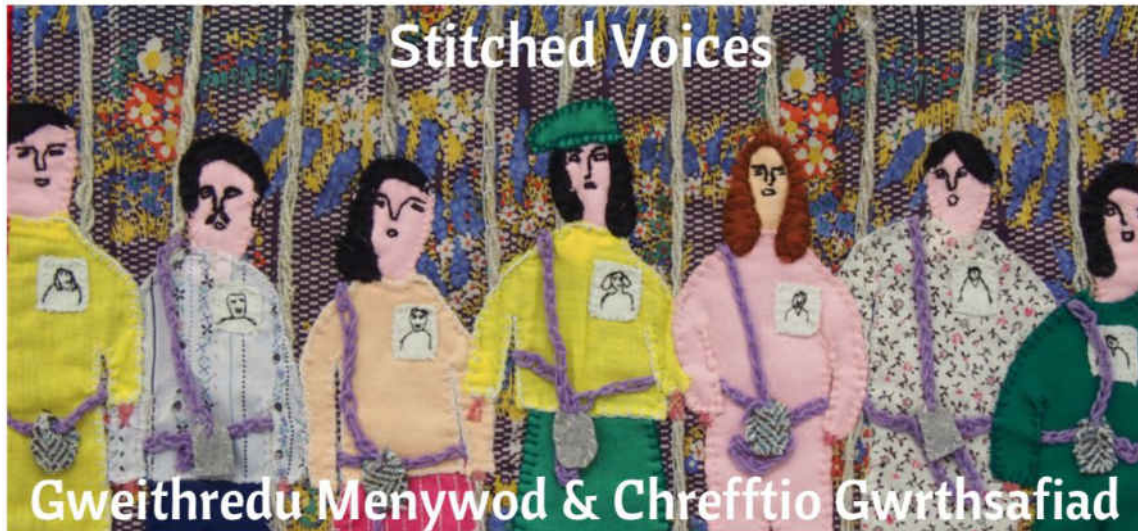


Lleisiau wedi eu Pwytho



Women's Activism & Crafting Resistance

On May 5, 2017, a roundtable entitled “Stitched Voices: Women’s Activism and Crafting Resistance” discussed the ways in which the practice of creating textiles is linked to the creation of spaces of resistance, communication, and discussion for women. Organized by myself and Lydia Cole, the idea behind the roundtable had been to bring some of the makers whose textiles were part of the *Stitched Voices* exhibition in the Aberystwyth Arts Centre into conversation with local activists as well as staff and students of the Department of International Politics.

Our speakers came from far and wide. Thalia Campbell, a Wales-based activist who has been making textile protest banners since the early 1980s, travelled to Aberystwyth from Pembroke. Cordelia Rizzo, a scholar and activist who is part of the *Embroidering for Peace* initiative in Mexico¹, joined us from Monterrey via Skype. Irene Cuogo, the initiator of the guerrilla knitting project *April's Tree*, came to us from Machynlleth, a small town about an hour away from Aberystwyth. Finally, Vivien Geuter, who did her PhD on the gendered history of embroidery in 17th-century Britain at Aberystwyth University in the 1990s, had just recently moved back here from Cardiff. The event was chaired by Lucy Taylor, a Senior Lecturer in Latin American Studies at the Department of International politics.

Prior to the roundtable, we had given our speakers a list of questions that they could address, but should by no means feel bound by: How does the creation of textile open up spaces for dialogue between women? How have these textiles come to be used in women’s resistance? Is there a gendered aspect to these spaces? – Either in how they are perceived or in what topics are able to be discussed through the textiles?

At the roundtable itself, the perspectives and experiences that Cordelia, Thalia, Irene and Vivien shared with us complemented each other and together led to a powerful conversation

¹ For more information on *Bordando por la Paz*/Embroidering for Peace and its links with the *Stitched Voices* exhibition, see http://cain.ulster.ac.uk/conflicttextiles/mediafiles/902_Bordando-por-la-Paz-update-for-RB-BD-010517-comp.pdf.

about textiles as a means for women to express anger, grief, and protest. In this way, the roundtable itself became a space of communication and resistance for the (not only, but predominantly) female textile makers, activists, and scholars on the panel and in the audience.



The roundtable: Cordelia via Skype, Irene in the front row, Vivien, Lucy, and Thalia in the back row (with their back turned to us). (Photo: Christine Andrä)



Thalia with one of her protest banners (photo: Christine Andrä)



Bordamos por la Paz Gales/Embroidering for Peace Wales as part of the Stitched Voices Exhibition (photo: Dani House)



April's Tree, Machynlleth (photo: Irene Cuogo)



April's Tree, Machynlleth (photo: Irene Cuogo)