

# Exhibition Reviews

Compiled by Ann Lovick

## Kousa/Cross Over A dialogue across continents

9 September – 20 October 2007  
The Grace Barrand Design Centre,  
Nutfield, Surrey

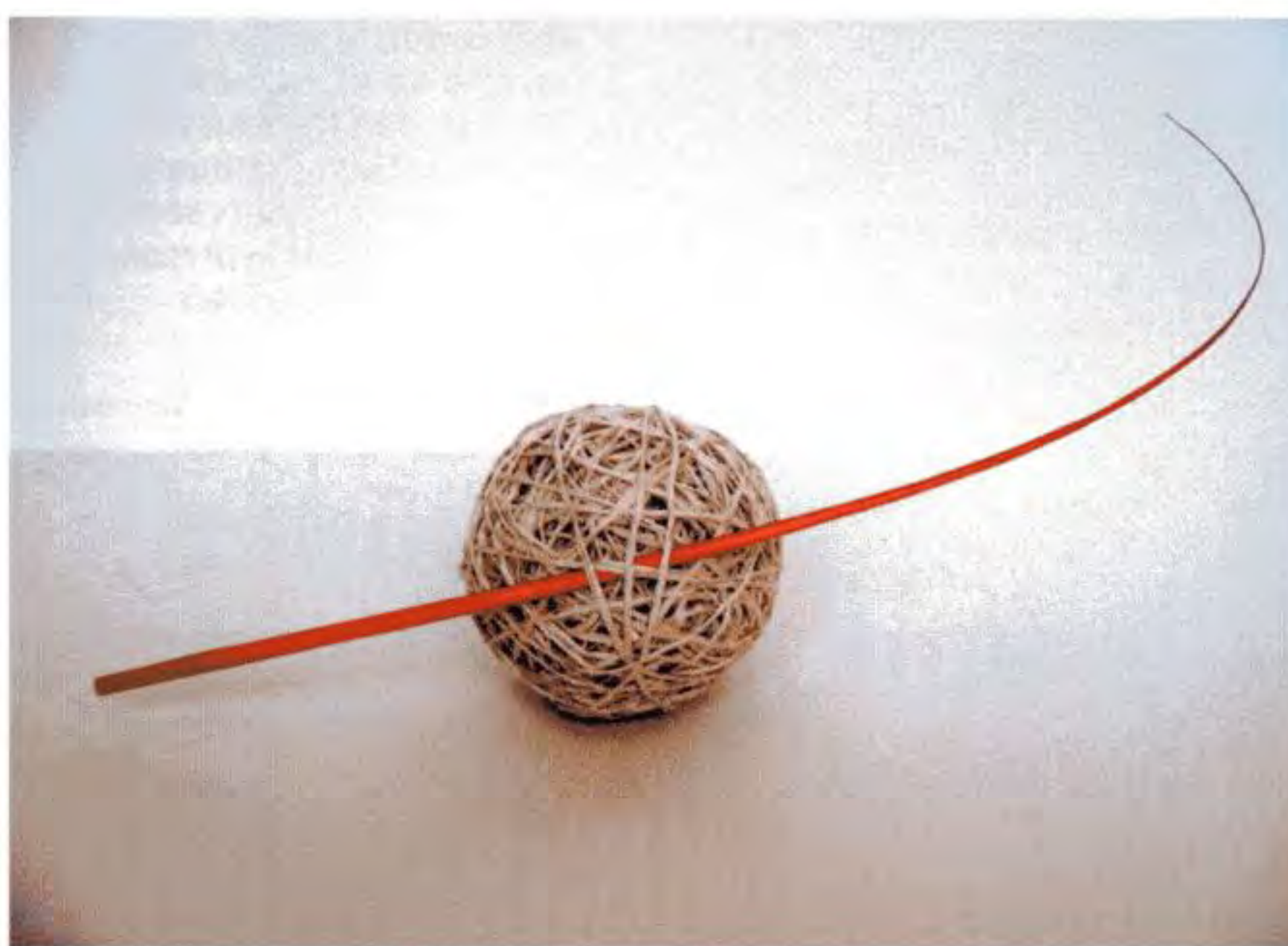
The light and spacious small gallery (over an extensive craft shop) suited this exhibition admirably. A year after Hillu Liebelt travelled to Japan, thanks to a bursary from the Theo Moorman Trust, she teamed up in this show with a prestigious Japanese artist whose work we saw in the ground breaking *Textural Space* in 2001.

Less monumental than then, Asako Ishizaki's work for *Kousa* was entitled *Wrapped*, with two installations at floor level and a series of smaller works, some as small as brooches – or perhaps rather lapel textiles. All were in linen, many, surprisingly, in bright colours and less earthy than previously in *Field* and *Drawn From Light* which made the artist's inspiration from nature less immediately tangible. The technique is intricate and the execution faultless; a leno weave with alternate linen and copper wire wefts, whose rigidity is contrasted by a surrounding 'frill' of softly laced sprang. The flexibility of the copper wire means that the weaving can be bent, rolled up or pressed over a

hand and retain the three-dimensional shape.

Impeccable technique links Hillu Liebelt to her Japanese partner. Her increased interest in three-dimensional structures – a departure from tradition for a tapestry weaver – are evidence of fresh development. The large *Moon Screen*, composed of several layers of linked bamboo twigs densely wrapped in light coloured rayon filament, seemed to float magically on air. The six wrapped yarn spheres of *Silent Space*, whilst individual pieces, were laid out as an installation; inside each nestled intriguingly a small red wool ball. A similar structure, *In Full Swing*, used silk paper yarn with the elegant flight of a red lacquered turkey quill. For some time she has used thin aluminium mounts to frame and to bend the shape of her weavings, which ranged here from the tiny understated *Patmos* series with very fine yarns to larger, brighter, pieces reflecting changing hours of the day or the season. Most successful perhaps was *Thin Ice*, a pair of long low tapestries in sober greys, black and white, evocative in an abstract way, in which the reflections of the metal frame integrated with the image itself. Versatility, and perfection of execution, in equal parts the preoccupation of both artists, was the hallmark of this exhibition.

Claude Delmas, London Guild



Top: A corner of the gallery at the Grace Barrand Design Centre. An installation and two wall-mounted pieces by Asako Ishizaki and tapestries by Hillu Liebelt.

Above: *In Full Swing*, wrapped silk paper yarn with a red lacquered turkey quill. Hillu Liebelt

Below: A pair of tapestries, *Thin Ice* Hillu Liebelt

