

Crafting a Better Future

"Yarnstorming (also known as yarnbombing): the art of enhancing a public place or object with graffiti knitting"

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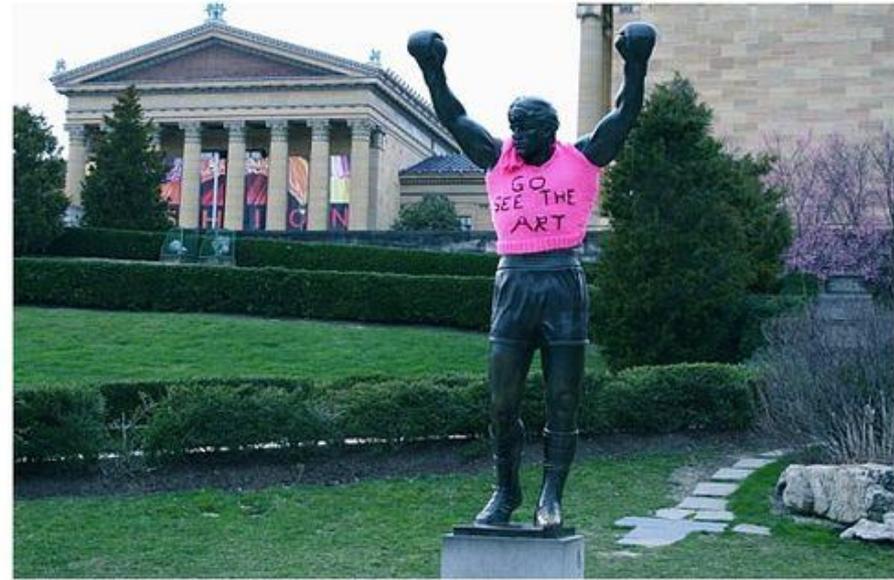
Magda Sayeg: the "mother of yarn bombing"

Yarn Bombed homage to Banksy by Agata Olek



Jessie Hemmons of Ishknits (Philadelphia, US)

*Yarnbombing
the Rocky
Statue in
Philadelphia*



Perelman Building, Philadelphia Museum of Art: curator commissioned layered swags to resemble very large, brightly coloured window valances.



Yarn bombed bike racks by Graffiti Grannies

Yarn bombed lion by Bournemouth & Poole Stitch n' Bitch



Knit the City (London):

- Deadly Knitshade
- The Fastener
- Lady Loop
- Shorn-a The Dead
- Knitting Ninja



Half Sick of Stitching (part of Tate Loud at Tate Britain, 2012)

Inspired by John William Waterhouse's oil-on-canvas and Tennyson's poem *Lady of Shalott*, made from hand-knitted cord

Why Yarn Bomb? Responses from Knit the City:

- Visibility: “It **takes a woolly hold on forgotten public spaces and gives them soul.**”
- Ownership: “It **treats the whole world as an art gallery. It encourages others to bring their own city to life in ways only they can imagine.**”
- After all **a city without citizens is just an empty shell of a place with no life at all.**
- Unleashing **our handmade art** on the world, makes us (and others) happy and **brings something to life that wasn't there before.** Put an 8-metre giant knitted squid on a statue of the father of modern biology, or a giant cosy on a phonebox under the paranoid gaze of CCTV, and see how it makes you feel. Go on. We'll wait here... See?
- There's **a bubbling love of being alive** behind our street art. Stony-faced and outraged art has its place, but **life is also beautiful, enchanting, heart-squeezingly graceful and all kinds of weird.** Consider it a stitched shove that whispers “Wake up! The world is a mad and marvellous place and we all get to live in it.”
- Yes, we *are* **women** who are very **passionate about our beliefs.** Like all artists, we have **strong opinions and grand ideas** in the tangles of our brains. But we're not screaming them through our stitching. Our street art doesn't work like that. And where would the fun be if it did?
- Change, and making the world a better place, can be done with a grin instead of a grimace, a whisper instead of a bellow. **Our art**, whether you like it or not, **changes the way people look at their world** and it gets people talking. How it changes your world it is up to you.
- That's really our point. You shouldn't need to be told what to see in our sneaky stitching. It's your mind and you see the world like no one else does. So what do you see?

Start thinking. We'll keep on knitting.

The Tables Turned

Up! up! my Friend, and quit your books;
Or surely you'll grow double:
Up! up! my Friend, and clear your looks;
Why all this toil and trouble?

The sun above the mountain's head,
A freshening lustre mellow
Through all the long green fields has spread,
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife:
Come, hear the woodland linnet,
How sweet his music! on my life,
There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark! how blithe the throstle sings!
He, too, is no mean preacher:
Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless—
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;
Our meddling intellect
Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things:—
We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art;
Close up those barren leaves;
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives.

William Wordsworth, *Lyrical Ballads* (1798),

Why?

When I think about some of my favorite things to look at, I tend to gravitate toward structures that are deteriorating or in a state of disrepair. And I always tend to find a relationship between the structural environment and the socio-cultural state of the neighborhood. And then I think about the empathic and nurturing nature of knitting and handcrafted objects. And this makes me want to cover these crumbling structures in knitting, to reflect my hope for the neighborhood and those within it. My dream would be to cover an entire abandoned home in brightly colored knitting with the help of youth or individuals with an invested interest in the area.