





The coincidence allowed me to see that there was this unadorned and accessible structure that I could offer to others, this synthesis of half-smiling and walking. That said, when I've invited others for a walking, it isn't with me *per se*. Rather, we meet at a designated place, and I share some ideas about both half-smiling and walking, and then we set off in different directions—walking separately in space, together in time—and then meet again to share lunch at a vegan restaurant. And lunch is free of cost for the participants, reversing the common cultural-capitalist formula. While I'm emphatic that these walkings are not artworks, they have been organized under the auspices of various exhibitions, and I appreciate that they are ambiguous in this way—it fits in neatly with the understatedness of the activity.



*Mantle*, 2007. Image courtesy of Galerie Nordenhake

**BDG:** Sound also plays a significant role in your work, both in playing instruments and recording. Were you originally a musician? What kind of training did you have?

**hm:** Hmm . . . I have no formal training. Maybe my first guide was a Thelonious Monk vinyl record that I chose to borrow from the library when I was 11 or 12, because of the photograph of him on the cover—I think it somehow registered that he was foremost a listener, and that this is what a great musician is. Maybe I could feel, even though I didn't *know* it at the time, that he was taking away notes [from chords] rather than playing them straight or augmenting them. Also especially formative were American Folkways LPs. Same thing probably—evidences of unpretentious and humble dedication without fixation. These days I play an echo harp, also known as a tremolo harmonica, not to make music *per se*; just as an amplifier of breathing.

**BDG:** What part do textiles play in your work? Do you situate yourself in the continuum of artists who weave and do you see a gendering to that aspect? I am thinking of Annie Albers, of course, and others. Or for you does the weaving resonate as more gender neutral?

**hm:** I find it moving that textiles precede texts by thousands of years. And though I love Anni Albers, she was more of an inventor and I'm more of an anti-inventor, if anything. My relationship with weaving is not gendered; the myth of Penelope doesn't resonate with me. For example, living in Kerala, South India in 2000–01, my main occupation was figuring out the math and constructing a rather large floor sculpture titled *Sky-wreck*, which is alternately a scale model of a piece of the sky that has fallen or a patch for a hole in the sky, with the presumption that the sky is a geodesic dome. It is made of indigo-dyed cotton, and the material was produced by a collective in Auroville, in Tamil Nadu, where the small group of weavers were all men.

Some of the Zen ancestors recognized weaving as relevant. In the *Mountains and Rivers Sutra* Dogen writes of the horizontal and vertical, which I read as a description of the simultaneity of relative and absolute reality of the fundamental sublime. Hongzhi had been a bit more romantic

about it, describing brocade, gold, and jade. If I had the opportunity to offer a verse responding to his verse for the first case in the *Book of Equanimity*, it would be: Often walking, loom and shuttle.



Detail of *Sky-wreck*, 2001. Photo by Tom Van Eynde

**BDG: What are you currently working on and where do you see your practice heading?**

**hm:** Can't resist the reply: toward death and hopefully the deathless. I am moving in what would be measured as smaller circles, while they feel more infinite. I am often walking forward and sometimes stepping, literally, backward, and recently have been thinking about figuratively moving to the side (no doubt that bright idea found me through weaving.) I'm increasingly inclined not to travel by air. I'm committed to being in the world, not as an explorer or a researcher but as a witness, especially listening to the non-dominant, non-humans.

And I am at the very beginning of what could be a 2–3 year project, which is to weave through all the “leftover” fiber that I have in my studio, which is mostly mill-spun linen, following the chance-based parameters that have seemed appropriate to work with since I moved back to California in 2016. The sequence is ordered according to the color spectrum—who am I to know better than a rainbow about how to proceed?

**BDG: Is there anything else you would like to add?**

**hm:** As always, I'd like to add nothing, yet I seem to be adding something. Thank you very much.