

while I write this text – it may well change. A simply gathered form, Stockwell proposes using elements of maps for parts of this largely abstract piece, considering this work to be the point where her past and current work meet. In earlier paper installations and sculptures she created environments for the most part of tissue, with drapes that joined the ceiling with piles of the folded paper on the floor. She also employed cardboard



Susan Stockwell in her studio 2008 (photo Heini Schneebel)

of differing textures and thicknesses, piled high; and she sometimes used tea-bag paper or coffee filters in works that were either abstract or figurative. In fact, one of her first 'dresses' was made from stained coffee filters.

Stockwell's discovery of rice paper has without doubt enthused her in creating these new pieces. Her excitement at placing them in the Lobby of One Canary Square lies in the absolute difference between the formality of the space

and the apparent frippery she has chosen to place within it. The contrast between this environment, strong in colour and severity of line, and the absolute white and erratic nature of her interventions has informed her intention.

On the day of installation, having assembled the characters for her tableaux and their supporting cast, Stockwell's work is still to be completed. Dresses, quilt, an assembly of frills, and paper ready to be used as drapes, are brought to the Lobby to finish her *Paper Tiger*.

**Ann Elliott** June 2008



Highland Dress 2008 (detail)

### Susan Stockwell

Susan Stockwell was born in Manchester and studied at Sheffield Hallam University 1985–88 and at the Royal College of Art, London 1991–93. She has exhibited extensively in both solo and group exhibitions since 1997. To support her work, Stockwell taught in art schools in Britain and the United States until 2007, since when she has been devoting her time to her own work.

In addition to making installations, Stockwell works in drawing, collage and sculpture. Her materials are readily available, sometimes recycled, and include rubber, paper, card, domestic and industrial disposable products with which we are all familiar. From used teabag papers, to coffee filters and even toilet tissue, Stockwell transforms mundane things into magical and mysterious works of art.



Highland Dress 2008 (detail)

From **3 July–2 August** the artist will also be showing her small works, drawings and collages alongside American artist Sharon Loudon, at **Patrick Heide Contemporary Art**, 11 Church Street, London NW8 8EE (020 7724 5548). [www.patrickheide.com](http://www.patrickheide.com).

Susan Stockwell presently has work in the **Royal Academy Summer Exhibition**, the **Beijing Bienale** and at **London Print Studio**.

All works are for sale.

Contact Canary Wharf Public Art Office 020 7418 2257.

Photographs by the artist unless otherwise credited.

**EVENT** Tuesday 22 July at 1.15pm **FREE**  
Curator **Ann Elliott** in conversation with the artist.  
Please call 020 7418 2257 to book a place.

#### List of works (Dimensions h x w x d)

<b>Imperial Quilt</b> 2005 Paper maps, thread 220 x 210 x 4 cm (Imperial measurement 7 ft 6 ins x 7 ft)	<b>Highland Dress</b> 2008 Ordnance Survey maps of the Highlands of Scotland Life-size 135 x 100 x 100 cm	<b>Paper Tiger</b> 2008 Rice paper 300 x 150 x 150 cm
	<b>Colonial Dress</b> 2008 World maps Life-size 150 x 80 x 70 cm	<b>Frill</b> 2008 Rice paper 200 x 200 x 200 cm
		<b>Frappe</b> 2008 Rice paper 180 x 100 x 70 cm

Front cover: **Colonial Dress** 2008. Designed by Tim Harvey. Printed by Jamm Print & Production

Arts & Events

CANARY WHARF

# PAPER TIGER: An installation by Susan Stockwell



**Sculpture in the Workplace**  
Curated by Ann Elliott  
for Canary Wharf Group

**One Canada Square**  
Canary Wharf, London E14 5AB

**23 June to 29 August 2008**  
Monday to Friday 5.30am–midnight  
Saturday & Sunday 7.00am–11.30pm

**Information**  
020 7418 2257

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## PAPER TIGER:

An Installation by Susan Stockwell

Susan Stockwell's installation in the Lobby of One Canada Square is a hybrid mix of paper sculptures and other paper forms, some of which appear to emerge from within the fabric of the building itself. In an unlikely alliance, architecture and sculpture are inextricably linked across place, governance and time. In works made of maps and rice paper fashioned into frills and flounces, political frocks and a bed-spread, Stockwell cuts and snips, sews and staples paper, gathering and pleating it to her will. Although she may be considered as an installation artist, sculpture is foremost in her practice. Drawing is important to her; location and reason have their place, but her installations may or

may not be site specific. *Paper Tiger*, the installation here, might seem to be something other than it is: through the relationship of its parts and how they connect to the Lobby of this iconic symbol of business, Stockwell raises questions. In this instance there is much that masquerades – maps and other papers become fabrics, paper structures appear as malevolent fungi. The extravagance of the installation takes us into the arena of carnival, but without its colour. Voluptuous dresses stand as a congregation of empty shells, like ghosts from some distant museum, tied to their corporate stage by a host of otherworldly forms that have similar attributes.

The earliest work in the installation is a 'quilt', made entirely of maps from old atlases, carefully stitched in the manner of an American quilt or bedspread. The patches that make up *Imperial Quilt* 2005 are taken from the



Left: to right: Frill 2008, Highland Dress 2008, Paper Tiger (in progress). On wall: ruffles and map drawing (photo Heini Schneebeli)

different continents divided by the sea. To form the pattern, one swatch of North America is sewn into each of the four continents in a re-fashioned map of the world centered on the Middle East, with North America framing the earth and its oceans. The Middle East's American swatch has Washington DC within it (with a place called Alexandria appropriately beneath). Stockwell comments, 'The quilt also works on the level of being a beautiful

work of craft, based on a traditional American quilt pattern. It is hand stitched, and its size is governed by Imperial measurement.'

The map dresses are also clearly political. *Colonial Dress* 2008, created in the style favoured by women of the Victorian era, speaks of a past when countries and their colonies were defined on world maps according to their common colour: pink for the British Empire. *Highland Dress* 2008, made from Ordnance Survey maps of Scotland, may hint at devolution while again reflecting a form of fashion that is long past. This dress is a little smaller than life-size, and was thereby intended to convey a feeling of being slightly uncomfortable, a state common for Victorian women who were often tightly corseted and framed in whalebone.

Stockwell discovered the pleasure of working with



Drawing for Frill 2008 (photo Heini Schneebeli)



Frill 2008 (detail)

rice paper when engaged as an artist in residence in Taiwan at the end of 2007. The paper is soft to the touch, unlike the smooth and crisp quality of folded maps, and it has a lustrous sheen that enhances extravagant, frilled forms when gathered or pleated. The gargantuan sculpture *Paper Tiger* 2008 stands three metres high. At the top is a strangely small bodice considering the drop and volume of the skirt, giving a sense of a circus



Empire Dress 2005 (detail) (photo Jeff Leysdon)

performer on stilts. In effect *Paper Tiger* is an empty paper space, which Stockwell sees as a metaphor for money, almost worthless in substance yet of value by implication.

In contrast with *Paper Tiger* is *Frill* 2008. Slightly smaller, it stands two metres high, a confection of frills and flounces; it serves to connect with the building through its profligate structure, which is mimicked by fungus-like wall pieces. Winnie Lin, a Taiwanese friend of the artist, observed that the layers of frills remind her of paddy-field terraces. Stockwell says of this sculpture, 'For me, it is a seductive paper extravaganza, with the rice paper doing what it does best, the forms naturally bringing out its inherent structural qualities.'

One more dress completes the quintet that raises the human spectre. *Frappe* 2008, more a suggestion of a dress shape than an actual garment, is under construction



Imperial Quilt 2005 (detail)