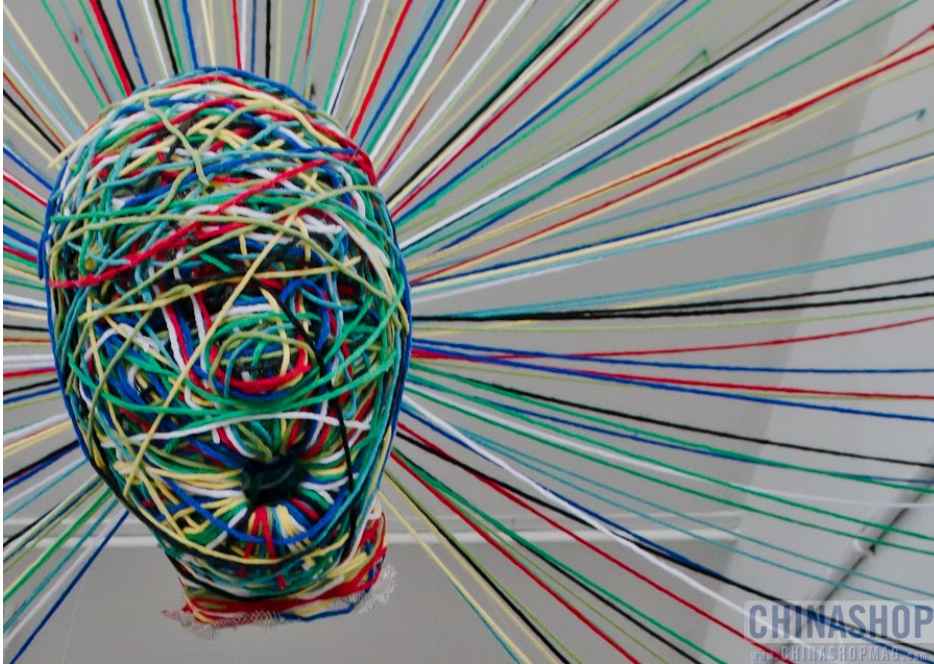


ART FEATURED GALLERY **Yarn Bombing 18th Street**
by Nicole Pajer and Dustin Downing

July 15, 2011 - 11:20 am



If you walked down the streets of Santa Monica recently, you might have noticed trees wearing sweaters, a convertible dressed in a knitted wardrobe, and crocheted birds hanging from trees. Your mind was not playing tricks on you – it was all part of a very real art phenomenon known as [yarn bombing](#). In order to celebrate this knitted street art movement, the 18th Street Arts Center's Arzu Arda Kosar and Arroyo Arts Collective co-president Heather Hoggan teamed up to present "18th Street Yarn Bombing." For those unfamiliar with the trials and tribulations of yarn bombing, ChinaShop sat down with Kosar for the inside scoop:

What exactly is yarn bombing?

Yarn Bombing is a form of street art that uses yarn or fiber material instead of paint. Oftentimes the idea is to add color to an otherwise drab urban environment. Some pieces such as "angry birds" hanging from a tree are just funny, others such as the ruffle of an old bronze statue covered in pink fuzzy cozy can be quite political as well. Humor often is a major component of yarn bombing, which by nature embodies contradictory idiosyncrasies within itself. It is graffiti, which has an anti-establishment, underground, hardcore, marginal, young, male, angst association to it. But yarn graffiti uses, well, yarn and other fiber material, which has more of a domestic, soft feel to it. Some lovingly and mockingly call it granny graffiti. Like all public art, whether we're referring to unauthorized formats bastardized under the name graffiti or the official kind that is commissioned for thousands of dollars, yarn bombing does impose a particular aesthetic onto an environment that maybe appreciated by some but not appeal to everyone. Yet, it is perhaps the most environmentally friendly graffiti because it can easily be removed with a pair of scissors with no damage left behind.





Is there a known history of how this yarn bombing movement came to be?

Yarn Bombing became more visible in the USA in the last few years when groups such as "Knitta, Please" and "Jaffa Girls" took to the streets and Olek, who insists she's an artist not a yarn bomber, took her crochet work to the bull street front of the Wall Street and to art galleries but I'm guessing it's been around as long as people figured they could mark their own presence and/or enhance their environment with fiber materials.

How did 18th Street Yarn Bombing originate?

Yarn Bombing 18th has emerged out of Fig Knit On, a yarn bombing event organized by the Arroyo Arts Collective on Figueroa St. in Highland Park in October 2010. Upon participating in Fig Knit-on, I invited Heather Hoggan, the co-president of the Arroyo Arts Collective, to yarn bomb 18th Street, where my studio is and organized this event in collaboration. And so far it looks like Yarn Bombing 18th will surely lead to many future collaborations in many forms and formats.



What was the best part about the experience?

I really enjoyed the process and the sense of community it brought about. We put together a [website](#), a [Facebook group](#) and put out a call for participation back in January but had no idea we were going to get so much response. Our orientation meeting back in February was widely attended, my studio and the hallway was full, standing room only. We even got some international inquiries and decided to accept those as well. We got unsolicited support in the form of yarn from Art Garage and Crystal Palace Yarn, which was much appreciated by the participants. We held monthly stitch and bitch meetings in my studio at the 18th Street Arts Center and also at another location in Highland Park. Some learned how to knit or crochet,

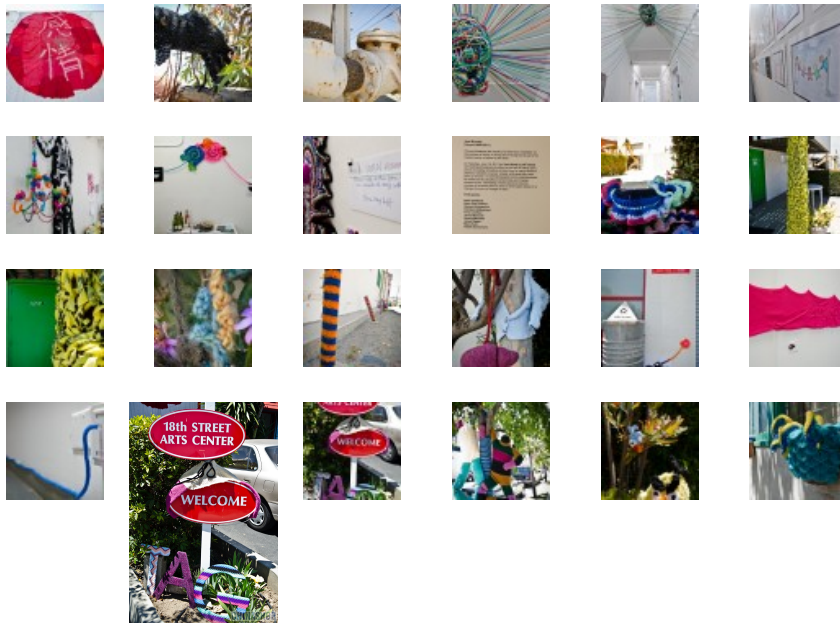
materials, tips and ideas were exchanged and the synergy of those meetings resulted in two projects even before Yarn Bombing 18th. Right after the Japanese disaster, a group of us put together a 12' knit red circle with the Japanese characters "empathy" written on it and it went up on a building at Little Tokyo and we also did another group yarn bomb on Wilshire, in front of Craft and Folk Art Museum. So, Yarn Bombing 18th, which started it all, then in effect became out 3rd group effort together.



What's the next phase of yarn bombing that you guys have planned?

We will resume our monthly meetings at CAFAM, which is more of a central meeting place for all. We plan to yarn bomb our cars on August 6th, near MOCA where Art on the Streets is closing that weekend. Heather Hoggan and Amy Caterina Hill are putting together a [knit/ crocheted forest](#) at Avenue 50 Studios in Highland Park in November 12. Pertev Emre Tastaban [Street Arts Istanbul](#) expressed interest to collaborate on a future event here or there in Istanbul, Turkey.

For more information on Yarn Bombing and to learn about future events, visit: <http://yarnbombing18th.weebly.com>





Share / Save    


4.67 (12 votes)

Related Posts



[Confessions of a Yarn Bomber](#)



[The History of Graffiti and Street Art Exhibition at MOCA](#)



[You Call Yourself An Artist? Street Art At Maximillian Gallery](#)



[Behind The Curtain: The Chicago Street Art Show](#)



[The New Wave of "Public Arts"](#)

Tags: 18th Street, 2011, Arroyo Arts Collective, Art, Art Garage, Arzu Arda Kosar, CAFAM, crochet, Crystal Palace, Dustin Downing, Graffiti, Heather Hoggan, Highland Park, Jaffa Girls, Japan, MOCA, Nicole Pajer, Street Arts Istambul, Tasaban, Turkey, Urban Art, Yarn Bombing

⌵