

Cover Artwork: 1 Step Forward, 2 Steps Back

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1 Step Forward, 2 Steps Back features hand embroidered work on printed Japanese mulberry paper that convey the ideas of struggle and discovery. In this piece there are three embroidered moths, representing the artist's three identities (Chinese, Canadian, and a hybrid of both). The motif of the silk moth is the manifestation of possibilities and potentiality, not only does it make silk, but it also manages to survive immolation and lead an ethically sound existence. The print on the mulberry paper took resemblance to the core principles of Yue embroidery, which features a rich and complex floral design with bright and gold colours. The triangular formation of the moths and the title suggest an internal struggle, a negotiation, a constant push and pull, the complexity of needing to choose, and questioning whether artist's identities are holding him back or propelling him forward. The three moths also serve as an allegory for the artist and his sisters, symbolizing the experiences of his childhood alongside them. This allegory highlights the persistent comparisons between genders and the societal expectations placed upon his family in relation to his familial history with craft.

Figure 1

1 Step Forward, 2 Steps Back



Note. Image by author. (2023). Japanese printed (mulberry blend) extra heavy paper, silk (China) embroidery 39 ¼ in x 26 ¼ in.