

The Politics of Clothing, Candy and One Big Jigsaw Puzzle

In an upcoming exhibit at the Forest City Gallery artists Fariba Samsami and Sarah Massecar illuminate thought art aspects of world politics, women's issues and how we organize and understand the world around us.

Afloat

of Fariba Samsami
Sarah Massecar

Installation

The idea of objectivity (or lack thereof) of the organization of the world around is a predominant theme in London native Sarah Massecar's work. She says that she had once thought that alphabetization was an objective and convenient way to organize the world, but her mind was changed when a friend told her a story of how, during the war, "Corea" was changed to "Korea" so that "Japan" would come first alphabetically.

Sarah will be showcasing two works during the exhibit. The first, entitled "All Sorts. Heads of State," is a 190-piece sculpture depicting the heads of state of every country in the world, carved entirely out of Licorice All Sorts (those candies that showed up in every Christmas candy dish your grandmother ever had), which the artist created using needles and then attached to a wall using those same needles. The images were then arranged in alphabetical order and bound in a book named "All".

Massecar's second work in the show is entitled "Afloat: In Memory of Alfred Wegner". Wegner was the scientist who put forth the idea that all the continents of the world were once joined, and that they could be fit together like a global jigsaw puzzle. Sarah's innovative work is comprised of a video showing a map of the world in which the countries have been "cut out" and set in water, each country floating independently of the others. The surrounding water flows forward and backward, making the countries appear to move toward and away from each other.



Iranian-born Fariba Samsami, who now lives in Montreal, will also be showcasing some of her work during this exhibit, in two components entitled "Closet" and "Wall". Through the use of items traditionally used to conceal women's bodies, such as chador (the long, black garment worn by Muslim women, covering their bodies from head to toe, including the face), Fariba explores the idea of taboo in the Muslim world.

Fariba's work simultaneously asks and offers answers to questions surrounding women's issues within the context of social and political life in Iran. The use of traditional Muslim clothing in her work serves to help examine the Islamic culture in light of how world events have recently turned the world's eyes toward that region.

— Staci Rai

Where+Who

Forest City Gallery (352 Talbot St.), Massecar and Samsami,
January 21 to February 26. Phone 434-5875 for more info.

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