



Stitches and Sutures

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Textile membranes are the canvas and the supporting medium for the questions and investigations with which I am concerned in the project *Stitches and Sutures*. The point of departure of the project was a disturbance in my own body's sensory capacity provoked by a relapse of multiple sclerosis (MS). For decades I have concerned myself with representations of the body and corporeality. The sensory disturbances connected with this disease constitute an irritation and have brought about a perspective change in me. The discovery that actual body perceptions can be similar to many embodied in my earlier works has caused different questions concerning body awareness, body memory and the corporeal unconscious to arise.

At issue are representations of the senses, with focus being placed on the perception of touch, and also the question of how subjective feelings can be visualized. One of the challenges posed by the investigation is to determine whether I can use Jacques Lacan's *quilting points*¹ as a method. This notion signifies a process whereby the past is studded retroactively with stitches, as it were, as if with needle and thread at larger and smaller intervals: many *quilting points* can constitute a *suture*, which serves diachronically to produce meaning. Drawing on both the Freudian notion of *afterwardsness* and that of the Lacanian *suture*, and through the application of artistic strategies, I am also trying to address the question of why my somatosensory disorder feels so "textile". Is it my own work that gives a language to my perception of the paresthesias? Does what one feels in one's body become bodily perception only when it acquires a connection to language?

Observing how other artists deal with self-perception, vulnerability and loss supports me in my efforts to address the questions that arise and provides me with a system of reference.

The aim of the project *Stitches and Sutures* is to produce a visual, material catalog of questions. *Membranes* – as permeable layers, as compact, delimiting skins, as porous tissue, as smooth surfaces, as canvases, as pages of a book, as notepads, as fabrics, as coverings for the body, as projection surfaces – become the carriers and the materialization of the process of my grappling with various questions. I work body structures into the textile fabric, and I perceive the structural alteration of the fibers as bodily expression – a perception based on my perception of my own body: penetrating layers of textiles with needle and thread, stitching and backstitching to create seams, displacing threads, disentangling woven fabric, creating blank spaces, stretching new lengths of thread and establishing and dissolving linkages.

¹ Jacques Lacan's point de capiton is variously translated in English as "quilting point", "anchoring point" or "upholstery button".