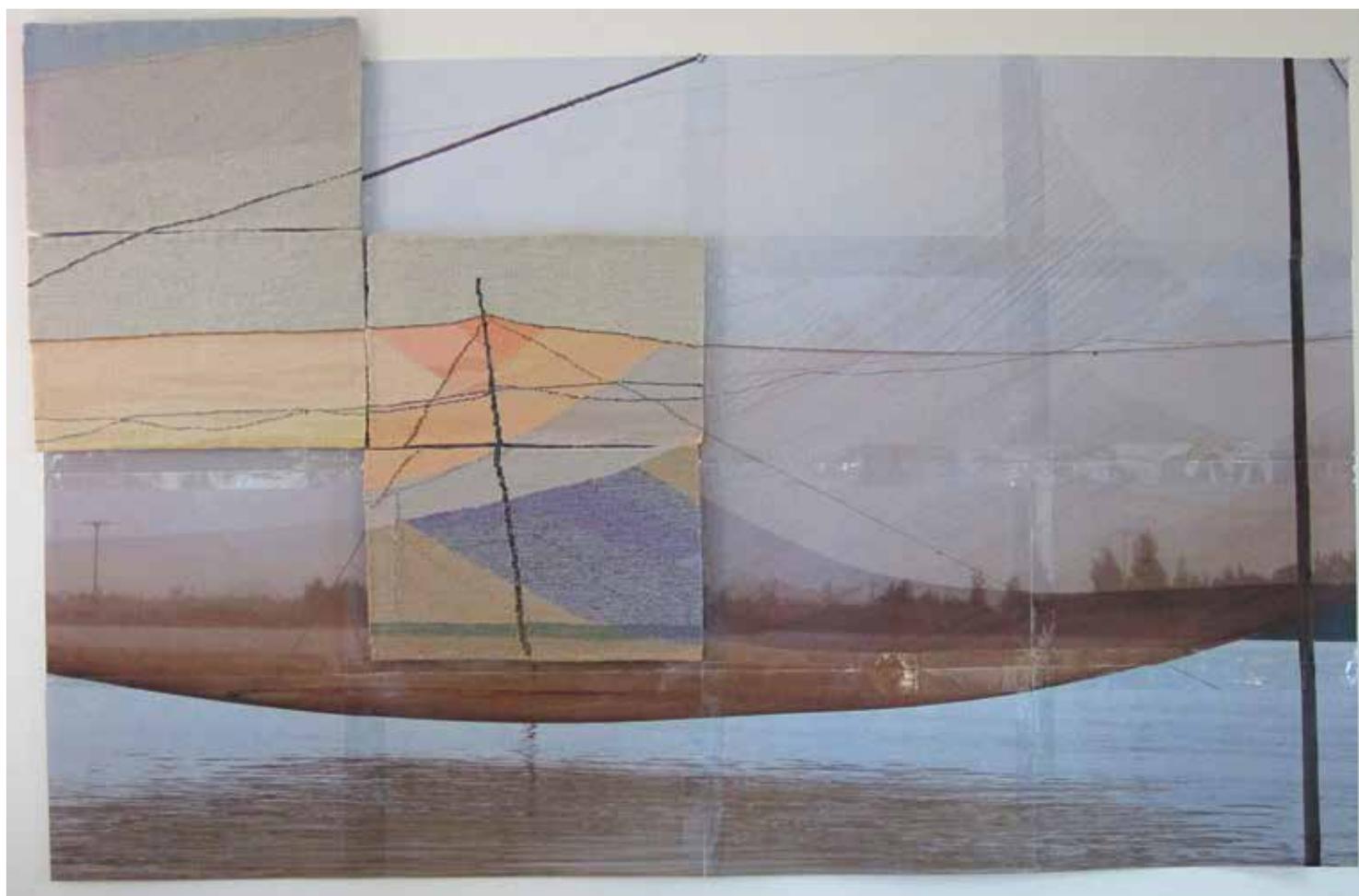
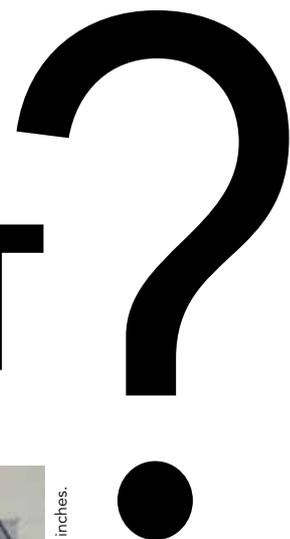


what  
makes it

ART



Inge Norgaard; Nets3; photocopy of own photo taken in Vietnam. Small tapestries mounted on top of image; 40 x 60 x 1 inches. Courtesy of Northwest Designer Craftsmen.

Inge Norgaard's piece in *Reaching Beyond* is a weaving about a woven item — a net. That, in itself, is a witty idea: contemporary in its self-reference and in its sheer ambition.

The work is based on a photograph the artist took in Vietnam. A grid of woven panels illustrate part of the snapshot; the rest of the image is supplied by a grid of photo copies.

As a viewer, I initially strained to get information from this compilation: what is in this landscape? Only a wonderful "nothingness" — sky and water, mostly the same blue-grey; the horizon, a blurry dark line without much distinction. We focus instead on the net-generated abstraction amidst this large sense of space. The net is stretched over sky and water... it's barely discernible...almost a veil. The net's edges, overlaps, and poles fracture the visual field, creating opportunities in the tapestry for subtly shifting areas of color. Woven, wavering lines cross the tapestry with the delicacy of a lightly drawn pencil line and connect with the faint lines in the photocopies. This, along with the grid structure, tie the woven and photo imagery together.

The tapestry panels can stand alone as satisfying pieces. (See IngeNorgaard.com for the entire Net series — with and without photocopy backgrounds.) By giving us the photocopies, the artist is not only expanding our view, she's letting us in on her source and her process. Weavers often use an image taped behind their warp threads to guide their weaving. They are used to seeing weaving and paper image together.

I called Inge to ask about the tape, barely visible on my computer, holding the paper grid together. Inge said that while exposed tape is outside the canon of usual art practices, it is enjoyable to her for exactly that reason. Plus, the archival tape subtly emphasizes the grid. It works thematically as another transparent net. It echoes the casualness of the taped image behind the warp threads.

What makes Net art is the pleasure it provokes aesthetically and intellectually. Inge's choice of imagery (rich in visual and metaphorical layers), her aesthetic sensibility (involving sensitive line and sublime color), her grand risk-taking in how she portrayed her subject — all give the viewer an opportunity to explore. It provides an absorbing experience of looking, requiring both eye and mind.

- Lois Harbaugh, President  
Northwest Designer Craftsmen

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