

Cover Artwork

Handweaving Health

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About the Artist



Emilee Fackelmann is a PhD student in the Faculty of Health at Dalhousie University. Her areas of interest surround disability and inclusion studies for children and youth, and collaborative health systems. Her research draws on critical disability theory and critical ethnography to be used to understand how social, cultural, relational, and political conditions shape disabled youth's experiences of social inclusion and belonging and how these conditions reinforce and maintain social inequities.

Emilee has Epilepsy, a neurological condition causing seizures. She uses knitting as a form of physical therapy and an artistic outlet for positive mental health. For nearly 6 months at the height of her worst seizures, and following a suspected stroke, she lost her ability to write her name and properly hold a pencil. Knitting and crocheting helped her to slowly regain muscle control and overcome these obstacles.

Description of the Art

The piece, 'Handweaving Health' was created to demonstrate how an individual piece plays a key role in collaboration to form strong, beautiful structures. The image's knitted texture represents health as a whole. The threads intertwine in a locking weave to create a balanced structure with what seems like limitless capabilities in its strength to support and reinforce. In comparison, 'health' can be seen broadly as the center weave of a population, a necessary thread in the collaboration of all the necessary pieces to the final structure – a *healthy population*. And with one weakened thread, everything unravels.



The project was made of 100% merino wool, ethically sourced from a fairtrade women's organization in Peru and has been organically hand-dyed in small baths, and hand-painted to get the unique color pattern.