

## BIG PICTURE

Elliott Zoegy Martin discusses Rowena Dring's practice.

Photography is the starting point of Rowena Dring's landscapes. Seen from a distance, her works appear like paintings, but upon closer examination it becomes apparent that they are stitched fabric over canvas. The artist's working method constantly runs between the mechanical and the digital. Dring digitally captures celebrated sites of Modernist myth and returns to the studio to adapt them with the aid of a computer programme. She then begins, in her words, "swapping cotton for paint", reinterpreting the landscape with a sewing machine. With the highly abstracted and flattened images of her craft technique, Dring underscores the constructed character of those landscapes to demonstrate that these seemingly fresh views are always mediated by a cultural preconception.

Dring mixes the traditional women's work of embroidery and appliqué with the high art of painting, making sewn fabric landscapes stretched over canvas. Yet Dring does not view her work as "blurring the boundaries between art and craft" as much as "addressing the politics of representation". Inspired by Andy Warhol's paint-by-numbers series, Dring uses snapshots taken while travelling, which are then made into a pattern by a computer programme and assembled by a sewing machine. The resulting landscapes merge abstraction and representation, handcraft and digital reproduction, to underscore the cultural framing process present in even the most natural states.

Elliott Zoegy Martin

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Solo exhibitions of Dring's work have been held at the Künstlerverein Malkasten in Düsseldorf; the Ausstellungshalle zeitgenössische Kunst Münster in Münster; Elizabeth Dee in New York; QED Gallery in Los Angeles; and Sies + Høke in Düsseldorf. She has been included in many group shows in Europe and North America, including 'Yöjille' at DA2 Domus Artium 2002 Salamanca, Spain; and in 'Landscape Confection' at the Orange County Museum of Art, organised by the Wexner Center for the Arts in Columbus, Ohio.

Dring's work was recently shown at The Nunnery, London in 'Between Time and Space' curated by Oliver Zubok. It can also be seen in 'Falls the Shadow', a solo show at Galerie der Stadt, Renscheid, Germany during January 2009. Dring studied at Chelsea College of Art and Design and Goldsmiths College. She currently lives and works in Amsterdam.

Big picture is commissioned space to show work. To nominate an artist for inclusion contact [edit@-n.co.uk](mailto:edit@-n.co.uk) with 'Big picture' in the subject box.

Rowena Dring, *Oasis of Muro No 4*,  
stitched fabric over canvas,  
145x160cm, 2007. Photo: Katja Effing

