

INTERNATIONAL VALCELLINA AWARD – 7TH EDITION

by Renata Pompas

The seventh edition of the Contemporary Textile Art Valcellina International Competition, promoted by Le Arti Tessili Association, with the Friuli Venezia-Giulia Autonomous Region's and Province's, plus the Town of Maniago's support was inaugurated rich in works, shining in colors, and full of driving spirit.

The jury selected 46 oeuvres out of 123 applications coming from 27 countries: Albania, Argentina, Austria Canada, Korea, Croatia, Finland, France, Japan, Greece, United Kingdom, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, Holland, Poland, Portugal, Moldova, Russia, Serbia, Spain, USA, Taiwan, Turkey, Hungary.

The competition theme was *Border Line/Linea di Confine*. The three prized competitors have interpreted it with different results: Japanese Sachiko Kitamura, first prize, in her work *From Memory* evokes the evanescent shape of a woman by manipulating a striped cotton cloth with a highly refined technique. She thins out the fabric and brings the figure to an abstract form in this way making the fabric become a border line between representation and imagination.

Pei-Shan-Wu from Taiwan, second prize, with her work *Hanging Series*, continues her interpretation of ritual coats, and in this edition presents funerary garments as in use in her country. She animates her oeuvres with diaphanous images which represent the border line between life and death.

The border line between nature and culture, femininity and passionate and wild instinct has been presented by American Kaylyn Gerenz who has created a three-dimensional head in the form of a wearable mask, *Everyday She-Wolf*, may be a homage to Clarissa Pinkola Estés's book, *Women Who Run with the Wolves*.

Many have been the artists who have centered their attention on the human body: an offended, violated, abused body, as in the heartrendering *Contemporary Shroud* by Italian Tiziana Abretti where a light veil of white tulle



Samina Seyed

gathers stains of pain accompanied by real testimony. Another example is the bridled, confined, and measured up body in *Device for the Spatial Form-mating of a Body* by the Italian couple Sofia Vannini and Gemis Luciani. Chia-Jung Hou from Taiwan has built a *Neutral* entity with her startling hermaphrodite face

with long hair, in a painful resistance against an imposed gender identity, in this way underlining the dichotomy between truth and appearance.

A stifled, negated, hidden body under a heavy black chador which dramatically claims freedom in Iran, a border line country, is the photo work by Iranian Samina Seyed, who has made a suggestive performance

during the opening ceremony. Italian Federica Bruni's *Hump (Beautiful Inside)* is a disproportionate, ungraceful, distorted body. She has built a small padded sleeveless flesh colored jacket with an unpleasant projection on the back, in this way altering the human figure in opposition to all aesthetic imperatives while a cascade of paillettes embroidered on the inside asserts a dimension of inner beauty.

A dismountable part of the body is the small sculpture presented by Austrian Brigit Sponer who in her *My Foot* has modelled a close-fitting second textile skin and has reinforced it with copper wires to make it malleable: by opening up the different parts the foot consists of, we have a two-dimensional