

Weaving the tapestry of history: Gail Skudera exhibition brings the past to life through textiles

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Photo by Lauren Fox '19

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AUTHORS

Aleni MacKarey

Nestled in the back corner of the Williams Center for the Arts, the Williams Center Gallery sometimes goes unnoticed by Lafayette student traffic. The "Gail Skudera In Time/ Out of time. Woven Photo Collages" exhibit will be displayed up until Feb. 21, though, allowing plenty of time for students to check it out.

The gallery emanates a unique but soothing vibe from its dark charcoal walls, to the simplistic arrangement of the art. Hanging in groups based on shape and size, the pictures of Gail Skudera depict woven, drawn, photo-transfer and collaged works, which have been exhibited frequently since the early 1980s.

Skudera's works are very intriguing because their "fuzzy" nature, created by the different textures, leaves room for viewers to interpret the exact story.

The exhibit offers viewers the opportunity to become familiar with several different art forms combined into one. Skudera combined her love for antique black and white photographs with her painting background, and her training in "traditional textile processes." Looking at her works, you will notice the intentionally uneven mediums, images, and structures, which form each collage. The methods Skudera uses to create each work range from weaving structures with photo-transferred images, to on- and off-loom weaving methods, to "paint, washes and glazes, thread and collected objects, as well as non-traditional printing processes." Most of Skudera's works portray a human figure in an environment. Both the figure and the environment, however, are distorted by the mix of mediums, forming a beautiful and individual final product.

One theme of Skudera's works is the passage of time. She accentuates the old photographs with modern mediums, creating a striking juxtaposition.

Skudera has an MFA in Fiber and a BFA in Textile Printing and Design from Northern Illinois University. She is the recipient of several grants and fellowships, including a Visual Artist Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts and a New York State Council on the Arts Decentralization Grant. She has exhibited her pieces across the country.

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