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November First Friday Picks: *We the People* at Fabric Workshop and Museum

By Katherine Rochester

Call it serendipity. As an exhibition that had been on the books long before Occupy Philadelphia took root, Nari Ward's *We the People* chimes a note of solidarity with the cries of activists camping outside City Hall. The show is comprised of aggressively articulate sculptures and installations that broach urgent topics such as immigration, poverty and discrimination. A custom tanning bed rigged to sear stars and stripes onto patriotic hides may seem like a gimmick at first, but the complex wiring and military-grade surveillance cameras set to monitor visitors recall sober issues of border crossing and citizenship. The show's titular work traces the phrase "We the People" in limp calligraphy on the gallery wall. Using multi-colored shoelaces, the palette suggests that despite the bitter irony of this constitutional quotation in the face of rampant corporate interests, we are, nonetheless, a rainbow nation of individual human beings.