

Dianne Setch
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My art is about absence.

I have always been interested in costume and how a body is disguised by what it carries wrapped around it and the job this disguise does. As a student, looking at historical costumes in museums, I became aware of the awkwardness of how costumes are displayed and the labeling explaining who once inhabited the interior space of the clothing with a written description of their life and the purpose of the clothing in past times, the wearer long gone.

I invent costume to create a state of absence of a wearer. For the last forty years I have made costumes and drawings using materials both conventional and unorthodox to describe this absence. Inevitably there is always the sense of death. Lately, due to the reality of aging, I have lost family members and friends and so my drawings have recently come to represent graves of the absent.

For the last twenty years, still concerned with the same subject matter, I have been using image manipulation software to create digital drawings. At first this work only involved detailed freehand drawing on a computer and replicated fabrics and the construction methods used to make costumes. Latterly I have introduced a collage of photographic images with added brush and ink drawing.

Since the early 1960s I have exhibited my work in the UK, Europe and the USA, have mounted solo exhibitions (touring) in the UK and taken part in numerous group shows. In 2006 I was awarded the Welsh Artist of the Year printmaking prize. I have work in public and private collections.

From the late 1960s I have designed and made costumes for theatre, taught in further education, worked in arts administration in commercial galleries and museums, mounted group exhibitions and arranged artists residencies in the UK and Europe and until 2007 managed the Women's Arts Association Digital Arts Workshop.

As the founder member of the Women's Arts Association in 1984, along with many other women who are artists, I work to raise the status of creative women in the art world in Wales.

Websites

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