

## FOLD UNFOLD

### Call for Participation

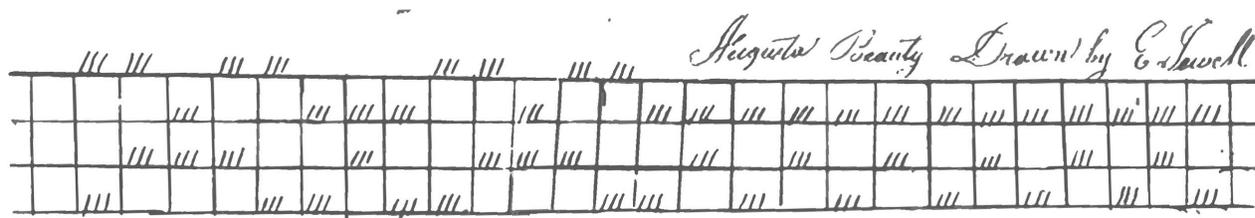
Although quilts in America have a well-documented history, coverlets, elaborate examples of woven bedding, are lesser-known cultural artifacts. But these bed coverings, often devalued or romanticized, once provided decorative and property value to North American households. They also hinted at an eerily prescient modernist, even op-art, aesthetic.

To explore the value of coverlets and to challenge current practices that relegate coverlets to the realm of “craft” instead of “art,” Susan Falls and Jessica Smith have planned **Fold Unfold**—a collaborative exhibition project that also features a publication and a performance. While the presentation of functional craft as fine art is not new (it has been the subject of many scholarly and curatorial projects), *Fold Unfold* is unique in that it presents coverlets as art without stripping them of their original use.

**Fold Unfold** invites skilled makers to weave functional bedding on manually operated looms; these coverlets will be shown in a contemporary installation at the Lyndon House Arts Center in Athens, Georgia.

The coverlets will be folded and stacked to reference architectural pillars. One pillar will stand in the formal entrance hall of the historic Ware-Lyndon House. Visible from both inside and out, this pillar will represent the historic role southern women played in building an aesthetic narrative of the cultural landscape. Another pillar will stand in the center of the Lukasiewicz Gallery which connects the historical space to the contemporary spaces of the Art Center. There will be two video screens in the Lukasiewicz Gallery showing a looped documentary slide show; slides will present each piece contained in the exhibition, along with details about their weaver(s). In a public performance at the closing of the show, the pillars will be taken down, and each coverlet will be unfolded to reveal the individual creative work within the community of weavers. All of the unfolded coverlets will then be stacked, at full size, to form a minimalist contemporary sculpture which recalls their original function as bedding.

Each coverlet will be professionally photographed and published in a downloadable catalogue available to a wide audience.



## Guidelines for Weaving:

- | All coverlets must be woven, 80" x 88" in dimension with no added trim or fringe. Panels may be sewn together after it is off the loom.
- | Coverlets should use a black, white and grey color palette only (materials are at the discretion of the weaver), and be informed by overshot geometric patterning popular in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
  - The black-grey-white palette will draw attention to the weaving skills of diverse makers.
  - Weavers may use this opportunity to revisit historical overshot patterning or build upon the structure of these historically powerful objects.
  - Drafts may be newly invented, found in weaving guides and texts, or inspired by woven coverlets in personal collections, decorative arts collections, or heritage house museums.
  - High quality is expected. While this is not a juried event, coverlets which do not meet the standards of the exhibition may not be shown.

In *The Coverlet Book*, Helene Bress describes the overshot structure as "Floating Work." She notes that coverlets are typically woven in geometric patterns, utilizing locally sourced materials; a thicker dark supplemental weft against a finer, lighter, plain woven ground. After analyzing of over 250 early 19<sup>th</sup> century coverlets, Bress determined that while no two coverlets were the same, they were typically "well woven and substantial in feel" with seams that matched "pretty well but not perfectly" (*The Coverlet Book*, page 1).

## SUBMISSION INFORMATION:

Please email Susan Falls and Jessica Smith at [foldunfold2017@gmail.com](mailto:foldunfold2017@gmail.com) to establish interest. You will receive a list of deliverables, a documentation form, and mailing address at this time.

- | Participation confirmation must be received by March 1, 2017.
- | All deliverables (coverlets, drafts, and weaver statement) as well as completed documentation form must be sent to Susan Falls and Jessica Smith by May 1, 2017.
- | You will be required to include return postage for your work.

Please contact Susan Falls and Jessica Smith at [foldunfold2017@gmail.com](mailto:foldunfold2017@gmail.com) for all inquiries.