

THE WAR AGAINST NOTHING

by

FRANK LUTHER GRAHAM JR.

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Marina Kassianidou

Alvin Gregorio

Mike Womack

The final copy of this thesis has been examined by the signatories, and we find that both the content and the form meet acceptable presentation standards of scholarly work in the above-mentioned discipline.

ABSTRACT

Graham Jr., Frank Luther (M.F.A. Department of Art and Art History)
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Technology is reshaping our understanding of reality. Whatever changes technology may hold for us, we will still need the comfort of our cultural stories. My quilts are story making machines, connecting stories about the future to stories about the past. I relate the implications of impending technological developments to the framework of mythological stories. I am drawing a line from the future to history. My research involves understanding and communicating patterns in human experience. The works transmit these multiple layers of information through both the physical unbuttoning of quilts and methods of meaning encryption; symbols, riddles, and puzzles. Informed by the history of quilting, pop up story books, and internet paranoia, my works are interactive heirlooms made in an age at the edge of coherence. My quilts pass forward fragments of stories designed to provoke interpretation. Interpretation centers the listener, bequeathing them the responsibility of the construction of meaning. Interpretation is a metaphor for the relationship between an individual, reality, and culture. Culture itself is made up of stories that resemble a quilt; a quilt that may soften the hardness of reality.

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INTRODUCTION

How do you think that the people from 100 years in the future will look back on us and the cultural artifacts that we are producing? Will our preoccupations and concerns be of interest to them? Will they look backward seeking a connection with their histories, searching for wisdom to carry forward, strengthened by their heartfelt heirlooms made quaint by time and obsolete by progress? I think a lot about my responsibility to pass on my knowledge and outlook, and my responsibility not to. The disorienting future causes me to question whether it is better for people to prepare themselves or protect themselves. What kinds of stories can we pass forward; what heirlooms will be useful despite what may come? My quilts, like a good story, are passing information to future generations, they are roadmaps asserting cultural and aesthetic sensibilities, and involved in protection of the bodies and spirits of people during their most vulnerable periods.

Ch. 1 Sputnik, The Semantic Apocalypse, and The Four Effects of Media

On October 4th, 1947, the Soviet Union launched the first artificial satellite into orbit. This event signaled the end of the terrestrial era and the start of the next chapter in the story of humanity. As communications expert Marshall McLuhan stated, "When Sputnik went around the planet [...] nature was enclosed in a man-made environment and art took the place of nature¹." Art places nature into the hands of humanity as a flexible material for us to shape in ways we choose that promote human well-being. Science and technology reterritorialize nature into nothing more than inflexible material; raw material free to be cut into pieces, pieced back together, quantified, and stockpiled until its eventual disintegration.

In his novel *Neuropath*, science fiction author R. Scott Bakker describes a looming bio-technological demystification of human cognition in his term "the semantic apocalypse"². When science and technology fully decode human consciousness, when the puzzle of human cognition is solved, philosophical existentialism lurches into crisis. The four existential urgent concerns - morality, autonomy, alienation, and death³ may be revealed as bugs in the software. Humanity is experiencing the launch another Sputnik, a probe now soaring inward, with the potential to transform human cognition into material, and possibly even into something unfathomably inhuman.

In philosopher Nick Bostrom's *"The History of Transhumanist Thought"*, he surveys the research being done into human cognitive ecology and the technological innovations that threaten to reshape it⁴. Recounting technological development from Gilgamesh to Kurzweil, Bostrom argues that "we have

¹ *The David Frost Show*. "The Planet as Art Form." Marshall McLuhan Speaks Special Collection, American Broadcasting Corporation, 1972, www.marshallmcluhanspeaks.com/interview/1972-the-planet-as-art-form/.

² Murphy, Justin. "Semantic Apocalypse and Life After Humanism with R. Scott Bakker." YouTube, YouTube, 1 Nov. 2018, www.youtube.com/watch?v=ob40tEMF6os.

³ Yalom, Irvin D. *Existential Psychotherapy*. Basic Books, 1980.

⁴ Bostrom, Nick. "A History of Transhumanist Thought." Nickbostrom.com, 2005, nickbostrom.com/papers/history.pdf.

always sought to expand the boundaries of our existence [...] there is a tendency in at least some individuals always to search for a way around every obstacle and limitation to human life and happiness.”⁴ Considering the trajectory of technological acceleration that Bostrom outlines, it’s likely that our present moment is the precipice of the greatest shift in the human condition since we developed the capacity for literacy.

In his book, *"The Guttenberg Galaxy"*, Marshall McLuhan described the pre-literate era of human society as an "acoustic age" of maximum involvement⁵. Through the very act of communication, both speaker and listener engaged in a mutual affirmation of the meaning of the present. Literacy facilitated the development of new forms of thought. These new forms of thought are new mediums. As a way of understanding these technological innovations, McLuhan developed his "four effects of media" - enhancement, obsolescence, retrieval, and reversal.⁶ Enhancement is identifying the technology’s intended impacts on an area of human life. Obsolescence is the naming of older media replaced by the new innovation. Retrieval is connecting the media’s character to any lost or diminished conditions from history. Reversal is when the innovation is incorporated to an extreme degree, or “overheated.” The media will then destroy the quality of its intended function. For example, a car can be said to enhance mobility, obsolesce the horse and buggy, retrieve the thrilling freedom of the frontier, and reverses into a traffic jam. Consider the internet, which enhances our access to information and renders boredom obsolete. It retrieves the public square and it reverses into surveillance, advertising, and misinformation. Although these impressions may be generalizations, they are tools to generate interpretations on the effects of these media.

⁵ McLuhan, Marshall. *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man*. University of Toronto Press, 1980.

⁶ McLuhan, Marshall, and Eric McLuhan. *Laws of Media: The New Science*. University of Toronto Press, 1988.

Deleuze wrote that "When new methods of control arise, they give birth to new methods of resistance."⁷ McLuhan's four-effect theory may provide access to forms of resistance for threats such as omnipotent surveillance managed by super-intelligent AI, a bio-technological prescription for existentialism, the semantic apocalypse, and other threats to humanity. Using four effect theory, I identify that the semantic apocalypse enhances the intelligence of humans while simultaneously obsolescing ambiguity. Ambiguous notions of free will and human agency are likely to be undermined by increasing knowledge of genetic predisposition or statistical behavioral probability models. In this way, the semantic apocalypse retrieves predetermination and thus inverts into human slavery. Humanity deconstructed all the way down to our naked condition of slavery to our own inherited biological and cognitive ecologies.

My project is designed to respond to threatening technological possibilities such as the semantic apocalypse. To explain how, I am launching a Sputnik around my creative project, to encircle it in an orbit of coherence. I will state how my project may enhance, obsolesce, retrieve, and potentially invert possible consequences of technological acceleration.

Ch. 2: Fatherhood, Puzzles, Science Fiction, and the Heirloom

Kurt Vonnegut said that he always wrote for an audience of one, his sister⁸. It seems that by speaking deeply with conviction to his audience of one, that he could generate a thought with her, through the ghost of her. By imagining how she might have responded to his stories, he could commune with his memory of her. Two heads are better than one, they say, and you have got to start somewhere.

⁷ Deleuze, Gilles. "Postscript on the Societies of Control." *The Anarchist Library*, theanarchistlibrary.org/library/gilles-deleuze-postscript-on-the-societies-of-control.

⁸ Vonnegut, Kurt. *Slapstick*. Delacorte, 1976.

I was born into a broken home in rural Texas, the only son of a single mother. My father was a newspaper man with lots of charm and a habit of intemperance. I knew him from a distance as a kid and from that distance he was quite impressive. I was lucky enough to know him as an adult and grew to admire the richness of his storytelling and his inconsistent but profound capacity for empathy. I often wondered why he was the way he was, but I never really could understand. He was a man of his age; only partially visible to me, like a ghost story.

I am raising my own young son now, and the way that I grew up reads like an ancient history. I have very little cultural programming to pass forward in absolute conviction of its applicability. As conditions change, moral and cultural customs require a degree of malleability. How do you know if your values and intuitions might be maladaptive in another techno-cultural context? Any value threatens to become anti-social in our high-speed race to the future. Where did the ideas that inform my own thinking even come from, anyway? Which lines of code from my cultural programming are still optimal for human well-being in the present? My confidence in the moment of my age unraveled around me; awakening as a controlled demolition of ideological demystification. The harder you pull, the faster it comes apart, like unzipping of twin strands of DNA. Every piece of the puzzle is laying in a giant pile of smoldering wreckage. From this rubble I must scavenge materials to rebuild a story, an identity. It is my job to piece together something useful from the materials that I have access to. The best we can hope to inherit is a good story, or at least not a bad one.

Quilts, like a good story, are passing information to future generations, they are roadmaps asserting cultural and aesthetic sensibilities, and involved in protection of the bodies and spirits of people during their most vulnerable periods. Harriet Powers is known by her two surviving story quilts that record 1800's applique methods and aesthetics. Her celebrated quilts retell the biblical and local

mythologies of rural Georgia and the ecological and astronomical phenomena of her age⁹ (Fig. 1). I am borrowing from Harriet Powers by engaging in the dual retelling of cultural mythologies and recording reactions to the internet and its peripheral technologies. I process futurology with the folk-art elements of the story quilt. Harriet Power's legacy blurs the lines between autobiography, cultural artifact, and spiritual testimony. I am seeking to recreate these aspects of her project in my own story quilts.



Figure 1: Harriet Powers. Pictorial Quilt, 1895-98, Reproduced by Museum of Fine Arts Boston

In the book, *Hidden in Plain View: A Secret Story of Quilts and the Underground Railroad*, the authors retell oral histories of quilts becoming maps to freedom. Pattern and composition encoded locations of safe houses, river crossings, and other practical guidance for people seeking

⁹ Lyons, Mary E. *Stitching Stars: The Story Quilts of Harriet Powers*. Aladdin, 1997.

emancipation¹⁰. Like these emancipatory heirlooms, my quilts act as maps orienting the reader between the inherited stories of the past and imaginary futures. My maps lead the reader to questions that they have to ask themselves. Nick Bostrom's "Vulnerable Planet Hypothesis" outlines how increasing technological capabilities makes notions of freedom and privacy impossible¹¹. More powerful weaponry requires more powerful policing in a feedback loop that rapidly reshapes civilization in a way that inherently reduces human agency. For example, the emergence of nuclear weapons ended the possibility of neutrality for anyone. I love Big Brother now; the banks are too big to fail. My quilts react to the threat of the erosion of individual human agency by mapping philosophical concepts, ideas that I believe may build humanity an underground railroad to navigate authoritarian conditions.

In ancient battles, warriors battled in quilted armor (Fig. 2). The quilted layers protected them against the horrific brutality of the compulsory combat of their day. Armor protects both the body and the mind. A warrior who feels protected is emboldened to face the enemy, like a self-fulfilling prophesy. I am using culture and quilting as defensive technologies against possible effects of technological besiegement. My quilts conjure an embodiment of the warrior spirit. Righteous resistance may prove to be a useful application as humanity engages with an unstoppable invasion of technological solution. Player 2 has entered the game. The best offense is a good defense, they say.

Amish Quilting describes quilts as the "embodiment of utility, simplicity, community, and devotion."¹² Amish quilting expresses an ambition for sincerity that inspires characteristics of my project. Labor and reverence intersect materializing in a blanket of culture and comfort. The quilts strive

¹⁰ Tobin, Jacqueline L., and Raymond G. Dobard. *Hidden in Plain View: A Secret Story of Quilts and the Underground Railroad*. Anchor, 2000.

¹¹ Bostrom, Nick. "The Vulnerable World Hypothesis." *Nickbostrom.com*, 2018, www.nickbostrom.com/papers/vulnerable.pdf.

¹² Cunningham, Joe, and Eve Wheatcroft Granick. *Amish Quilts 1880 to 1940: from the Collection of Faith and Stephen Brown*. University of Michigan Museum of Art, 2000.

for divine humility; a cave man in a spaceship, a servant walking on water. I am retelling these histories in my quilts, building from these traditions of recording, guiding, defending, and revering; retelling an old story swathed in the aesthetics of its many histories.

My quilts are funny too. I hide jokes inside the pictures, I speak in riddles. These communication games outsource a portion of the coherence of the statement. Poetics are a way to communicate at the edge of coherence, a space to consider language and meaning. Puzzles, jokes, and riddles highlight the softness of meaning. Pictures are like puzzles to me. They reveal themselves to you in pieces and ask for you to do some work. They can make you forget yourself and leave you with a feeling of “Ah Hah!” when you get it. The reader cannot fully translate the affect. They cannot reconcile the abstraction between sign and signifier, the loose thread. If we can see the tear than we can patch it. A stitch in time saves nine, they say.

Culture is an operating system susceptible to infection, bits of code in your head that you didn’t ask for. Resentment, nihilism, irony, regret; all loathsome, spikey worms, nestled tightly in the soft folds of your brain, uncomfortably writhing in the nutrient rich bath of your perception, endlessly suckling on the warmth of your involuntary attention. Jung outlined the importance of integrating the shadow, the dark parts of the human psyche. A person infected with the shadow, whether through nature or nurture, may be treated by cultural rites of passage, calls to action.¹³ All operating systems require periodic system updates, or at least a nice restart. As Kurt Vonnegut wrote, “You were sick, but now you are well and there’s work to be done.”¹⁴

¹³ Campbell, Joseph, et al. *The Power of Myth*. Turtleback Books, 2012.

¹⁴ Vonnegut, Kurt. *Timequake: Kurt Vonnegut*. Berkley Publishing Group, 1997.

Ch. 3: 9/11, Labor, Nostalgia and Collecting

September 11th, 2001 launched the system reboot of our technological age. I had wandered into my senior year of high school; presumably to assume responsibility for my future; rise and shine. I was briefly shaken from my adolescent stupor by the televised infliction of this national disaster. The deck had been shuffled; the winds had shifted. Looking back, it becomes clear that new programming was being installed. I was awakened to the reality that technological war was the future; an automated, consecrated self-reinforcing delusion that continues to cast its shadow over reality. Marshall McLuhan, in describing his ideas of how the Vietnam war was affecting the world, explained that “War is the curriculum.”¹⁵ He suggests that it is through war that reality is forced to adapt; material education through socio-technological natural selection. If you are not doing anything wrong then you have nothing to worry about; you are either with us or against us. Technological war is inhuman and out of control. Total domination produces desperate resistance by any means necessary; a conscripted martyr in a flying machine on autopilot crashing into a burning future in freefall. How could any of us now begin to pick up the pieces?

Kurt Vonnegut wrote of fictional parent in *Slaughterhouse 5*, “Like so many Americans, she was trying to build a life that made sense out of things she found in gift shops.”¹⁶ My process in constructing these quilts begins with collecting. I collect ideas through the consumption of news, advertising, comedy, conspiracy theories, science fiction, and sermons. I collect drop cloths and textile materials on clearance along with bits and buttons; used tools, toys, trash, and treasures. The collecting comes from a scavenging spirit of apocryphal documentation, but another element is eleventh-hour production

¹⁵ “Marshall McLuhan in Conversation with Norman Mailer.” *Marshall McLuhan Speaks Special Collection*, www.marshallmcluhanspeaks.com/interview/1968-marshall-mcluhan-in-conversation-with-norman-mailer/.

¹⁶ Vonnegut, Kurt. *Slaughterhouse 5*. Panther, 1970.

processes. Unskilled labor and the pursuit of play are my cyclical imperatives of production. The quilts are built between waves of play and work, intentionality and the edge of coherence. The quilts are produced in pairs; created, captured, catalogued, and compressed for later computation.

I applique' the quilts with symbols and patterns. The picture is a story map, a cultural algorithm programmed subconsciously by methods of gestalt and free association. I find this exercise to be a bit like a showdown; I have to ask myself one question, do I feel lucky?¹⁷ The ordeal of wrestling the battle flags through a sewing machine proves my initial investment in a test of endurance, a physical commitment to an interpretation of the picture. Next, I button layers of quilted flaps to the picture; covering up some of the data and conscripting the viewer to perform a physical role in the unveiling, the unfolding of potential meaning. The unbuttoning of flaps on the quilts reveal additional linguistic equations. Like the opening of a child's pop-up book; the quilt and the story disclosed, blooming under the movement of touch. I understand the quilts as patchwork constructions of stories that seemed relevant to me in the moment of their conception. They are flashes of partially-formed statements hastily thrust into the constantly expanding fabric of the future.

Ritual, science fiction, mythology, memory, and symbol are ways to talk beyond reason. They are the hand-made, the search for uncharted territory. The communication between the writer's abstraction and the reader's interpretation, there remains a possibility of telepathic transcendence. Listening and speaking, dreaming and waking, and seeing and reading; each like a feedback loop between fact and fiction that affirms the ineffable primacy of consciousness. Communication is a miracle that affirms the meaning of the present, incorporates the operating system of our histories, and

¹⁷ Seigel, Don, director. *Dirty Harry*. *Dirty Harry*, 1971, www.youtube.com/watch?v=JtyjuCzBZA0.

determines our flight paths into the future. Our stories form the skylines of our identities. I am in spinning above in orbit, monitoring the patterns to map the future onto history.



Figure 2: Detail of Bayeux Tapestry, approximate date of authorship in 1070's, Reproduced by Wikipedia

Ch. 4: The War Against Nothing

This section of the thesis will describe the five quilts of my thesis project. In each description, I will decipher various characteristics of the stories. In each quilt are encoded at least three stories told simultaneously; base reality- the recounting of its making today, futuristic speculative science fictional

premises, and an ancient archetypal narrative outline. The five quilts are named after the biblical stories of the Creation, the Garden, the Flood, the Tower, and the Revelation.

In the beginning, I launched The Creation quilt (Fig. 3) as the prototype story making machine. I directed my research into creation mythologies and the recent history and near future of the internet. I imagine the awakening of artificial intelligence as being analogous to waking up, the big bang, a violent self-birthing of being. Upon reflection I read The Creation quilt as communicating resistance to the quantification of all knowledge into analytics. I found in the story a celebration of the poetic flexibility of fiction over the inhumane rigidity of data. Partially based on the assembly line aesthetics of racing model decal sheets, I designed fictional nonlinear, algorithmic story diagram. Cherries, tigers, tanks and embryos each allude to fragments of this creation retelling; playful partial plot points veiled in layers of encrypted coherence. The quilt unfolds a flap like a runway; from which a silhouetted Sputnik is launching into a makeshift astrological data chart. Tentacle like tubes spill out from on and under the quilt, anthropomorphizing the bedspread like a giant virus. I invite the audience to unbutton and open the quilt like a cabinet. As they reconstruct an interpretation of the story, they mirror the process of my telling of it.

Double the size of the other quilts in the series, The Garden quilt outlines the possible event horizon for humanity as we know it. I directed my research into the biotechnological frontiers of medicine. The quilt retells a possible bio-technological merger of human and machine. Genetic engineering and cybernetics seem to me like a Faustian bargain. They made us an offer that we cannot refuse. One bite of the fruit from the tree of knowledge is the blurring of the line between psychobiology and gadgetry; the techno-human intelligence evolution. The Garden quilt retells a possible technological violation of human psycho-biological integrity. Tempted by the serpent, full speed on the insatiable quest for increase, a curious cat steals a peek from behind the curtain. To me, the quilt

urges the saying of yes to our humanity, or our last chance for the refusal of terms and conditions. It is a call for sacrifice in favor of preserving self-sufficiency, an attempted veneration of the unspeakable glory of being in our present state. Expulsion from the garden is presented as a metaphorical endgame of the potential failure of human gratitude. As humanity was cast out of paradise, so may we find that our pretechnological state was our preferable condition.

The Tower quilt retells an admonition against unfettered human ambition. The premise is the techno-utopian reengineering of reality. Imagine that Earthly intelligence hacks physics; all material and energy becomes fully reprogrammable. Breakthrough inevitably generates a dominate singular irrefutable, infallible language. The writing is on the wall: total linguistic and intellectual homogenization. Perfect pragmatic rationalism without allusion, we have used technology to reprogram our perceptions as being one no longer rooted in notions of the individual or desire. Blazing flames, the chimera, bricks and keyholes suggest the unexpected unfolding of an unpleasant unknown. Ultimate knowledge, ultimate consensus has its own critical vulnerability. For what purpose would such a hive-entity even aspire: pride, conquest, nihilism? Is freedom even compatible with unanimity? Cue catastrophic system crash. Meltdown - mechanical intelligence can no longer justify energy investment into further reckless material experimentation. Whatever is left of human comprehension goes fully online. Construction on the tower ends, retreat into simulation begins as the dark cloud forms overhead.

In the archetypal flood story, animals and people are spared from an ordeal of environmental annihilation. In case of accidental planetary biological extermination, only a digital backup of Earth's biological data may survive the extreme environmental transition. The Flood Quilt portrays an era of stasis. Reporting status: immaterial, like a file on a flash drive. The anchor, the battery, the dove, and the pear are each symbol that construct the story vessel in voyage. Imagine total conversion of all knowledge, material, and energy into ones and zeros. Lambs lay with lions frozen in a static state of

holographic cryogenisies. Total information security requires multiple identical duplications. Infinite disconnected data drives silently floating outside of the safety of nature. They are starships in search of land suitable for rehabilitation. Can you hear me Major Tom? Carbon copies, humanity is a sea full of quantum ghost ships aimlessly adrift in the endless expanse of the virtual, looping in a simulated eternal recurrence.

And behold, the noise of thunder. Time, energy, matter, space, consciousness all fading into a singular indivisible negation. Imagine the pale horse fading into white noise. The end of history, complete collapse, total system failure, the irreversible suicide of intelligence. The most horrific and violently composed of the series, The Revelation quilt punctuates the project. It explodes like an exit wound; dark red and in shreds. Shining within its golden frame, the Revelation quilt signals the permanent erasure of difference itself. The quilt's message is dominated by a single gesture. The worst of all possible scenarios communicated through the final symbol of the ultimate negation, a big red no.



Figure 3: The Creation



Figure 4: The Garden



Figure 5: The Tower



Figure 6: The Flood



Figure 7: The Revelation

CONCLUSION

When I shared many of these ideas with my Mom, she said “it is like worrying about the sun coming up, there is nothing that you can do about it. The best thing that we can have is good humor.” My project is in the spirit of good humor. The toys, the pop-up format, and the puzzles each help to communicate a playful, optimistic spirit. Fun is like a preemptive strike on nihilism. Sharing is caring. The quilts aspire to communicate generosity through intensity and engagement; passion and elbow grease. Kurt Vonnegut’s 1994 commencement address, *How I learned from a Teacher What Artists Do*, he explained that “First they admit that they can’t straighten out the whole universe. And then second, they make at least one little part of it exactly as it should be.”¹⁸

In my little part of the universe, I am retelling the stories that I was told with a twist. Piece by piece, I work to tailor my message on the stories that I tell. Marshall McLuhan stated in 1977 that “All forms of violence are a quest for identity.”¹⁹ My quilts are the standards of the assertion of my identity. They are as harmless as they are impassioned. Culture is a medium that facilitates this human desire. Nature and the market certainly cannot respond to human spiritual needs. Fiction is more flexible than fact, and all stories come to an end. These quilts translate aggression into silly stories.

It is difficult to come to terms with the possibility that nearly every part of humanity is being transformed into a commodity. Human attention is now the marketplace of our information age. What affects may territorializing have on human cognition? If technology really does change humanity, that will elevate our cultural artifacts to a high level of historical importance. The present a time capsule of

¹⁸ Vonnegut, Kurt, and Dan Wakefield. *If This Isn't Nice, What Is?: The Graduation Speeches and Other Words to Live By*. Seven Stories Press, 2016.

¹⁹ McLuhan, Marshall. “Violence as a Quest for Identity.” <http://www.marshallmcluhanspeaks.com/>, *The Mike McManus Show*, 2006, www.marshallmcluhanspeaks.com/media/mcluhan_pdf_11_fNfqAl.pdf.

human sentimentality. When I inherited my own Dad's earthly possessions, I combed through the archive in search of any traces of a story. Can you imagine a human being so corrupted that they could not even enjoy an old-fashioned game of telephone?

McLuhan's four-effect theory is a method for understanding how an individual can analyze the way media operates in reality. My quilts enhance sleep, interpretation, and decoration. They obsolesce triviality, timidity, and the impersonal. They retrieve humor, mythology, labor, and fantasy. Worst case scenario, the quilts reverse into wasted time, paranoia, and pretentiousness.

Some people would say that there are no new problems under the sun. They may claim that I am just saying what the people in my position always say, like a grumpy old man shaking his fist at the kids these days and their gadgets. We have always had technology and we survived. The more things change, the more they stay the same, they say. I am proud to be in the good company of such astute visionaries. I trust in a future that is shaped by the intuitions of humanity. I believe culture is the greatest innovation ever conceived. Culture is often the most humane prescription for human problems. I may not be capable of creating culture, but I know where to look for it. My project is not an instruction manual- it generates methodologies of generation. *The War Against Nothing* is a call for an aggressive refusal of surrender to negation. It is a challenge for humanity to piece together something worthy of veneration from the identities that we have inherited.

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Harriet Powers. *Pictorial Quilt, 1895-98*, Reproduced by Museum of Fine Arts Boston

Detail of Bayeux Tapestry, approximate date of authorship in 1070's, Reproduced by Wikipedia