

Ink is absorbed by paper: marks bleed into the fibers, pooling where the pen is kept down for a second or two. In my notebook there are dashes as language trails off at the limit of thought. Paint makes another surface altogether, versus embroidery, where thread incorporates substrate while insisting on its difference: a puncture moving through. If a stitch is loose, the space between the thread and the fabric shows. Pixilated edges of the stitch signal the hand, the original digital, and unlike ink, embroidery floss catches light. Unlike paint, thread may be removed and the substrate will forgive the needle's mark. Drawing, the more I look the more I do not see. Typing, I watch words become typeset as if the book comes into being on screen. If notebook writing is lonely, then the self in front of the computer is neurotically so: checking for virtual contact as the screen to the internet remains open, behind the poem, but the one who later leans over her stitching could care less as time and self appear to stop. Color always comes from my mother's body. Breaking open the privacy of household budgets and a long job search: this seems taboo even while struggle comes from economic trends and Labor has a history. It is local and global and the mirror is one place to begin to read. Finished, the front of the embroidered surface appears well dressed and the messier back is unseen, yet it must be there, tied off.

— Jill Magi, from “Writings on Stitching,” published
in a slightly different form in *SET / a journal*, 2012

Jill Magi is an artist, critic, and educator who works in text, textile, and image. Her books—text-image hybrid works—include *LABOR* (Nighboat Books), *Threads* (Futurepoem), *SLOT* (Ugly Duckling Presse), *Cadastral Map* and *Torchwood* (Shearsman Books), *Shroud* (an unbound unlimited edition collaboration with Jen Hofer), as well as numerous chapbooks and handmade books. An extended essay on textimage hybridity entitled *Pageviews/Innervisions* was published by Moving Furniture Press/Rattapallax in 2014, and two projects from Essay Press entitled *Labor Poetic Labor!* and *Labor Poetic Labor!: Into the Archive* were published as free e-books in May of 2015. From February-April of 2015, Jill wrote a weekly commentary series for *Jacket2* on “a textile poetics,” and more of her essays have been published in *The Force of What's Possible: Accessibility and the Avant-garde*, *The Racial Imaginary*, and *The Eco-Language Reader*. New poems have recently appeared in *Court Green* and *Columbia Poetry Review*. Visual work has been exhibited at apexart, the Brooklyn Arts Council Gallery, Pace University, Arcade Six Gallery at Columbia College Chicago. Jill was a resident artist at the Textile Arts Center Brooklyn, and a resident writer with the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council. She has received awards and grants from the Academy of American Poets, The Literacy Assistance Center of New York, the City University of New York Professional Staff Congress, The Puffin Foundation, the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs, and in 2010, *Poets & Writers* magazine named Jill as among the most inspiring authors in the world. After piecing together part-time gigs at numerous colleges and universities for over ten years, Jill accepted a full-time faculty position in 2013 with New York University Abu Dhabi where she teaches expository writing through the study of textiles, as well as poetry electives.

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Jill Magi

Might (Writing and Stitching)

August 24-September 20, 2015

The Project Space
In the Arts Center
New York University Abu Dhabi

KEY TO WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION, CLOCKWISE FROM MAIN ENTRANCE:

1. *Might* (2010-2014)
Hand-embroidery, unbleached muslin, laser prints and photographs on found book pages, texts compiled from quotes from the artist's journals, *The New York Times*, and various authors.
2. *LABOR* (2011-2015)
Hand-embroidery, cotton fabric, unbleached muslin stiffened with gel medium, interior house paint and acrylic on plywood, book by artist (*Nightboat* 2014) and book display from artist's library, photographs on found book pages, laser print with custom-made stamp on found book page.
3. *The Economy Poems* (2013-2015)
Hand-built ceramic, hand-made book, edition of two; these poems were originally published in *Columbia Poetry Review*.
4. *Threads/Threads* (1997 & 2007)
Altered old Estonian book, collage, paper, thread, photographs, photocopies, edition of one, and book by artist (*Futurepoem* 2007).
5. *Sometimes My Father Would Wander Off* (2012)
Unbound book, book cloth, book board, adhesive, paper, laser print on found book pages, hand-embroidery on unbleached muslin stiffened with gel medium. Ed. 1/2
6. *Portable Horizon (Book Version 2)* (2013)
Altered old blank book, collage, thread, cotton fabric, adhesive, book cloth, book board, paper.
7. *Penury: "Stripped of Comprehensive Knowledge"* (2014)
Hand-embroidery based on *Wildflowers and Winter Weeds* by Lauren Brown, sunlight prints on craft paper, titled after a line from Myung Mi Kim.
8. *Untitled* (2006)
Acrylic on found book pages.
9. *Her Body of Rework* (2011-2015)
Collage, fabric from the wardrobe of Jean Ruth Magi, thread, acrylic.
10. *Dates* (2015)
Laser print, compiled from artist's notebooks 2001-2015.
11. *Dashes* (2015)
Laser print, compiled from the artist's notebooks 2001-2015.
12. *and* (2015)
Laser print, compiled from the artist's notebooks 2013.
13. *Reading Penury by Myung Mi Kim* (2014)
Video, *Penury* by Myung Mi Kim (Omnidawn 2009), from artist's library.
Running Time: 25 minutes 58 seconds
14. *Last Book* (2015)
Compiled from the artist's notebooks 2001-2015, printed and bound in Abu Dhabi, 500 copies stacked in columns and displayed.

Visitors may pick up the books from this display, read, and place back on the stacks. Visitors may also take a copy from the gallery in exchange for leaving a favorite or important word on a piece of paper in the ceramic box on the teaching table. Words given may be incorporated into the community stitching project.
15. *Writing, Reading, Drawing, Stitching: A Miscellaneous Array* (2009-2015)
Hand-embroideries, cotton, unbleached muslin, unbleached muslin dyed with acrylic, linocut print on tracing paper, linocut print on handmade paper, laser print on found book pages, acrylic on found book pages, acrylic on paper, acrylic on canvas, watercolor on paper, ink, found title pages, found library cards from Goddard College library, old card catalogue card from Chicago Public Library, pages from artist's sketchbooks, collage, acrylic stencil quotes on craft paper from Myung Mi Kim's *Penury*, "A blank sheet..." quote from Edmond Jabès, embroidery of Buddhist mantra interspersed with the handwriting of Jean Ruth Magi, fabric from Crit Messer's wardrobe.
16. *An NYUAD & Community Lexicon: A Growing Archive of Stitched Works* (ongoing)

