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**Green Weaver: Shelley Spector turns reclaimed fabric into environmental art**

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For Shelley Spector, scraps of discarded fabric are more inspiring than a blank white canvas any day. Bits of boldly-patterned textiles serve as Spector's foundation for her latest exhibit, "Dreck Groove". The exhibit is a patchwork of reclaimed materials the South Philly artist gathered from her closet, neighbors' recycling bins and local thrift shops. Ever since she began her art career as a woodworker, using recycled materials was a no-brainer for Spector.

"A plain white piece of paper or a plain sheet of wood is more intimidating to me than something that already has character and purpose," says Spector. "So it was just easier for me to approach something that had the mark of this previous existence."

As [NextFab Studio's](#) current artist in residence (a [Breadboard](#) program), Spector had access to more than 50 state-of-the-art pieces of equipment at the University City workshop, which hosts and offers classes for builders of all kinds. Maintaining the environmental awareness present in many of her past exhibits, Spector used a digital sewing machine to embroider images representing recent natural disasters onto 21 different swatches of fabric framed by reclaimed wood. A yellow tornado on tweed from an old purse signifies 2011's tragedy in Joplin, Miss. A red, orange and yellow teardrop on teal plaid shorts illustrates a satellite map of radiation from last year's earthquake in Japan. The effect is aesthetically pleasing, yet environmentally alarming. In addition to her textile creations, Spector has wrapped the exhibit with eclectic wallpaper she made from colorful discarded food packaging laser cut into geometric shapes.

To see more of Spector's most-recent creations, visit "Dreck Groove" on display from February 17 to March 30 at [Breadboard's Esther Klein Gallery](#), located at 3600 Market Street.

<http://www.gridphilly.com/grid-magazine/2012/2/28/green-weaver-shelley-spector-turns-reclaimed-fabric-into-env.html>