



Installation view at Barometer Gallery showing *Child Picking Cotton in Uzbekistan* (right) and one out of three tapestries titled *At the Shore of Amygdala (Seeing What I Want to See)* (left). Photo: Ian Hobbs

*Weaving Labour*, an exhibition title meaning both my labour as a weaver and that the actual weavings that are based on images of global textile labour, was proposed by Professor of Crafts Jessica Hemmings in response to the exhibition invitation received from Barometer Gallery in Sydney. The solo exhibition included four hand-woven tapestries in rya-technique: *Child Picking Cotton in Uzbekistan* from 2017, and *At the Shore of Amygdala (Seeing What I Want to See)* triptych from 2015.

As an artist weaver and PhD candidate in Craft at the Academy of Design and Crafts (HDK) I began in 2016 practice-based research in hand-weaving that investigates low resolution pictures in fluffy overgrown pixels woven in a traditional manner with wool-piles on a linen warp. Currently titled "Rya Weaving: Where does the picture start?", the project's written text and rya weaving occupy a personal perspective, structured around interests in the subjects of labour, history and time-consuming activity. The *Weaving Labour* exhibition brought together work completed prior to beginning my PhD studies, as well as one of my most recent weavings. The opportunity to exhibit the work internationally offered a place where my work could be viewed in a different geographic context and by a new community of artists and educators.

Barometer Gallery is an artist run exhibition space with an emphasis on fibre arts, as well as showcasing photography and jewellery and initiates exhibitions from time to time in an effort to address ideas and create dialogue about craft and art and the

object making processes. The 2017 exhibition invitation coincided with the inaugural Sydney Craft week which described itself as: *bringing together the creative diversity of Sydney's contemporary craft community, the inaugural Sydney Craft Week runs from Friday 6 to Sunday 15 October 2017. An initiative of the Australian Design Centre, this ten-day festival celebrates the beauty of the hand-made and the pleasure of making. Not limited to one material or mode of making, the program features a range of exhibitions, workshops, talks and open studios.* <https://www.sydneycraftweek.com>



At the shore of Amygdala (*Seeing What I Want to See*), triptych, 2015. Photo: Ian Hobbs

On Saturday afternoon of the 7<sup>th</sup> of October Jessica Hemmings and I held a public talk as a part of *Sydney Craft Week*, about the woven work and about contemporary craft practices in Scandinavia. Questions from the audience focused on the nature of artistic practice within the Swedish PhD model, perhaps because several members of the audience were current or recent PhD candidates both from Australia and England. The craft historian Grace Cochrane contributed to the discussion by reminding the audience of the very different values and structures of PhD studies between Australia, New Zealand, Asia, Britain, Canada and Europe. Surprise was voiced by the audience that the term craft continued to be identified within education, as the term has fallen out of favor within Australian education, but not with practitioners.



The exhibition *Weaving Labour* was later on also found mentioned in *The Design Writer* blog: <http://thedesignwriter.com.au> - in the post *Thinking about Making*, *Sydney Craft Week*.



Gallery view of Barometer Gallery. Photo: Ian Hobbs