

Woodson Art Museum

in your classroom

RePurposed & ReImagined
Recycling & Rethinking the Unusual
Spring 2014



Top: Jennifer Angus, *Nature Composed*, wallpaper detail, 2014; Bottom: Nancy Judd, *Paper Lace*, detail, 2003



Introduction

Glass gowns, tailored tires, stitched scraps of candy wrappers, and intricate patterns of exotic insects invite visitors to think twice and take a closer look this spring at the Woodson. Creativity and fresh perspectives come to life in RePurposed & ReImagined – three new exhibitions, which celebrate the endless possibilities of reclaimed materials, on view April 12 through June 15, 2014. *Nature Composed: The Insect Artistry of Jennifer Angus*, *ReDress: Upcycled Style* by Nancy Judd, and *Salvage & Selvage: A Fiber Artists Coalition Exhibition* explore the dynamic potential of upcycling through unusual mediums.

Nature Composed: Insect Artistry

Step into a carefully composed and elegant room. The walls are adorned with a rich “tapestry” of storybook screenprints upon which march parades of pinned insects, creating the grand illusion of three-dimensional wallpaper. Jennifer Angus’ elaborate insect installations yield intriguing patterns that suggest Victorian wallpaper and textile designs. Her work is informed by a vast knowledge of insects, the environment, design concepts, and decorative arts. While Angus’ medium may seem bizarre at first, her installations are critically acclaimed throughout the US, including in Wisconsin, at the Chazen Museum of Art and Racine Art Museum.

Artist Jennifer Angus is a design studies professor and coordinator of the UW-Madison Textile and Apparel Design Program. Her expertise ranges from fashion history and studio arts to the cross-cultural significance of pattern. Angus is especially drawn to the Victorian era, explaining:



Jennifer Angus, *In the Midnight Garden*, 2013, North Dakota Museum of Art, Grand Forks, ND

“ . . . it was a time of great collecting. For the insatiable Victorian collector, nothing was sacrosanct. . . In the Victorian era, both adults and children were introduced to the natural world through a large number of educational publications in which insects were anthropomorphized so as to have greater appeal to the general reading public. I had often made a connection between my work and children’s literature because curiosity, imagination, and magic are key ingredients.”

While Angus’ dramatic visual arrays of insects may be reminiscent of an imagined reality, the inherent beauty of nature plays a key role in the artist’s work. Angus never paints or dyes her



(sustainably farmed) insect subjects, but rather heightens their innate aesthetic through thoughtful installations with a keen eye toward color, pattern, and design. “The devil is in the details,” as the expression goes. For Angus, intricate, small-scale details – individual insects – are intriguing when observed independently, but when part of a larger motif, the impact is even grander and spectator interest is even keener. Similarly, fashion designers

rely on subtle elements – embroidery, pleating, or iridescence – to construct cohesive designs. These compositional components are essential elements of the artistic visions of textile designers, painters, and sculptors alike . . . and the artworks of both Nancy Judd and Jennifer Angus beautifully reflect these priorities.

Environmental awareness and education are central to these artists’ core missions, and their decisions to work with unusual and unexpected materials also closely link them to nature. While Judd focuses on reusing discarded materials as a way to shed light on the over-consumption of a throw-away society, Angus highlights loss of rainforest and charismatic species syndrome in conservation efforts. Often global environmental campaigns choose “poster-children” species to illustrate key issues – the panda bear for poaching and habitat loss, the polar bear for global warming, or the orangutan for excessive palm-oil production in Indonesia, for example – while the plight of undesirable or less-easy-to-relate-to species are neglected despite their crucial roles in all ecosystems. Angus presents these underappreciated and misunderstood creatures: “I seek to rehabilitate the image of insects and draw correlations between humans and members of the six-legged kingdom. The fear we have of insects is generally unwarranted. Their role in the environment is vital, whether it be in the pollination of flowers, which in turn produce the fruits we so enjoy, or the decomposition of matter. They don’t deserve a blast of ‘Raid’ or a beating with a flyswatter.”

ReDress: Upcycled Style

Santa Fe artist and environmental educator Nancy Judd packs a punch with her couture garments made of recycled materials. The artist uses her wearable sculpture as an aesthetically appealing vehicle for engaging in a serious dialogue about the care and keeping of our planet. “A spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down!” *ReDress: Upcycled Style by Nancy Judd* features eighteen dresses, each spotlighting a common area of consumer waste, encouraging viewers to dwell on their own consumptive habits and the longevity of the hundreds of materials that pass easily through our hands each day. Some works target easily identifiable “throwaway products” such as

plastic bags, water bottles, packaging materials, aluminum cans, and junk mail, while others shed light on materials with which we have little conscious interface on a regular basis. Consider the short utilitarian lifespan of event-driven advertising (think political campaign posters, yard signs, or the thousands of t-shirts produced for a marathon). The relevancy of these items is fleeting, and once they are out of sight, most certainly they are not on our minds. Judd created a three-piece collection of garments made exclusively from 2008 Obama plastic and paper campaign posters and yard signs.



Nancy Judd, *Crime Scene*, 2011, plastic film and cotton, photo by Jay Sturdevant

While the oceans, sky, and landscape are obvious victims of poor resource management, Judd also identifies our own bodies as dumping grounds for the harmful effects of processed products in our lives. The artist writes:

“The Center for Disease Control reports that each of us has over 200 man-made chemicals deposited in our bodies, many of which are known toxins. Ninety percent of the 85,000 synthetic chemicals registered today in the United States, have NOT been tested for their effects on human health. Many of these chemicals persist in the environment and accumulate in our bodies creating susceptibility to cancer as well as many other health problems. Both our bodies and the planet have become crime scenes.”

Environmental educators and activists, like Judd, recognize the cultural and psychological disconnect Americans have from nature and our place within a community or regional ecosystem. The intimacy of our personal health, though, is not so easily pushed aside.

Salvage & Selvage: The Fiber Artists Coalition

Salvage: to retrieve or preserve something from potential loss or adverse circumstances + Selvage: the woven edge of fabric, used to prevent fraying along the edge of the textile = twenty-six works by eight Midwestern fiber artists. Curator and Fiber Artists Coalition member Pat Kroth gave the group simple instructions: create textiles using only reclaimed materials. The results are diverse, striking, and unusual. Kroth's request proved challenging for some members and liberating for others. Some fiber artists, more comfortable with the controlled color blocking and pattern design required in quilting, found that the unpredictable nature of reclaimed materials invited a loose and somewhat chaotic design. Kroth's *Sweet Tooth Too*, for example, is like a visual sugar rush. At first glance, the work is perceived as loud and even overwhelming. Upon further observation, the brands of favorite candy wrappers peeking out from a saccharine color palette prompt the realization that our own consumptive narratives are woven into this messy landscape of flotsam and jetsam.



Pat Kroth, *Sweet Tooth Too*, 2013, hand-dyed and commercial cotton fragments, candy wrappers, buttons, paperclips, vegetable bag netting; heat-bonded and machine stitched



Kathie Briggs, *Totems*, 2012, various recycled textiles and fiber materials



Casey Puetz, *Tranquility*, salvaged items: rusted muslin fabric, tea-dyed cotton batting, dyed Timtex, antique Korean coin, used postage stamp, wood chopstick

Earth Day & Environmental Action

In celebration of our planet and the creative ways to advocate for environmental stewardship presented in the RePurposed & ReImagined exhibitions, the Woodson invites students to present their plans for eco-activism at the Museum. Tuesday, April 22, marks Earth Day – the perfect opportunity to take advantage of the serendipitous relevancy, by asking students to select a *ReDress* garment and examine its environmental narrative. Students are encouraged to form “action teams” in which each student takes on a different role or perspective associated with a social-change movement. These identities could include:

- A *business leader* challenged to adopt new practices
- A *marketing officer* enticing masses to buy into an environmental campaign
- An *educator* tasked with crafting key messages to share with students and partner agencies
- A *scientist or researcher* explaining the impacts of a specific waste
- The *resource cultivator/producer* – be it a farmer, manufacturer, landowner, or materials extractor – logger, miner, oil driller, etc.
- The *engaged consumer* eager to practice and model good habits
- The *uninformed consumer* (devil’s advocate) who resists change and balks at adopting new and sustainable consumer habits

The goal is to have students walk in the shoes of one of the key players needed to enact tangible change in consumptive habits, production, and the economy of waste. In assuming these viewpoints – and defending them as honestly as possible – the task at hand, regardless of the environmental cause, is to present them truthfully. Social and economic webs of power can overshadow and/or cause roadblocks to understanding and tackling the multifold interests at play when it comes to environmental issues. So, let’s get creative at the Woodson Art Museum!

How to get involved:

- Call the Museum and sign up to visit on Earth Day . . . or another date that works for you and your students; everyday can be an Earth Day!
- Schedule a guided tour of the galleries
- Divide students into action teams with each group of students addressing a different topic
- Review the garments – reproduced below – with students prior to the visit so they can begin thinking about their issue
- Meet with a Museum educator following your gallery tour to discuss the *ReDress* works on view and introduce the topic/garment your group would like to tackle
- Spend forty-five minutes brainstorming creative ways to address the environmental issue at hand and present ideas for critique and feedback from peers

Our goal is to foster a creative Earth Day think tank. Contact Museum educator Catie Anderson for more information at canderson@lywam.org

Review these *ReDress* garments and Nancy Judd’s explanations with students to begin your Woodson Art Museum Earth Day project.



Nancy Judd, *Plastique Couture*, 2006, plastic bags and film, detergent bottles, fabric made from plastic bottles, thrift store satin

The fabric in this gown is sewn from a fabric called Eco-spun, which is made from plastic bottles. The dress is then covered with used, plastic packaging film and accented with small circles cut from post-consumer plastic detergent bottles. The stole is knit from used, clear plastic bags and lined with fabric from a second-hand, white-satin prom dress. It took 225 hours to complete and was created in 2006.

Plastic bags and film that is dry, clean, and free of paper labels can be easily recycled at your local grocery store. Here are the many types of film you can recycle:

- Grocery, produce, food storage bags (including cereal box liners)
- Retail bags (hard plastic and string handles removed), newspaper and dry cleaning bags
- Retail wrap (e.g., furniture, electronics, napkin, and food containers)
- Plastic shipping envelopes (no bubble wrap/remove labels)



Nancy Judd, *Tireless Couture*, 2010, bicycle and car tire inner tubes, torn hotel sheets, photo by Jay Sturdevant

Inner-tube tires from bicycles were cut into circles and sewn onto the shirt. Others were cut into fringe and sewn to the bolero. Vehicle inner tubes create the undulating fabric on the skirt. The base of the shirt, bolero, and skirt are all sewn from torn hotel sheets dyed apple green.

Car exhaust fumes are a major contributor to the climate crisis. Your vehicle releases carbon dioxide (a greenhouse gas) into the atmosphere, which causes climate change. Bicycling is an excellent way to reduce local air pollution and greenhouse gases, and it improves your physical fitness!



Nancy Judd, *Eco-Flamenco*, 2011, cereal boxes, recycled paint, parachute scraps, photo by David Astilli

Cereal boxes painted with recycled paint have been transformed into cascades of ruffles that contain over 5,000 eco-pledges — individuals' commitments to take action to help the environment. The ruffles cover a dress made from parachute scraps. It took 650 hours to complete and was created in 2011.

Nancy created this piece at The Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts in Grand Rapids, Michigan, while participating in an event called "ArtPrize." Nancy was on site for three weeks working 10-12 hours a day with volunteers who helped her to paint, cut, and sew the ruffles. Thousands of Art Prize attendees made eco-pledges answering the question, "What can you do to live lighter on the earth?" The pledges were then sewn onto the dress designed so that the length of the garment would be determined by the number of eco-pledges received. Nancy kept adding panels until the night before leaving, and still had pledges leftover.



Nancy Judd, *Jellyfish Dress*, 2010, plastic dry cleaner, newspaper, and grocery bags, photo by Jay Sturdevant

Green dry cleaner bags and blue plastic newspaper bags were ironed together to create the aquatic skirt. The bodice, under-skirt, tentacles, and necklace were made from white grocery bags. The garment was partially created in public workshops in Lincoln City, on the Oregon Coast.

Seabirds, sea turtles, fish, and marine mammals often ingest trash that they mistake for food. Sea turtles have been found to swallow plastic bags because the bags look like jellyfish, one of their favorite foods. Ingesting this debris can seriously harm marine life. Three of the top five types of marine litter are recyclable: plastic bottles, plastic bags, and cans. Additionally, plastics contaminate lakes, ponds, streams, and rivers as well as the land. Plastic breaks down into tiny pieces but is never returned to its original form, oil; plastic will continue to pollute the environment for thousands of years.



Nancy Judd, *Pop Can Couture*, 2006, aluminum cans and canvas scraps, photo by Sandrine Hahn

Aluminum cans were hand-cut into leaves, petals and vines then hand-sewn onto the dress, purse, and vintage shoes. The 1950s retro cocktail dress and purse were created from canvas scraps. It took 135 hours to complete and was created in 2006; was commissioned by the Coca-Cola Company.

Find out where to recycle aluminum cans in your community at <http://www.earth911.com>. Recycling a single aluminum can saves enough energy to run a computer or TV for 3 hours, or a 100-watt bulb for 20 hours. Every 3 months, Americans throw away enough aluminum to rebuild our entire fleet of commercial airplanes.



Nancy Judd, *Junk Mail Fan Dress*, 2000, paper, canvas, shoes, and metal, photo by Sandrine Hahn

Catalogues, solicitations, and newspaper ads were folded into fans and sewn onto the Spanish-style dress. The skirt and bodice were constructed from canvas scraps. The thrift-store shoes were covered with used postage stamps. The ensemble is topped off with a vintage mantilla embellished with junk-mail fans and origami-peacock earrings.

More than 4 million tons of junk mail are produced yearly. Over 50 percent of this unsolicited mail ends up in landfills annually. Recycled paper is made into paper towels, notebook paper, envelopes, copy paper, boxes, hydro-mulch, molded packing, and kitty litter. Producing paper from post-consumer paper uses 40% less energy than making paper from virgin wood pulp.

Before Your Visit

Introduce themes of sustainability and conscientious consumption to students using the wearable sculptures featured in *ReDress*. One of Judd's *ReDress* takeaways is that there is no "waste" in nature. In fact, there is no such thing as waste – just wasted resources. Consider the decomposition time required for these everyday man-made and processed materials.





Incorporate this *eco-activism vocabulary** in continuing the conversations and classroom discussions with your students.

Biodegrade - to break down by the action of living organisms such as bacteria.

Climate Change/Global Warming - the Earth is getting warmer because people are adding heat by trapping gases in the atmosphere, mainly by burning fossil fuels. These gases are called greenhouse gases. Warmer temperatures are causing other changes around the world, such as melting glaciers and stronger storms. These changes are happening because the Earth's air, water, and land are all linked to the climate. The Earth's climate has changed before, but this time people are causing these changes. These changes are bigger and happening faster than any previous climate changes that modern society has ever seen or researched.

Clothing Swap - an event or party where participants exchange their valued but no-longer-used clothing for clothing they will use. Clothing swaps are considered not only a good way to de-clutter and refill one's wardrobe, but also help the environment.

Consumerism - encourages the purchase of goods and services in ever-greater amounts.

Couture - the design of high-fashion clothes to a client's specific requirements and measurements, often sewn with extreme attention to detail using time-consuming, hand-executed techniques.

Downcycling - the process of converting waste materials into new materials or products of lesser quality and reduced functionality.

Endangered - a species of plant or animal that is in danger of becoming extinct.

Extinct - no longer exists.

Fast Fashion - trendy clothing designed and manufactured quickly and cheaply to allow mainstream consumers to buy current clothing styles at low prices.

Herbicides - chemical substances used to kill plants considered weeds.

Manufacturing - the production of everyday items.

Micro-organism - any life form so small that it can only be seen with a microscope.

Pesticide - a chemical substance used to kill insects.

Pollution - contamination by man-made wastes and chemicals of air, water, and soil.

Recycling - changing materials (waste) into new and useful products.

Reuse - to use a used item again in its original form, for the same function or a different function.

Social Justice - achieving conditions that are fair for all people.

Toxin - a poisonous substance.

Upcycling - converting waste materials into new materials or products of better quality or for better environmental value.

Waste, Trash, Garbage - unwanted materials that are either thrown in the landfill or littered.

Waste Reduction or Minimization - reducing the amount of waste produced by a person or a society.

*Glossary of terms courtesy of artist Nancy Judd.

@ the Woodson

During your visit to the Woodson Art Museum, a docent will lead your group through the galleries, offering insights and encouraging thoughtful dialogue inspired by the artworks. All docent-led Art Museum Experiences involve opportunities for hands-on art making inspired by an artwork or idea discussed. Inspired by Nancy Judd and the Fiber Artists Coalition, students will work in the Museum's classroom to design and create a coaster-size weaving made from magazines and recycled materials.

Activity Guides

Each student receives an Activity Guide to extend learning in the classroom and at home. When students leave the Museum with an Activity Guide in hand, they are able to share their Museum visit with friends and family, along with their newfound expertise and enthusiasm.

Woodson Art Museum Information

Please encourage your students to visit the Museum with their families and share what they've learned. Admission is ALWAYS FREE! The Museum is open 9 am – 4 pm, Tuesday – Friday, and Noon – 5 pm on Saturday and Sunday. On the first Thursday of every month – Night Out @ the Woodson – the Museum offers hands-on art for all ages from 5:30 – 7 pm. Call the Museum or visit the website for more information:

Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum

700 N. 12th St.

Wausau, WI 54403

lywam.org

715.845.7010

Calling All Fashionistas!

A Fun and Unique One-Day Volunteer Opportunity

Take part in the Woodson Art Museum's upcoming Recycled Runway fashion show – **Saturday, May 3** – presented in conjunction with *ReDress: Upcycled Style*, an exhibition of elegant couture fashion sculptures created from trash by internationally recognized artist and environmental advocate Nancy Judd.

Garments and accessories to be featured in the fashion show are the creations of UW-Madison Textile and Apparel Design students, who worked with Judd to create exciting recycled fashion pieces.

Leigh Yawkey
Woodson
Art Museum

Franklin & 12th St.
Wausau, WI 54403
715.845.7010
www.lywam.org

Tuesday – Friday 9am – 4pm
First Thursday of each month 9am – 7:30pm
Saturday – Sunday Noon – 5pm
Closed Monday and holidays

Always FREE Admission

Follow Us   
Weekly blog Woodson Wanderings



The Museum needs these volunteers on Saturday, May 3

40 Models to walk the Recycled Runway – runway experience not necessary!

Sizes 0-12

Mostly women; a few men, too

Hours 3:30 – 9:00 pm

5 Hair and Make-Up Artists

Bring your own supplies!

Hours 2:30 – 8:00 pm

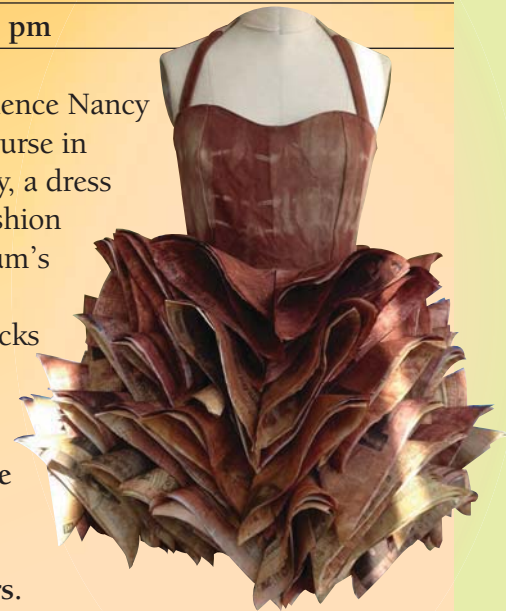
6 Dressing/Tailoring Assistants

Assist models to get dressed/undressed

Hours 2:30 – 9:30 pm

Meet artist-in-residence Nancy Judd for a crash course in walking the runway, a dress rehearsal, and a fashion show in the Museum's galleries. Food, beverages, and snacks provided.

Help us spread the word about the Recycled Runway fashion show and need for volunteers.



To volunteer, call Catie Anderson, at 715.845.7010
or email canderson@lywam.org

From Trash to Treasure

Nancy Judd Residency

Thursday – Sunday, May 1 – 4

Incorporating crime-scene tape, shards of glass, and repurposed tires, Nancy Judd cleverly weaves strong environmental messages throughout her intriguing, meticulously designed upcycled couture.

During her residency, Nancy shares how she uses the power of art to create fashion statements promoting environmental stewardship in dynamic, engaging ways. Nancy guides program participants

in the creative reuse of discarded materials and emcees an evening fashion show, featuring upcycled garments and accessories created by UW-Madison fashion design students.

May 1 Thursday 5:30 – 7 pm

Art 101 & Hands-on Art

Eco-Friendly Fashion

Nancy discusses her thought-provoking couture made from recycled materials and leads participants in creating upcycled accessories from discarded magazine pages rolled into beads.

May 2 Friday 10 am – 2 pm

Upcycling Workshop

Adults interested in designing and sewing get creative with recycled t-shirts. Nancy guides participants in using pre-made patterns or designing their own to create scarves, backpacks, dog toys, and more. Bring t-shirts to incorporate into your projects. Fee includes lunch: \$20 for Museum members; \$30 for non-members. ☎

May 3 Saturday 1 – 3 pm

Art Park Open Studio

Bring the family for this drop-in, self-directed activity using recycled materials.



May 3 Saturday 7 – 8 pm

Recycled Runway

Lights, Camera, Environmental Action!

Upcycled garments hit the runway in a fashion show featuring the work of UW-Madison students. Their creations made from recycled materials incorporate clever juxtapositions, alterations, and printing and dyeing techniques. Nancy directs this fashion show, highlighting her Woodson Art Museum-initiated UW-Madison collaboration.

May 4 Sunday 1 – 2:30 pm

Recyc-ALL

Collage & Decoupage

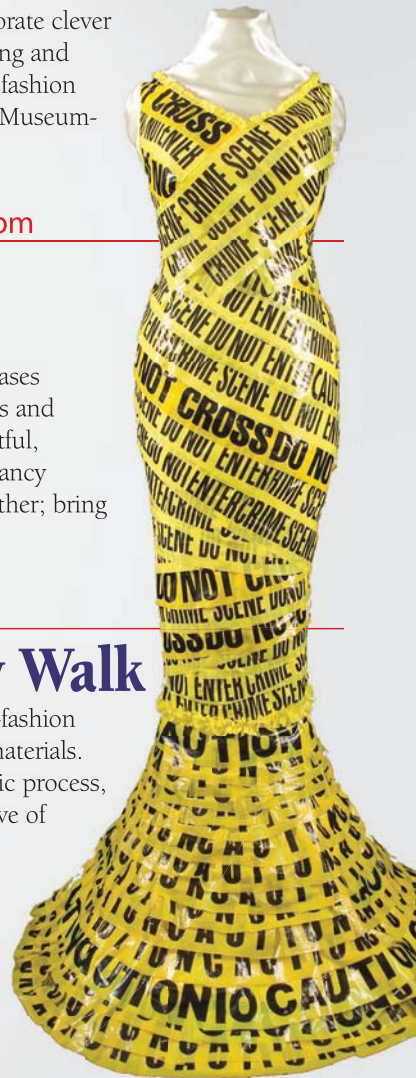
All ages drop in to make decorative vases and candleholders from recycled glass and also learn how to make more thoughtful, everyday environmental decisions. Nancy assists participants as they work together; bring glassware for your project.

May 4 Sunday 3 – 4 pm

ReDress Gallery Walk

Join Nancy for insights into the high-fashion garments she creates from recycled materials. She'll share thoughts about her artistic process, partnerships, and the implicit narrative of ReDress artworks.

Left to right: Nancy Judd, *Glass Evening Gown*, 2002, glass, cotton, and shoes, photo by Don Marr; Nancy Judd, *Crime Scene*, 2011, plastic film and cotton, photo by Jay Sturdevant



"From Trash to Treasure" funding comes from a Community Arts Grant from the Community Foundation of North Central Wisconsin, with funds from the Wisconsin Arts Board, Community Foundation, and the B.A. & Esther Greenheck Foundation. This project also is supported in part by a Challenge America Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

