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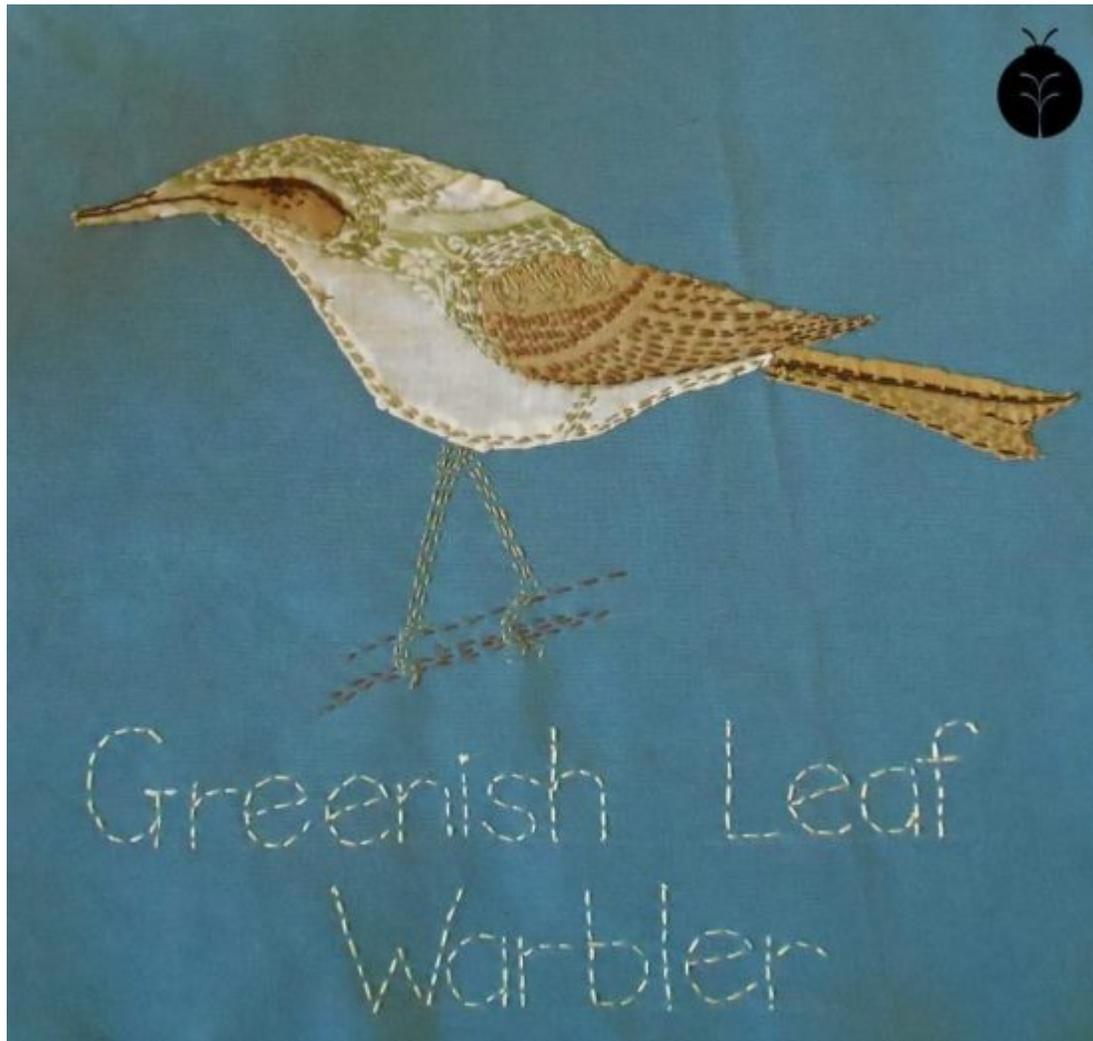
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Visiting Artist Workshop, Lecture to Teach Audience How to Make Waste Fabric Into Beautiful Products

October 17, 2016



Textile artist and naturalist Medha Bhatt will visit Georgia Southern University on Oct. 24 and 25. Bhatt has worked with environmental organizations in developing solutions toward zero waste and has worked to empower women through training programs in reusing of discards. Her own label, First Forest, considers discarded materials as a resources for creating innovative and aesthetically rich handmade products. She will conduct a workshop on Monday, Oct. 24 from 2:30-5 p.m. in Visual Arts Building, room 2046 and deliver a lecture about her work on Tuesday, Oct. 25 from 5-6 p.m. in Visual Arts Building, room 2071.

“With the current issues of climate change confronting every part of our planet, she believes, sharing efforts made by individuals can strengthen the campaign of conserving resources and biodiversity,” said professor Santanu Majumdar. “Medha will be sharing her journey and experiences of working in the area of sustainability and innovation, and have interactive and insightful discussions with the students as well as faculty and staff. This exchange of ideas holds great significance in developing a road-map for a greener tomorrow.”

Bhatt’s workshop will focus on her recent project, “Birds, Art and Reuse of Discards” and will be accompanied with a small exhibit called “Songbirds of Blue Ridge Mountains.” The work celebrates 100 years of the U.S. National Park Service and features textile artworks illustrating birds like the Mockingbird, the Northern Cardinal, the Blue Jay and many more. The exhibit will act as a backdrop to the workshop and artist talk, which will include textile art and mixed media as techniques of exploration. Bhatt’s Artist Talk will focus on bridging the gap between pollution, biodiversity and conservation through art and design and how First Forest was developed.

“The focus of sustainability probably runs in my veins as my mother has been an energetic upcyclist all her life. Further, during my design education years, I spent many months in rural salt pans of Gujarat where I saw and

studied the sustainable way of life of traditional tribes amidst dearth of basic resources. I grew up reading Gerald Durrel, and Jane Goodall has been my guiding star,” Bhatt said. “My early professional years were spent with a group of environmentalists fighting against pollution, poison farming and urban waste. Many walks through forests where the bird numbers have dwindled, strolls through rice farms where the butterfly populations have been wiped out, brought a deep sense of pain and concern. Creating awareness about effects of pollution on biodiversity seemed to be an utmost priority. Hence, bridging sustainability and biodiversity through art began as a passionate attempt to address issues of environment.”

Both the workshop and the Artist Talk are free and the public is invited to attend.

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