

from William Easton, "Shifting Perceptions." *Fiberarts*, Summer 1995

Any number of examples might be given, but the work of photographer Natalie Bookchin is exemplary. In her embroidered photographic works, such as **landscape #1** and **American sampler**, she deftly and caustically directs our attention to the superficiality of the press photograph.

In these brilliantly acerbic pieces, Bookchin has adopted the techniques of fiber art. And whether she is aware of it or not, the content of her work places her in line with dominant trends in fiber art. The use of "domesticated" practices, reclaimed and barbed with personal politics to confront the superficiality of the dominant power structures, is something that has been a concern for fiber artists for well over a decade.

Although the motivation for her subversively stitched samplers may be based in the history of photography, her work can be usefully placed beside that of Elaine Reichek, Aminah Robinson, Christine LoFaso, or Darrel Morris. And as much as a discipline such as photography may demand its specificity, the cultural capital of a time is always spent more wisely. Yet, despite conceptual and technical similarities with fiber art, Bookchin finds her work in a different set of spaces, in the pages of the other magazines, and reviewed by another set of critical voices. She is also able to avoid any pigeonholing and shifts back to her designated discipline without much fear of being the returning prodigal.



Television picture shows a bridge that Iraq said was destroyed by bombing in Baghdad on Tuesday night.

*Natalie Bookchin's  
landscape #1;  
embroidery; 4-1/2 by  
6-1/2 inches. Photo:  
courtesy the artist.*