

The exploration and preservation of the **communal act** of making

Ana Lupas's ***The Solemn Process 1964–2008*** began as a **traditional ritual** involving communal **craft work** in **rural Romania**. When this activity fell into decline, Lupas found a new way of continuing the work.

Beginning in **1964**, Ana Lupas oversaw the creation of **large straw structures** in villages in **Transylvania**. She enlisted the help of **villagers** who used **weaving techniques** traditionally **employed** to make **wreaths** for **harvest festivals**. Lupas originally saw the **artwork** as the **communal act** of **making** and **displaying** these **objects** in the **local area**.

Wreath—"an arrangement of flowers and leaves in a circular shape, used as a decoration or as a sign of respect and remembrance for a person who has died."- Cambridge dictionary

Lupas defined her role as 'a **bridge between the ancestral and the future.**' (1)

Individual structures might **change** and **decay**, but the artwork remained as long as the **process** continued **over time** and the activity expanded out to **involve new participants**. The project developed in this way, but by the mid-**1970s**, the **economic** and **social changes** in **Romania** made it **difficult** for **participants** to continue.



Lupas could no longer **ensure** that **new objects** would be made **each year**. This changed the status of the structures from products of an ongoing process to **relics**(an object tradition, or system from the past that continues to exist)- Cambridge Dictionary.

Lupas tried **different ways** to **preserve** them, first by **restoring** the original **wreaths**, then by **drawing**

them, making more than 200 drawings. Eventually, in the early 2000s, she developed the technique of sealing them in metal 'tins'. This solution satisfied the artist as a practical means of preservation and a way of combining the natural and traditional 'wreaths of wheat' with modern, industrial associations through the metal casing.

Curated by Juliet Bingham