

# Lydia Bodnar-Balahutrak



What Sits In My Guts, 2008-9  
Embroidered sewn linen, paper,  
molded tubing, wood, metal rod suspended from wall, 40 x 32 x 7 in.

"What Sits in my Guts" is my discourse with innocent victims of the horrific 1932-33 Holodomor in Ukraine, a genocidal famine artificially induced by Stalin's political collectivization policy that claimed 5-7 million lives.

The artwork is a child's embroidered garment, splayed open and hung as cruciform. It shrouds a body of coiled cloth casing – an armature stuffed with many letters. The narratives are harrowing accounts of Stalin's regime witnessed and never forgotten. They are repositories of past lives that dwell at my core. They have come to inhabit me from earliest childhood, to fill my entrails – not to pull me down into despair, but to compel me to tell their story, which is also my story.