



ARTWORK **DRESS CODE**

ARTIST **JEAN SHIN**

INSTALLED 2008
GEORGE H. FALLON FEDERAL BUILDING
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

Dress Code is an abstract group portrait of American society. This vibrant, eighteen-panel mural is comprised of a fabric mosaic created from used clothing that has been cut and rearranged in horizontal bands distinguished by color. The donated garments came from two sources: clothing from recently naturalized citizens and military uniforms from members of the U.S. Armed Forces. Jean Shin chose these two groups because they embody important aspects of the American experience. Immigrants personify the principle of inclusion that is central to the American dream. Veterans have repaid the gift of citizenship through military service.

For Shin, the process of gathering her raw materials was as important as her arrangement of them. Through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, she invited veterans and active-duty servicemen and servicewomen to contribute their used military uniforms to the project. Among the immigrants who donated clothing, some were family and friends who had become citizens years ago. Others came to Shin after she solicited clothing contributions at a U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services naturalization ceremony in Baltimore, which took place, by happy coincidence, on the same day and in the same city that her own Korean-born parents had become citizens twenty-three years earlier.

In all, forty-five people donated items of clothing for the creation of *Dress Code*. The immigrant participants originated from more than twenty-five countries, including South Korea, Nepal, Egypt, Nigeria, Greece, Sweden, Canada, Mexico, Peru, and Honduras. Veterans and active-duty members came from all branches of the U.S. Armed Forces, served from World War II to the present, and represent military ranks from Private to Vice Admiral. Symbolizing a wide range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, the articles of clothing in *Dress Code* present visual evidence of the diversity of the American populace. EH

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THE JOURNEYS OF THE IMMIGRANTS AND SOLDIERS ALIKE TAKE GREAT COURAGE, RISK, AND RESILIENCE. I HOPE THIS PROJECT SPEAKS TO ALL THOSE WHO MAKE A SACRIFICE AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE MAKING OF A NATION, BE THEY IMMIGRANTS, VETERANS, OR HEIRS TO THIS HISTORY. - JEAN SHIN

Jean Shin is known for meticulously gathering massive quantities of mundane objects and transforming them into beautiful works of art. She has created elaborate sculptures and site-specific installations out of melted vinyl records, discarded computer keyboards, empty wine bottles, scratched-off lottery tickets, prescription pill bottles, donated clothing, and broken umbrellas. The resulting artworks can be appreciated on a formal level as stunning abstract compositions, and on a conceptual one as vehicles for investigating notions of community, identity, consumption, technology, and communication. Serving as catalysts for memories and personal associations, Shin's works encourage the viewer to see the many cast-off objects of contemporary life in new and thought-provoking ways.

Born in Seoul, South Korea, Shin received a BFA and an MS from Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York, and attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Maine. Her installations have been exhibited in various museums and cultural institutions abroad and in the United States, including a solo show at The Museum of Modern Art, New York, in 2004. She has received numerous awards, including a Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant and a Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Biennial Art Award. *Dress Code* is Jean Shin's first permanent, public art commission.

MEDIUM CUT FABRIC AND BEVA ADHESIVE ON PAINTED ALUMINUM COMPOSITE PANELS

DIMENSIONS 14 FT 3 IN X 58 FT 6 IN

