



**For Immediate Release:**

Three exhibits connected through the love of letters...

**Gallery 1:** “**Compassion**” an interactive installation by **Lynda Abraham**

**Gallery 2:** “**White & Black**” drawings by **Ivan Gaete**

**Guest Curator Rm:** “**Sampler Stitch**” *curated by Sara Hines*  
textiles by **Vandana Jain, Sarah Browne & Donna Huanca**

**Dates:** **February 17- March 26, 2006**

**Opening Reception:** **Friday, February 17, 8-10pm**

**Hours:** Fri. 3-8, Sat. & Sun. 12-6pm or by appt.

**Contact:** **Dam, Stuhltrager Gallery**  
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**Directions:** L to Lorimer. Exit near token booth. Metropolitan under BQE.  
Left on Marcy. Distance from train: 3 bl

**Like old friends born in the same town, the current exhibits at Dam, Stuhltrager originate from the same place - from alphabet letters, the words they form and meanings they carry. As often happens among childhood buddies, the art founded in the exploration of communication has grown in different directions.**

**“Compassion”** an interactive installation by **Lynda Abraham**

**Textual plans and the machines they build...** Abraham’s mechanical drawings, and the sculptures created from them, explore human interaction as it manifests in social roles of the empowered and those vulnerable to them. In essence, Abraham’s sculptures are “correctional devices” that appeal to our self-help culture, contraptions that invert the status quo and embolden the indefensible.

In “Compassion”, Abraham creates a behavioral science lab, where viewers are asked to wear lab coats to observe her sculpture’s function and it’s effect on participants. The sculpture’s body of pulleys, wheels, cables, seats and metal support structures bind two human subjects together over a water basin. Through video and drawings, viewers witness two people placed in the contraption, face to face, only the tips of their noses touching water. Uncomfortable, each tries to pull their head further from the water, but in doing so (by the design of the device) their partner’s head will be submerged. Each will cause and witness the choking, gagging and struggling of the other. The struggle may continue for a while, as contempt transforms to compassion under the necessity to work together to end further suffering. While not in use, the sculpture itself is a case study in how each of its attributes contributes to altering behavioral patterns.

**“White & Black”** drawings by **Ivan Gaete**

**Physical movement and the philosophic journey of numbers, letters and lines...** Gaete premieres two large diptychs, “White Space- The Root of All Dark” and “Black Space- The Root of All Light”, inaugurating the newest room to open in Dam, Stuhltrager’s renovated expansion. Budding from the paths and pathos of data as it transcends to and from nonsense to clarity, Gaete’s drawings map the abstract process of communication. Reminiscent of the night sky, a calculus teacher’s busy chalkboard, cells dividing under a microscope or an accountant’s figurations at tax time, the drawings are detailed surveys of how knowledge is formed and conveyed. Fleeting and emerging lines, letters, patterns and numbers suggest infinite routes traveled, not a static or single isolated moment.

**“Sampler Stitch”** textiles by **Vandana Jain, Sarah Browne & Donna Huanca** *curated by Sara Hines*

**Letters stitched in time address the present...** The works in this exhibition politicize traditional methods of needlecraft as a means to examine and question prevailing cultural notions of mass morality and collective experience. The stitch sampler dates back to the middle ages whence it began as a necessary and practical tool before the advent of the recorded needlework pattern. The Victorian era ushered in a conservatism of culture along with the rise of the leisure class, and the sampler’s role transformed from purely practical to morally didactic. It became a way to keep the idle hands of young genteel ladies busy as well as a way to instill the glory of God through the practiced stitch of moral and religious aphorisms. This allusion to the “sampler” refers to a cooptation by these artists of the moral vernacular of traditional needlecraft. Likewise, their decidedly hand-crafted works comment on and contrast global corporatism and refer to a localized (and feminized) model of production and distribution. - S. Hines