

Deb Lawrence

My work is unique in its materiality, process and conceptual basis, and has a psychological and feminist bent at its core.

Like a well worn, well loved security blanket, my work centers on Donald Winnicott's historical notion of transitional objects and their universal use throughout life...how in the face of contemporary stress our profound, intimate, seemingly irrational attachment to objects helps nurture security, mitigate distress and form our authentic selves, as individuals in general, and women in particular.

I aim to have a distinctive voice in the conversation about elevating the role of women and handcrafted objects to high art in the tradition of Judy Chicago, Rosemarie Trockle, the women of Gees Bend, and others whose work is inspired by countless "unknown women" who have painstakingly handcrafted master works of art with little or no recognition or acclaim.

The antique linen I use is integral both to the conceptual basis and visual aesthetics of my work. Hand woven by women in the 1800's, it was originally used as bed sheets and duvet covers, security blankets in their own right. The coarse threads, hand stitched seams, and occasional repairs highlight the vestiges of the female hand and engender a sense of strength, authenticity and beauty in that which is genuine and imperfect.

My handling of materials is intimate and engaging as I fold, crease and paint, creating structural dimensionality and imbuing my work with a veritable soul. Collectively termed Self-Help, my titles serve as wry provocations to cope with contemporary life and get comfortable in our own skin.