct, 62 Group of Textile Artists, Sunny Bank Mills Gallery, W.Yorkshire (20 Jul - 15 Sep)

Ctrl/Shift, 62 Group, 20-21 Visual Arts Centre, Scunthorpe, N Lincs (14 Dec '19 - 29 Feb '20)

UDHR Quilt Project, Museum of Australian Democracy, Canberra, Australia (until 10 Mar '20)

2018

UDHR Collaborative Quilt Project, Kings ARI Art Gallery, Melbourne, Australia (6-10 Mar)

Jane Austen Community Quilt Project, JA House Museum, Chawton, Hampshire (10 Mar onwards)

Eating Disorder International Conference - Beat, Imperial College, London (28-29 Mar)

Ctrl/Shift, 62 Group of Textile Artists, Mac Birmingham, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham (21 Jul-9 Sep)
Jane Austen Community Quilt Project, Festival of Quilts, NEC, Birmingham, West Midlands (8-13 Aug)
The Mr X Stitch Guide to Cross Stitch, Standen House, East Grinstead, West Sussex (1 Sep-11 Nov)
What's Going On Upstairs, Solo Gallery, Knit & Stitch Show, Alexandra Palace, London (11-14 Oct)
Suffrage, Llantarnam Grange Arts Centre, Cwmbran, South Wales (6 Oct-17 Nov)
UDHR Quilt Project, Museum of Australian Democracy, Canberra, Australia (25 Oct '18 - June 2019)
What's Going On Upstairs, Knitting & Stitching Show, Simmons Court, RDS, Dublin, Ireland (8-11 Nov)
What's Going On Upstairs, Knitting & Stitching Show, Convention Centre, Harrogate (22-25 Nov)

"What's Going On Upstairs might provoke feelings of discomfort and sadness in the viewer, but Garfen has never shied away from dealing with uncomfortable topics in her work. It is this aspect of her artistry that shows her ability to engage sensitively with difficult human experiences." Jessica Edney, Selvedge blog post

2017

Textile Art of Today, Touring Exhibition, Slovak Museum, Czech Republic (until 15 Jan)
Making Space, The Knitting & Stitching Show, Olympia, London (2-5 Mar)
London Eating Disorder Conference, Institute of Education, University of London (22-24 Mar)
Making Space, The Knitting & Stitching Show, Royal Highland Centre, Edinburgh (27-30 Apr)
Hand & Lock, 250 Years Conference, Bishopsgate Institute, London (13-16 Jul)
International d'Art Miniature, Gallerie Louise-Carrier, Quebec, Canada (18 Jun-3 Sep)
Desperate Artwives, Feminism in London Conference (FiLiA), Institute of Education, University of London (14-15 Oct)

2016

Textile Art of Today, Touring Exhibition, Tatra Gallery, Poprad, Slovakia (Feb-Mar)
A Group Gathering, Herefordshire Archive & Records Centre, Hereford (Apr-May)
Textile Art of Today, Touring Exhibition, Historical Museum, Bielsko-Biala, Poland (May-Aug)
Transgressing Traditions, Schweinfurth Art Center, Auburn, New York, USA (Jun-Aug)
Making Space, Macclesfield Silk Museum, Cheshire (Jun-Sep)
A Group Gathering, Unit Twelve Gallery, Stafford (Jun-Aug)
Wit of the Stitch, Ruthin Craft Centre, Denbighshire, North Wales (Jul-Sep)

"Garfen's 'Augustus and Edie', couched in funereal black frames, is perhaps the only overtly dark piece in the show. Two narrow, hand-stitched samplers, their letters barely a millimetre tall, tell stories, Edward Lear-style, of anorexia and body dysmorphia. Breath-taking in their tender minuteness, here is the wit of the stitch writ large." Ellen Bell, Embroidery magazine

Textile Art of Today, Touring Exhibition, Art & History Museum, Győr, Hungary (Sep-Oct)
Anne Kelly at The Knitting & Stitching Show, Alexandra Palace (Oct), Dublin (Nov) & Harrogate (Nov)
World of Threads Festival, Queen Elizabeth Park Comm. & Cultural Centre, Ontario, Canada (Oct-Nov)
Textile Art of Today, Touring Exhibition, Slovak Museum, Czech Republic (Oct 2016 - Jan 2017)

2015

On My Mother's Knee, Gwynedd Museum & Art Gallery, Bangor, North Wales
People and Process, Salts Mill, Saltaire, West Yorkshire
62 Group Now, Upfront Gallery, Penrith, Cumbria
Feast: pleasure+hunger+ritual, Lexington Art League, Lexington, Kentucky, U.S.A.

"Caren Garfen employs her talent for intricate hand-stitching to create subtle and delicate pieces with profound messages. Her works explore themes of gender stereotypes, femininity, and domesticity all the while retaining a sensitive and accessible approach." Artist Feature - Lexington Art League

A Stitch in Time: A Day of Embroidery, British Library, London
The Diana Springall Collection, Art in Action, Waterperry, Oxford

Abode, Walford Mill Crafts, Wimborne, Dorset

A Group Gathering: Daphne's Glove, The Weavers Gallery, Ledbury, Herefordshire

Textile Art of Today, Slovak National Museum, Bratislava, Slovakia

2014

Solo Gallery Space, Knitting & Stitching Show, Harrogate & London

Construct, Ruthin Craft Centre, Denbighshire, North Wales

Selected, Newark Park National Trust Property, Stroud International Textiles, Gloucestershire

2013

British Textiles Exhibition, 62@50, Showa Women's University, Tokyo, Japan

On My Mother's Knee, Llantarnam Grange Arts Centre, South East Wales

Cloth and Memory 2, Salts Mill, Saltaire, West Yorkshire

"Caren Garfen's work for this exhibition is a remarkable translation of meticulous research into meticulous outcomes. Working in the most painstaking hand-stitch, she re-presents this information in a manner that is direct, understandable and completely humane in her use of the tools and the domestic/work garment." Professor Lesley Millar, Cloth & Memory 2 catalogue

Featured Artist, The Beetroot Tree, Draycott, Derbyshire

Internationale d'Art Miniature, Galerie Louise-Carrier, Quebec, Canada

The Button Project, Macclesfield Silk Museum, The Heritage Centre, Cheshire

Small Talk, Constance Howard Research Centre, Goldsmiths College, London

Hand Stitch Perspectives Book Tour, L'Aiguille en Fete, Paris

2012

Interventions, Platt Hall, Gallery of Costume, Manchester

Royal Academy of Arts, Summer Exhibition, London

AA2A Exhibition, Todd Fine Art Studios, University of Hertfordshire

62@50, Holden Gallery, Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester

Drawn to Craft, Bilston Craft Gallery, Wolverhampton

Package Tour, The Knitting & Stitching Show, Dublin, Harrogate & London

"Nadelwerke" (Needle Works), Galerie Handwerk, Munich, Germany

Made - The Design and Craft Fair, One Marylebone, London

2011

Celebrity Paws, Chris Beetles Gallery, St James's, London

5.8 x 4.1 Exhibition, Holden Gallery Cafe, Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester

Home Autour du Monde, Paris, France

Arts Depot open, Apthorp Gallery, London

5th International Exhibition of Mini Textile Art, Kherson, Ukraine

Designer Maker Market, Clerkenwell Design Week 2011, St John's Square, London

At a Tangent, Gallery Oldham, Cultural Quarter, Oldham

Designer Crafts, The Mall Galleries, London

2010

Origin, Old Spitalfields Market, London

The Dartboard for Witches, Contemporary work in textiles, Aberystwyth University, Wales

"Caren Garfen's work engages with the story of women's handwork in the home, where feminine stitch signified a well-bred and socially advantaged environment. The evidence of her time spent on embroidering or hand sewing has changed in its significance; careful stitches are transformed from a signifier of submission and routine labour to a political statement." Eve Ropek, curator of The Dartboard for Witches exhibition, 2010

Bending More Lines, Collins Gallery, University of Strathclyde, Scotland
Quilts 1700 - 2010, Victoria & Albert Museum, London
Bending More Lines, Museum Rijswijk, Netherlands

2009

Art of the Stitch, The Knitting & Stitching Show, Alexandra Palace & Harrogate
Bending the Line, Hub, Sleaford, Lincolnshire
AA2A Exhibition, University of Hertfordshire, Hatfield.
Art of the Stitch, Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest, Hungary
Designer Crafts, The Mall Galleries, London

2008

Art of the Stitch, Deutsches Textilmuseum, Krefeld, Germany
Embroiderers' Guild Scholar, The Knitting & Stitching Show, Birmingham, Alexandra Palace, Dublin & Harrogate
One Year On at New Designers, Business Design Centre, London
Art of the Stitch, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery
Graduate Showcase, Stitch & Craft, Olympia, London
Designer Crafts, Mall Galleries, London

2007

Embroiderers' Guild Graduate Showcase, The Knitting & Stitching Show, Birmingham, Alexandra Palace, Dublin & Harrogate
New Designers Selection, the.gallery@oxo, London
New Designers, Business Design Centre, London
Degree Exhibition, University of Hertfordshire, Hatfield

2005

On the Edge, Courtyard Art Gallery, Hertford, Herts

ARTICLES/PUBLICATIONS

2020

Feature, San Francisco School of Needlework and Design, USA, Facebook & Instagram (Dec 9)
Art Textile/Fibre Arts e.Zine, Fibre Arts Australia (pub. 29 Nov, Vol 4, p.3-8)
The Limited Edition Festival of Quilts Magazine, The Vlieseline Fine Art Textiles Award (Sep, p.11)
The ties that bind us to a tragic past, The Jewish Chronicle (26 Jun, p.48)
Textile Artist Caren Garfen and the Star Witness project, Dr Jessica M Grimm (4 May)
Ctrl/Shift: 62 Group Exhibition at the 2021 Visual Arts Centre, Vimeo (7 Feb)
Nothing Less! 100 Years of Women's Suffrage, exhibition catalogue (Jan)

2019

School of Stitched Textiles, Caren Garfen - Putting the Text in Textiles, sofst.com (27 Jul)
Be Creative with Workbox, CBe meets Caren Garfen, Create in Miniature (Jul issue, p.20-23)
X Stitch magazine, Artist Profile - Caren Garfen, Thinking Small (Jul online issue, p.66-69)
Carillon Radio, Health and Wellbeing, Wise Words, radio interview (12 May, 17:49-17:52)
Envision Art Show Magazine, What's Going On Upstairs (9 May)
www.envisionartshow.com, Threaded: a fiber & textiles collection (3 May)
Surface Design Journal, On Display, Domestic Spaces (Spring Issue)
14th International London Eating Disorder Conference, Handbook (20-22 Mar, p.90-91)
Crafts, Preview, Ctrl/Shift (Issue 276, Jan/Feb, p.4-5)
Embroidery, Exhibitions, Suffrage, Ellen Bell (Vol.70, Jan/Feb, p.54)

2018

Caren Garfen: From Conception to Creation, Mary Carson, textileartist.org (24 Dec)

What's Going On Upstairs Exhibition, Arnold's Attic, interview, YouTube (posted 13 Dec)
Embroidery, Profile, A touch on the small side, Ellen Bell (Vol.69, Nov/Dec, p.24-29)
Caren Garfen - UDHR Article 11, #UDHR Quilt Project, quilts.moadoph.gov.au (Oct 28)
Craft Business, Editorial blog, Tackling difficult subjects with needle and thread (3 Oct)
Suffrage, A Llantarnam Grange Arts Centre Exhibition catalogue, issuu.com (published 1 Oct, p.48-53)
62 Group Autumn Newsletter, Members News (published 1 Sep)
Selvege blog post, What's Going On Upstairs, Jessica Edney (13 Aug)
Axisweb, Highlights of the Week, Heartfelt (23-27 Jul)
Text Journal, Professional Development Award, What's Going On Upstairs (Vol.45, p.57-58)
British Patchwork & Quilting, The Jane Austen Community Quilt, Lucy Bailey (Jan, Vol.288, p.40-43)
Stories in Stitches: Reimagining Jane Austen's Quilt, ed. L Bailey, E Betts & S Dell (Mar, p.39)
Axisweb, Category of the Week: Arts in Health, Room for Improvement (5-12 Mar)

2017

One Year On x Alumni Interviews, Blogspot newdesigners.com (24 Jan)
London Eating Disorder Conference, 13th International Handbook (p.64, 22-24 Mar)
Popular Patchwork magazine (Sep issue)

2016

Textile Nature, Anne Kelly, Batsford Books (Aug 2016, p.104-105)
Contemporary Stitch Volume 2, e-book, TextileArtist.org Resources (Apr 2016)
#1 New Directions, Exhibooks Art Book Publisher (Apr 2016, p.66-69)
Workbox magazine, Writing Textile Nature, Anne Kelly, image (Apr 2016, p.31)
Art that inspires Caren Garfen, textileart.org (25 Feb 2016)

2015

House of Coco, Creative Spotlight: Caren Garfen, www.houseofcoco.net (23 Feb)
Reel Lives of Saltaire Women, Colin Coates, www.saltairevillage.info/Reel-Lives (Jun)
Feast Artist Feature: Caren Garfen, www.lexingtonartleague.org/art-stories (Jul)
Embroidery magazine, What a waste (Jul/Aug, p.14-15)
Textile Art of Today, 2015-2017, catalogue
Installation & Site-Specific #2, The State of Art, Series 2, Bare Hill Publishing, book (Oct, p.98-101)

2014

Embroidery magazine, Exhibition Review, Cloth and Memory 2 (Jan/Feb, p.56)
Embroidery magazine, Exhibition Review, On My Mother's Knee (Mar/Apr, p.54)
Construct, Ruthin Publication, catalogue (Apr, p.10-15 & 21)
Stroud News & Journal, Artist stitches a story of heiress's suffering (23 Apr, p.46)
Embroidery magazine, Preview, Selected (May/Jun, p.15)
Wales Arts Review, Construct by Adam Somerset (Jun, Vol.3, Issue 11)
The Cutting (& Stitching) Edge - Caren Garfen, Jamie Chalmers, mr x stitch, on-line (21 Aug)
Textile Art Around The World, Ellen Bakker, Textile-link, book (Oct, p.49)

2013

Embroidery magazine, Preview, Cloth & Memory 2 (Jul/Aug, p.8)
Cloth & Memory 2, www.clothandmemory.com
Cloth & Memory 2, edited by Prof Lesley Millar, Salts Estates Ltd, book (Aug p.50-53)
Cloth & Memory 2, BBC TV Look North, Cathy Killick (15 Aug)
A gripping yarn of Salts Mill's girl, Emma Clayton, Telegraph & Argus (15 Aug, p.22-23)
Text in Textile Art, Sara Impey, Anova Batford, book (Aug, p.42,50,56,94,102)

"Text is a crucial component of the work of Caren Garfen, whose wryly humorous and sharply observed textiles are the result of extensive research. The entertaining accessibility of her work masks a serious underlying social commentary." Sara Impey in Text in Textile Art

Handcraft of the World, Quilts Japan (Oct/Nov, Issue 155, p.60-61)
Stitch magazine, From Sketch to Stitch - Caren Garfen (Oct/Nov, Issue 85, p.30-33)
On My Mother's Knee, catalogue (Nov, p.33-36)

2012

Radical Thread, Professor Lesley Millar MBE (ed.), Direct Design Books (Jan, p.48-49)
Embroidery magazine, Learning Curve (Jul/Aug, p.42-45)
Hand Stitch Perspectives, by Alice Kettle & Jane McKeating, Bloomsbury Publishing, book (p.126-128)

"Caren translates her interests in gender politics and women's issues into witty, beautifully executed artworks. Her subject matter is the role of women in the twenty-first century. She works around specific themes, such as women and housework or women and dieting, researching a subject methodically before embarking on meticulous, carefully considered finished pieces that provide a humorous critique of contemporary society." Professor Melanie Miller in Hand Stitch Perspectives

Textiles, The Art of Mankind, Mary Schoeser, Thames & Hudson, image (Nov, p.345)
Inspired London: A Guide to Handmade in London, Mary McDermott, book (Nov, p.40)
An interview with Caren Garfen, www.textileartist.org (Dec)

TALKS

Royal College of Art. Manchester School of Art. V&A. The Knitting & Stitching Show. University of the Creative Arts. University of Hertfordshire. Ruthin Craft Centre. Wellcome Collection. Austrian Cultural Forum.

AWARDS/SELECTIONS

"Apart from our appreciation of the quality of your work, we like the use of traditional crafts for social engagement and we think that it is very relevant for British Jewish history. Moreover, the embroidery would complement a collection that encompasses many works of traditional textile craft." Kathrin Pieren, Collections Manager and Curator (Social and Military History)

2020

The Vlieseline Fine Art Textile Award - Shortlisted
Art Textile Biennale exhibition, Australia - Selected

2019

Permanent Collection, Jewish Museum London - Artwork Acquired
The Vlieseline Fine Art Textile Award - Shortlisted
Best in Show, Threaded, Envision Arts online gallery - Awarded

2018

Solo Gallery, The Knitting & Stitching Shows - Invited

2017

The Textile Society Professional Development Award - Selected
International d'Art Miniature, Quebec, Canada - Selected

2016

Transgressing Traditions exhibition, New York, USA - Selected
World of Threads Festival exhibition, Ontario, Canada - Selected

2015

Permanent collection, Salts Mill, Saltaire - Artwork Acquired
Textile Art of Today, Touring Exhibition, Eastern Europe - Selected
Feast: pleasure+hunger+ritual exhibition, Kentucky, USA - Selected

2014

Artist-in-Residence & Mentor, University of Hertfordshire
Solo Gallery, The Knitting & Stitching Shows - Invited

Visiting Artist, Jane Austen House Museum in conjunction with University of the Creative Arts, Farnham and Royal School of Needlework - Invited

Permanent Collection, The Diana Springall Collection of Textile Art - Artwork Acquired

2013

Cloth and Memory 2 exhibition, Salts Mill, Saltaire - Selected

2012

Royal Academy of Arts Summer Exhibition - Selected

Royal Academy of Arts Summer Exhibition - Work of the Week

2011

AA2A Artists Access to Art Colleges Scheme (Arts Council & Lottery Funded) - Selected

Celebrity Paws - Charity Commission - Invited

Royal Academy of Arts Summer Exhibition - Shortlisted

2010

Contemporary quilt for Victoria & Albert museum for 'Quilts 1700-2010' exhibition - Commission

2009

Crafts Council National Register of Makers - Selected

Design for cover of catalogue, An Embroiderers Eye: the Diana Springall collection - Commission

2008

AA2A Artists Access to Art Colleges Scheme (Arts Council & Lottery Funded) - Selected

Art of the Stitch Exhibition - Selected

Member of The 62 Group of Textile Artists - Selected

The New Designers One Year On Award - Selected

Embroiderers' Guild Scholarship Award - Selected

Wallpaper journal - Top 100 Graduate

2007

New Designers (BDC) Award - Shortlisted

Embroiderers' Guild Graduate Showcase - Selected

University of Hertfordshire - Prize for best overall performance at assessment