



The Banner; the stitched, artfully designed kind that offers sophisticated social comment, or anti-establishment protest and resistance has claimed turf in the landscape of current visual culture. Big names from the Art World walk this landscape and biggest one of all for now, Grayson Perry, employs the stitched banner as a vehicle to depict critical observations of British society. Perry's compassion for his flawed fellow beings is tenderly rendered in large scale tapestry or appliqué, and even though his hand may have touched only the digital pen with which he drafts the images on screen, there is a deeply understood tactile, domestic connection to his banners. Sadly

'domestic' is a term often flung around with pejorative abandon to deride things that seem banal, or unexciting but generally speaking domesticity refers to a human context that emerges from being warm, fed and protected, usually within the framework of family and, or community. Textiles, along with sustenance constitute the domestic tap root of humanity because as mammals lacking furry pelts, we could not have survived without our manipulation of materials into things to keep us warm and protected. So, as it happens, domesticity is not at all mundane. Perry of course understands this and also that, materials such as textiles and clay matter

because they are universally familiar and relevant. Also increasingly relevant and ubiquitous are the screens through which much of the world is now experienced, so much so that our tactile senses ache to physically meet materials. This is maybe why there is an apparent, emphatic attraction to textiles in various manifestations, including banners and indeed banner making. Along with the enjoyment of seeing and handling textile based work, an increasing number of us want to dive into the sensory processes of creating things from cloth.

One of the many great things about textiles is ▶

Bayeux Museum