

Wall Curtain; Saw Blade

The elements are listed in the artist's marvelously literal title. Hanging on the wall from the blade of an old logging saw is the folded ghost of a curtain crocheted from copper wire. The great thing about this particular piece of Tracy Krumm's is not that it questions assumptions about an arbitrary line dividing the handicrafts of women from the traditionally patriarchal Arts with a capital A. This it does with *bravura*, as does all of Krumm's work, but the great thing in this piece is that Tracy Krumm relishes that line as she obliterates it, playing both sides splendidly close to the chest, knowing she holds the winning hand.

Her first card is the scent of prairie grass and more than a strand of pioneer romance. *Wall Curtain; Saw Blade* is an homage to every blanket ever crocheted by nimble fingers on autumn evenings, as if the same astral thread ran through them all and straight into Tracy Krumm's art. A thread through conversations and the ease of mind in the silences as night falls and one by one they go to sleep. A thread through your fingertips, a soothing chant of touch, running like a prayer of gratitude to all aunts, *abuelas*, and ancestors practicing these crafts.

And at the same time, the piece is an airy work of sophisticated minimalism, an *arte povera* object drawing, and it ups the ante with a bit of a rectangular jab at painting's near death experiences. "Hang it up, painter boys," the work asserts with complete confidence. "Crocheting's still going strong."

And has finally found its wildest maverick in Tracy Krumm. Besides delightfully deflating gender biases, and puncturing the puffed paradigms that meaninglessly divide arts and crafts practices, Krumm constructs a fascinating mechanics of abstracted emotion and sculptural play. Her works can be read as enlarged cooking implements, they can literally be baskets, or they can look like mechanisms from a lost world of machinery. Some are sweet, delicate, and diaphanous while others have a sinister edge of bondage and gothic torture. Almost all would function nicely as lobster traps.

There is a rare humor here too, and a Dr. Seussian sense of whimsy. Another pole of her work expresses itself in pieces like *Long Tapered Bag* or *Semi-shroud Coll*. There is a figurative sense of animation in these symmetrical pieces, scaled to the body, dropping from the ceiling like marionettes. The formal and literal tensions compound in a way that brings a suspended sense of expectant life to their taut verticality. This all-encompassing vitality is at the heart of Tracy Krumm's project.



2-BALANCED, 2003
CROCHETED & FABRICATED METAL & FOUND OBJECT
121 X 114 X 82 INCHES



TWO DOZEN, 2003
CROCHETED & FABRICATED METAL & FOUND OBJECT
42 X 68 X 8 INCHES



TRACY KRUMM, b. 1963 Kenosha WI. Ed: MFA Vermont College; BFA California College of Art and Crafts, Oakland; Evergreen State College, Olympia WA. Coll: Atlanta Airport Hilton; American Craft Museum, New York; Ed Broida Trust, Santa Fe; Ciorax Corporation, Palo Alto CA; Concepts, Santa Fe; Denver Art Museum; Elements, Chicago; Ford Motor Company, Serramonte; Kaiser Permanente Hospitals CA; Lark Books/ Fiberarts, Asheville; Marin General Hospital, San Rafael; Minnesota State Arts Board, St. Paul; Museum of Fine Arts, Santa Fe; Shadow Agency, Minneapolis. Representation: Linda Durham Contemporary Art, Santa Fe.

LUCKY BLOOM AND OTHERS, 2002
FABRICATED METAL & FOUND OBJECTS