

My response to the top floor of the disused spinning mill at Salts was firstly what a huge and beautiful empty architectural space, and then the imagination takes over, and history floods in: noise, smells, machines and above all people, their entire working lives, lived out in one place, Saltaire, with its philanthropic, support/living/work system.

Visually I was particularly interested in the floor, the large grey flagstones, irregular sized rectangles carefully fitted together to make this indestructible industrial surface. How these stones were fitted and the water stains from a leaking roof were inspiring, so it seemed appropriate to work towards something at ground level to be walked around observed from above.

## DIANA HARRISON {UK}

Using recycled handkerchiefs (that had been in everyday use until paper took over), was the initial idea. I started collecting from friends, family, vintage and charity shops, market stalls and two were picked up off the street. They are all different but all cotton and square. Men's, women's, children's, each with its own past; used, washed, stained, worn or boxed, kept for special occasions, given as gifts, hand embroidered or monogrammed.

Once they were all dyed black they came together, lost their individuality apart from the different qualities and weights of cotton from very fine voile to plain sheeting cotton. Whilst printing and bleaching out the dye the details, weave, initials, embroidery and edges all came back to life; each handkerchief was worked as a separate unit.

Whilst stitching them together, by hand, with a loose fishbone stitch and in keeping with the quality of the original items, the size of each handkerchief dictated where they fitted in the whole, and the subsequent composition of the piece takes on a random growing quality that could be added to in the future.

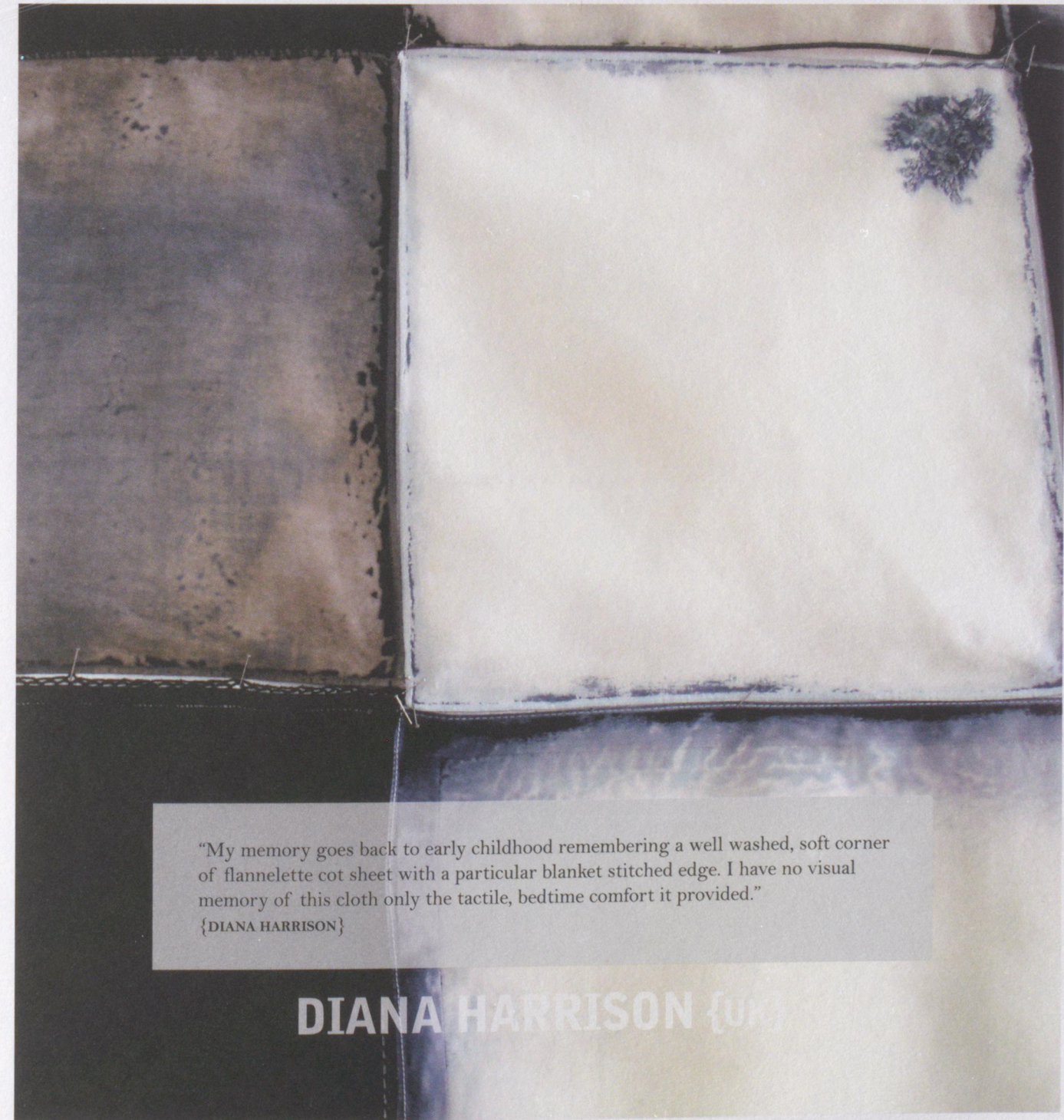
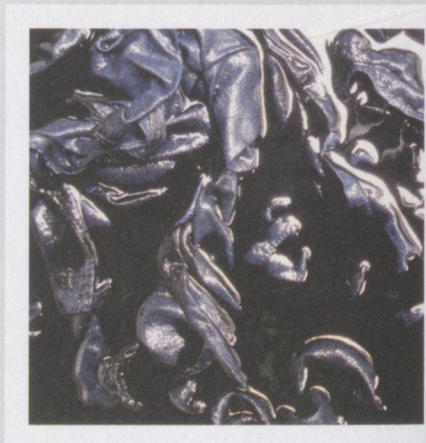
**TITLE:** HANDKERCHIEFS

**INSTALLATION:** approx 4 x 2.5 metres

**MATERIALS:** recycled cotton handkerchiefs







**CURATOR'S NOTES:** "The work Diana Harrison has created for this exhibition is atypical. She is known internationally for her ground-breaking work using quilting techniques, yet for cloth and memory - a subject which seems tailor-made for a quilter - the only reference to quilts is a visual one in the patchwork layout of handkerchiefs. The ubiquitous paper hankie has rendered the cloth handkerchief as almost a memory, but back in the heydays of production at the mill, a 'proper' cloth handkerchief would have been a luxury item, only for use on Sundays and special days. The rest of the time it would have been a piece of rag or nothing. The second-hand handkerchiefs Diana Harrison has collected, dyed and sewn together were all once prized possessions, and through her attention they are now precious again. Laid out on the floor, as they are in the exhibition, they are like so many memorials to the unknown owner/worker." {LESLEY MILLAR}

"My memory goes back to early childhood remembering a well washed, soft corner of flannelette cot sheet with a particular blanket stitched edge. I have no visual memory of this cloth only the tactile, bedtime comfort it provided."  
{DIANA HARRISON}

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