

Making Space: Do Ho Suhâ??s Contemporary Sewing and Embroidery

## Description



Do Ho Suh, 2016

Light, airy and weightless, Korean-born contemporary artist Do Ho Suhâ??s ephemeral architectural constructs are made from great swathes of sheer fabric and thread. He reconstructs the many different places he has lived around the world, recreating distinctive features, rooms and even staircases of places he has passed through during his nomadic life. Do Ho calls these artworks â??suitcase homes,â?? because, despite how much space they can take up, and how much they can command a gallery space, they can be easily packed and folded away. But he also makes a nod towards his life as a traveller with no fixed home. He says, â??I see life as a passageway, with no fixed beginning or destination. We tend to focus on the destination all the time and forget about the in-between spaces.â?•



Do Ho Suh, Almost Home, 2018

Born in Korea in 1962, Do Ho went to live in the United States when he was 29 years old. Later, he and his family relocated to Europe for several years. Now the artist spends his time moving between New York, London, and Seoul, Korea. This nomadic lifestyle became the launchpad for the artistâ??s â??suitcase homesâ??, which express themes around fragility, impermanence and transience. But ultimately there is a distinctly Korean quality to the artistâ??s work, from the fabric he works with to the stitching techniques used to make them.

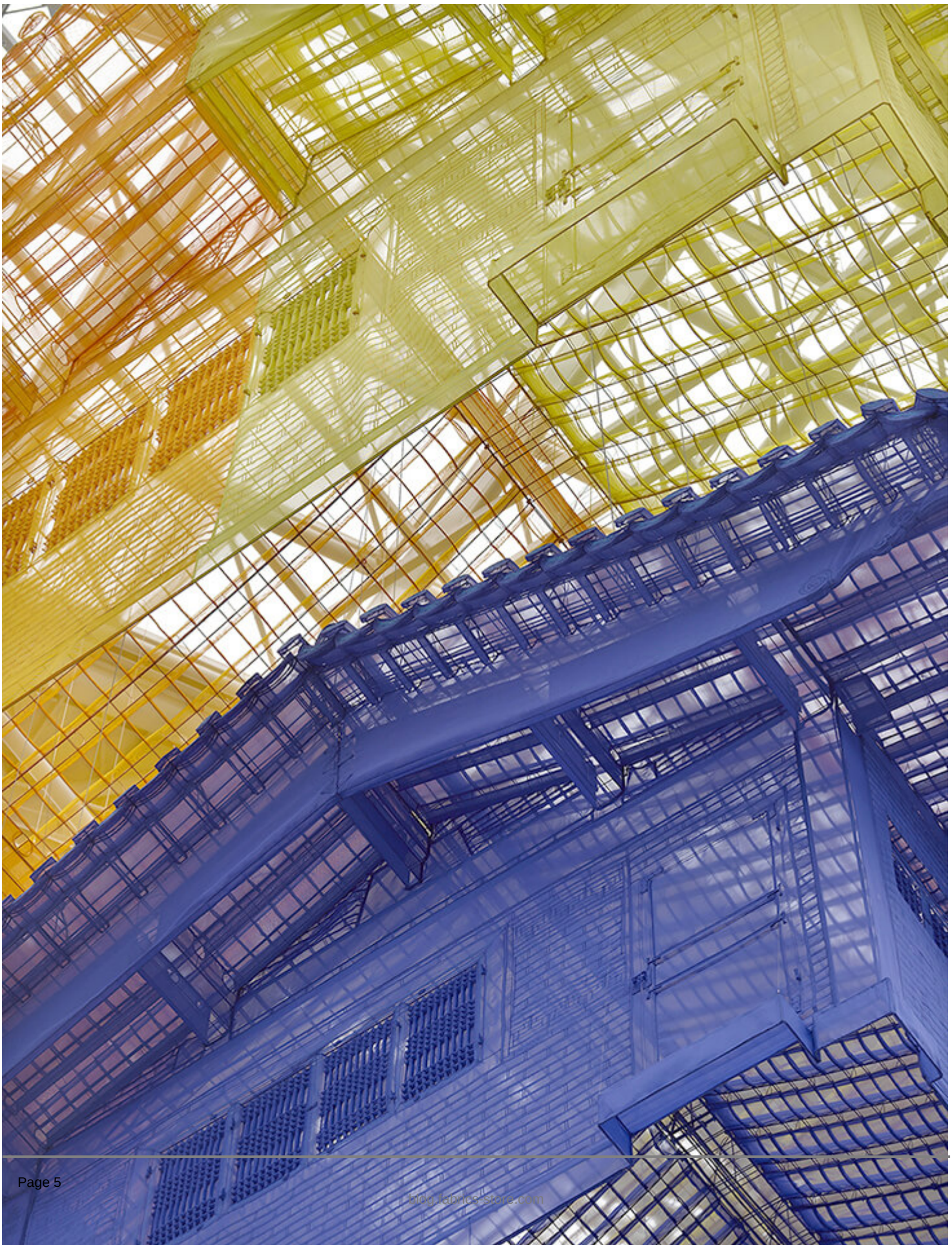


Doh Ho Suh, Passage, 2016, Architectâ??s Newspaper

To make his large installations Do Ho works with a cheap, lightweight and translucent type of coloured fabric usually reserved for Korean summer wear. When this sheer fabric is spread out across large gallery spaces as architectural constructs, the end result is a ghostly, spectral relic of a home that only exists now in the artistâ??s memory. A rich array of jewel toned colours are an important feature in the artistâ??s work, aiding in their emotional impact. Pastel hues, for example, have a melancholic, nostalgic quality, while vivid, intense shades suggest radiance and optimism. All these constructions are entirely hand-stitched by Do Ho and his team of dedicated assistants. It can sometimes take them months to perfect every last detail, from light fittings to wood panelling and door handles, and the traditional hand sewing techniques they use for this painstaking work are learned from years of training with Korean artisans.



Doh Ho Suh, Home within Home, 2019, Polyester fabric, stainless steel

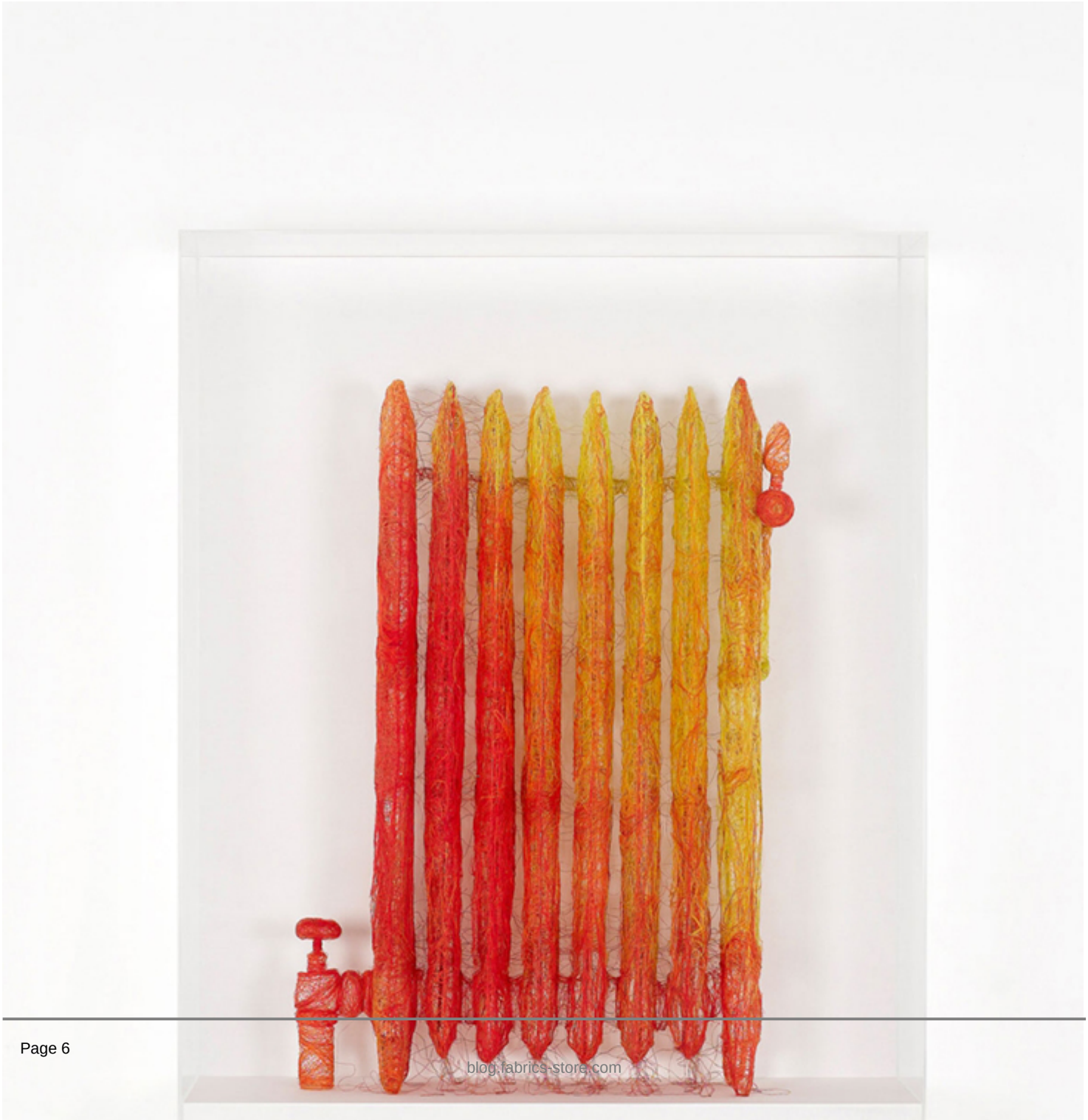




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Doh Ho Suh, Home within Home, 2019, Polyester fabric, stainless steel

Do Ho also applies his stitching skills to a series of small sculptural works that are made entirely from thread. These smaller artworks recreate certain nostalgic features from the artistâ??s former homes, such as radiators, doors, telephones and oven hobs, quotidian fragments of place that can carry the weight of a personâ??s life inside them. Tangles of thread seem to swarm together like hand-drawn lines in these fragile, lightweight sculptures, and they look as though they could unravel and fall to pieces at any moment.



Doh Ho Suh, ScaledBehaviour_runOn(radiator_10.7.1), 2021, Polyester thread, resin

Along with his room-sized installations, Do Ho also creates works on paper using a variety of techniques, while continuing to explore the same conceptual themes around history, place, memory and loss. Many of the artistâ??s drawings are made by carefully embedding colourful strands of thread into hand-made paper, echoing the laborious stitching processes that go on in his larger sculptures and installations. But these drawings are far looser and more spontaneous than the artistâ??s three-dimensional work, revealing an intimate world of thoughts and feelings. They document elusive moments in time, showing us fragments of meandering staircases, multi-layered faces and overlapping bodies, which come apart at the seams and form vast pools of tangled, gloriously expressive colour. They echo the same sentiment as all the artistâ??s work, acting as relics of a time now gone, that only exists in ghostly, half-forgotten memories.

**CATEGORY**

1. EMBROIDERY

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