

Benchmark

October 2011

Lysa Benton

Where I was, first benchmark

Portraits of people who have challenges.

Portraits of people using their 'left behinds'. (I.e. items from my son's floor)

Using wire, hardware, found objects

Struggling to find focus on how to incorporate the materials I am attracted to and the portraits I want to create.

William, 2010

Abstract portraits of people who have mental and/or emotional challenges.



Zackery, 2009

Portraits of people using their 'left behinds'.
(I.e. Things from my son's floor)

Exploring Media:

In the spring of 2011 I took a welding and metal sculpture class at *Snow Farm* in western, Ma.

I took this class in the event I would need to attach metals for my thesis project.

I made a few silly garden projects with my husband and son who came with me.



Intended Audience

- People who appreciate abstract representation and interpretation
- An audience who is willing to interact with the art. (Relational Art)

Artists I identify with:

Félix González-Torres (1957-1996) "Portrait of Ross", because I would like my work to be considered a reflection of my experience. (For González-Torres it was Aids, for myself it is as a child of a bipolar parent.)



I identify with the materials used by: Gelah Penn & Anne Mudge.

Penn because of the sculptural and gestural drawing quality of her works.



Gelah Penn, *Solo*, 43" x 28" x 13", Armature wire, monofilament, Dacron line, acrylic, 2001.



Anne Mudge, *Spur*, Stainless steel wire, fiber, asphaltum 42" x 18" x 14"

Collection of artists I appreciate and am inspired by:

[Laura Ellen Bacon](#)



[Zip tie sculptures](#)



[Ellen Dickinson](#)

[Nathalie Miebach](#)



[Chiharu Shiota](#)

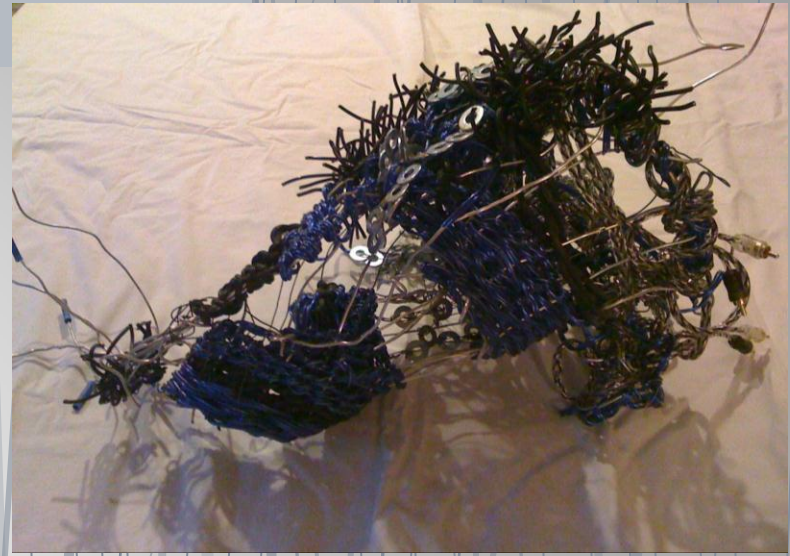
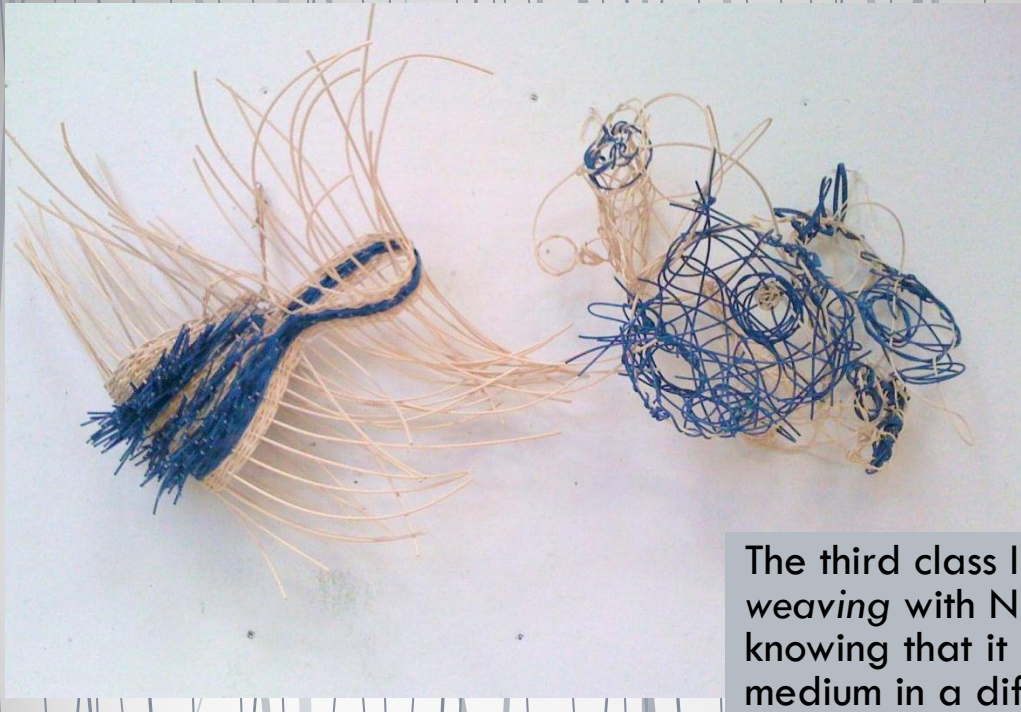
studio work since previous benchmark



During the summer of 2011 I took three courses at Art New England. My first two courses were in ceramics, a media I wanted to explore as I had thought of possibly incorporating it into my final thesis. I was conflicted on have a site-specific work vs. a work I could keep afterwards, and wanted to **push through a decision** by summer's end.

The conclusion was that although I really love ceramics, I prefer the more instant flexibility in what I might loosely call 'wiry' sculptural forms. The aesthetics of the ceramic courses were determined by the building techniques and glazing success. This criteria was far too technical for what I am currently seeking for my thesis project.

studio work since previous benchmark



The third class I took at Art New England was *sculptural weaving* with Nathalie Miebach. I went in with an open mind knowing that it was an opportunity to explore a familiar medium in a different way.

Although I attempted to weave in wire I discovered that for at least now, metal will not allow me to achieve the desired affects for my thesis project. It would be too difficult for my current skill level.

The conclusion was that I had no idea that weaving could be so fabulous! Reed has so many possibilities Weaving can include a wide variety of media. I was also able to make connections with artists I had in my “artist collection”.

studio work since previous benchmark

How my artwork developed over the last year.



This is my final piece for the sculptural weaving class. I created this as my interpretation of the manic side of bipolar disorder.

I am moving toward fully embracing chance into my practice. It's a way to get beyond a conception of an idea.

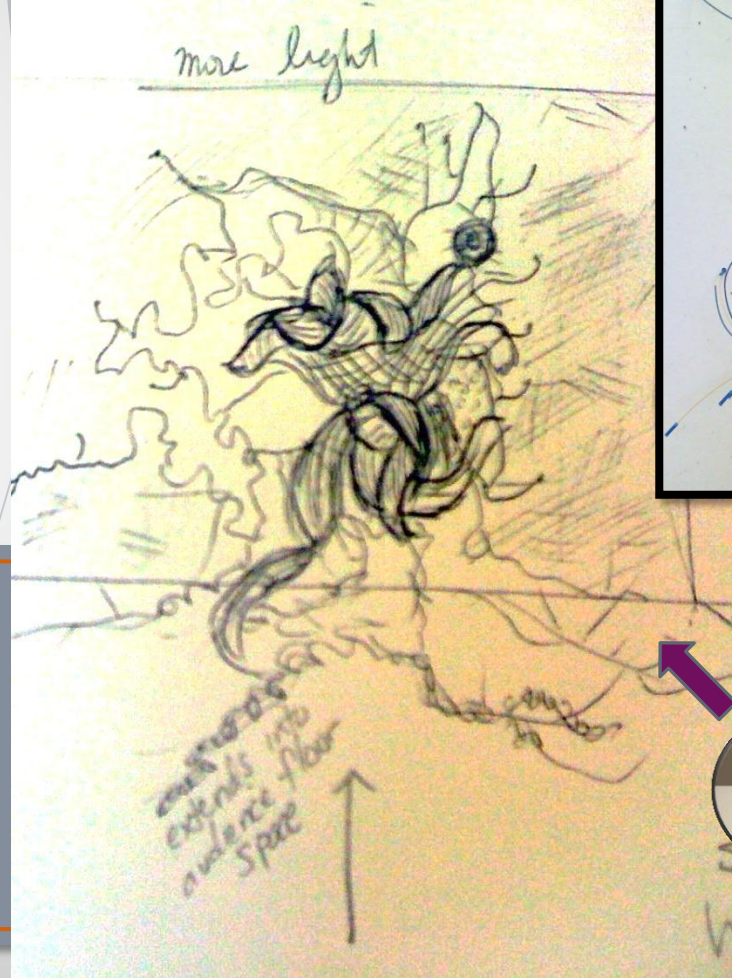
During my last meeting with Jen Hall she allowed me to realize that I am assuming that people will understand my artwork which is based on my experiences. But instead, I should be creating a way into the experience, which was a dysfunctional relationship with a mother who was not always accessible.

How my artwork developed over the last year.

Current thesis focus

The catalyst (my own interpretation of interviews and my memories) will serve as a gestalt for one large scale sculpture made from malleable materials

I will engage the viewer into the experience by bringing them close through small, tight, spaces, and to step back from invasive parts of the piece, all of which emulate the cycles of the disorder I experienced with my mother.



Fiber Artist Ellen Dickinson

Current thesis focus on creating a situation in which the viewer may choose to engage with my work, to enter into the conversation.

Some ideas/possibilities to provoke viewer interaction:

- Keys supplies on a tray which the audience may choose to use on a locked door. There could be multiple doors as well as keys.
- Half silvered glass- you can see through it but you can also see yourself. This can be inside the doors but also be a window to a certain part of the piece.
- At times the viewer could set into motion a behavior, at other times the piece could react to the viewer's behavior.
(I have ordered a very small motion detector to practice with)
- Magnifying glasses could be available to look into small, hidden areas which are lit from inside. When the viewer gets too close the light will dim so it is difficult to see. When the viewer steps back the light will become brighter.

