

HOWL

Inspiration for Creatives
from *Wolf-Gordon*

Issue 03, 2021 — Quarterly
Curated by Paul Makovsky



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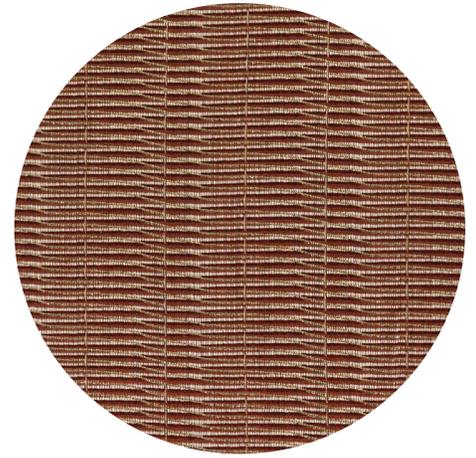
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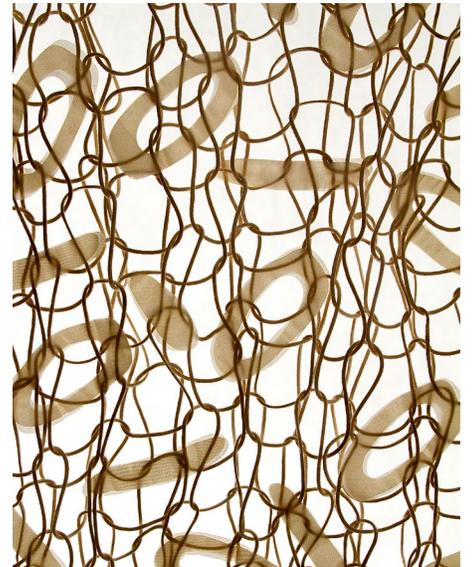
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—— Feature

Net Heroes

Toshiko and Charles MacAdam's crocheted structures turn art into a playground.

by Kim Cook

There's a vibrant community of textile artists in the Canadian Maritimes, but there's only one company creating two-ton, thirty-foot-wide crocheted pieces for kids to romp on.

Toshiko MacAdam
Harmonic Motion (2013)

Museum of Contemporary Art of Rome (MACRO)

Photo: Roberto Boccaccino

Courtesy of Enel Contemporanea

In Nova Scotia's pastoral Annapolis Valley, Toshiko and Charles MacAdam run Interplay Design & Manufacturing, where they mastermind giant art installation/play structures woven of stretchy nylon fibers. The structures have delighted visitors to museums, parks, and playgrounds around the world. They've been the backdrop for gangster chases in Jackie Chan films and have even found their way into video games.

Born in Tokyo in 1940, Toshiko Horiuchi MacAdam's experience as a post-war refugee profoundly impacted her. "I realized even as a young child that life should be spent doing what makes one happy." With degrees from Tama Art University and Cranbrook Academy of Art, she became



Toshiko MacAdam
Harmonic Motion (2013)
 Museum of Contemporary Art of Rome (MACRO)
 Photo: Roberto Boccaccino
 Courtesy of Enel Contemporanea

Whammock!, a popular ongoing attraction at the San Diego New Children’s Museum, took 3,600 hours to construct, and consists of 40 miles of braided nylon.



Toshiko MacAdam
Whammock! (2019)
 The New Children’s Museum, San Diego
 Photo: Brandon Colbert
 Courtesy of The New Children’s Museum

a staff designer at the Boris Kroll Fabric Company in New York City, then through the 60s, taught weaving and fabric design at various institutions.

Toshiko continued creating her art while teaching and is considered a leading member of the 1970s “new wave” of experimental fiber artists. She explored woven fiber’s relationship with light and movement in pieces like *Atmosphere of the Forest*, *Atmosphere of the Floating Cube*, and *Luminous Curtain*, and became fascinated with how manipulating knitted material created new shapes—crocheting was a technique she termed even “more freeing.”

Then, one day in 1970, something happened in a Tokyo gallery that set her on a new trajectory. Two children jumped into the artwork Toshiko had just installed, and it started bouncing, shifting shape. The piece came to life as they played. “The textiles started moving, and I thought, ‘Fantastic! This is much more interesting than just making beautiful things,’” she says. And that meant creating art for children. Researching Tokyo playgrounds, she saw how uninspired the steel and concrete spaces were. She was determined to make lively, soft, and welcoming places to play, engrained in textile sculpture, so she worked with landscape architect Fumiako Takano on a netted play space in an Okinawan park in 1979 that drew raves.

Her first large commission was *Knitted Wonder Space 2* for the Hakone Open Air Museum in Japan—a crocheted 50’ x 30’ wonderland of swinging balls, hammocks and bouncy surfaces, made of over 1400 pounds of brightly-colored nylon rope that she spent a year knitting by hand.

Toshiko met Charles MacAdam while he was working in finance in Tokyo and dabbling in art on the side; they bonded over their love of textile art. After their son was born, they opted to leave Japan, landing in Canada, Charles’ homeland. They’ve been in Bridgetown for over thirty-five years, where Charles oversees the projects. As he has said, “Toshi makes it. I make it happen.”

Interplay has created dozens of projects in Japan over the years. Perhaps Toshiko’s most famous project is the *Woods of Net* (2009) installation at Hakone. She asked that venerable engineering expert Torihide Imagawa be brought in to design the complex all-wood structure that supports her creation, and Interplay has continued to work with his firm. In Hokkaido’s Takino Suzuran Hillside National Park, Interplay created *Rainbow Nest* (2000), a

“I prefer to see the space first.
How the sunlight looks, the
changing colors, how you feel in
the surrounding nature.”

—Toshiko MacAdam

28-foot-wide, 1,000-pound, braided nylon structure with hanging pendulums, hidey-holes, and bouncing net.

Toshiko used a PVA material called vinylon in her early work, then switched to nylon. Today she prefers a solution-dyed filament that’s sent to the west coast of Canada for initial processing, and then back to the Nova Scotia studio for fiber correction and braiding. Interplay has a small team and hires locally for global installations, but Toshiko still crochets and assembles.

She recalls how her initial play structure proposals met with maintenance concerns from the Japanese government, but she countered with examples of gardening and shoji screen repair: “We’re used to these traditions of maintenance in our lives.” She wryly recalls how one government naysayer came back to her years later to commission a park project; his mind had been changed after watching his own kids play on the nets.

Toshiko says she approaches all new projects the same way: “I prefer to see the space first. How the sunlight looks, the changing colors, how you feel in the surrounding nature.” She likens the energy of her structures to a child’s experience in the womb. And in fact, pediatric doctors have told her that exploring play on these giant nets is measurably helpful with development.

The indoor installations are usually just up for an exhibition period. The outdoor ones may be up for years. Charles says everybody understands that with thousands of rambunctious children jumping and leaping on them, there will be wear over time, so long-term installations receive regular inspections for reinforcement or replacement. The pandemic paused many projects and proposals, but things are moving again—among them installations at high-rise residences in India and Miami, and an orphanage in Iraq.

The couple say what they love about their work is the reaction of children. They meet grownups who recall playing on Toshiko’s early pieces and now bring their own families to explore them. They’re approached by new net climbers, too. One little boy came up to Toshiko, gave her a hug, and said, “I’ve been to lots and lots of things at museums, and yours is the best ever. You’re Superman!”

Kim Cook is a contributing writer for regional and global news outlets including the Associated Press.



Toshiko and
Charles MacAdam

Photo: Courtesy of Toshiko
and Charles MacAdam



—— Feature

Pattern Play

History repeats but is reinvented in bold color textiles through the lens of sculptor Elisabeth Kley whose graphic signature is black and white.

by Elaine Markoutsas

Pattern lives rent-free in Elisabeth Kley's mind. Not in dreams, although she dreams in color. Mostly, her creative process is informed by history. She is drawn to such diverse imagery as Roman, Byzantine, Egyptian, Indian, North African, Islamic, and Wiener Werkstätte.

Elisabeth Kley at work

Photo: Carlos Avendaño
Courtesy of the artist

As a painter-turned sculptor, Elisabeth Kley's signature style has evolved to an über graphic black and white expression, with an almost naïve quality. The art itself morphed from smaller scale sometimes-utilitarian objects to much larger format decorative pieces.

Her first solo exhibit, *Minutes of Sand*, recently wrapped up at The Fabric Workshop and Museum (FWM) in Philadelphia. It revealed a new body of work, plus one in a previously unexplored medium. The Brooklyn-based artist was invited to print fabric with FWM's world-renowned screen-printing facilities. The intersection of ceramic and painting techniques with printed textiles was compelling



Elisabeth Kley
 Left: *Double Stack Pointing Two Ways* (2021)

Glazed earthenware, 44 x 17 x 13 ½ inches

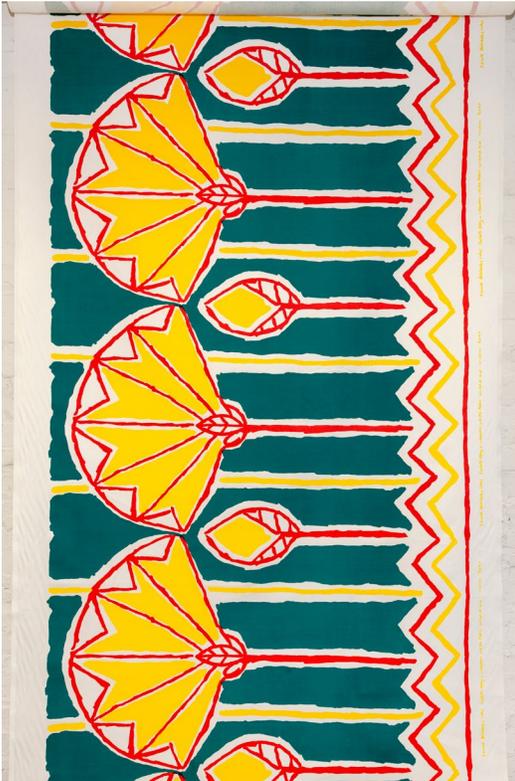
Right: *After Bakst* (2020)

In collaboration with The Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia
 Banner: 155 x 96 inches

Photos: Carlos Avendaño
 Courtesy of the artist

as the yardage displayed vivid color—specifically a primary palette underscored by the black and white glazed earthenware. “Even though my sculptures are three-dimensional,” says Kley, “I treat each surface as a sort of painting or drawing.” What was different, she says, was going back to working in color. “Also, the idea of making a fabric was kind of confusing,” she says. “I started off with a small-scale pattern, repeating it. I realized I wanted something more open and bigger. It was a whole evolution.” She focused on more geometrical, simple shapes for the fabric: “I am fascinated by reversal and positive and negative. In textiles, you’re very conscious of the shape of empty space.”

The black and white ceramics were inspired by Egyptian art downloaded from the internet, and in books and photos she took in museums, as she ferreted out details that caught her eye. The screen-printed fabrics are actually linked to early 20th century textiles. A bold yellow lotus on black ground design was derived from a 1918 Egyptian motif for a curtain by Edouard Benedict. The curling red line on a dark blue ground, a familiar wave pattern found in many cultures, was inspired by a fabric design from the late 1910s by Leon Bakst, who designed opulent sets and costumes for the Ballets Russes. “This design was featured in a show I saw at the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World in 2019 that focused on the influence of classical Greece and ancient Egypt on Bakst and other designers,” Kley says.



Elisabeth Kley
Eduard Benedictus Lotus (2020)

In collaboration with FWM, Philadelphia
 Pigment on cotton sateen

Photo: Carlos Avendaño
 Courtesy of the artist

Kley made up the third design, relating it to pieces in the show, perhaps subconsciously channeling Roman mosaics. For color, Kley experimented with “lots and lots of bottles of colored inks,” mainly Dr. PH Martin’s Hydrus watercolor, which she likes for its texture, lightfastness, and mixability. She especially liked red and the way it spread. “The more I expanded and simplified the designs, the more sensual the color.” Her process was painting multiple designs on 18-by-24 inch sheets of paper. “When I was getting more sure of what I wanted, I cut (lengths) to the same size as the fabric for screening (four feet wide by 30 feet long).” Kley designed and painted the translucent mylar sheets. They were then photographed by the team onto the screen and screen printed. “They took my designs and blew them up on the computer. There was one sheet for each color. They placed the pieces of mylar film over the blowups they made, painting each in black. Then, they took to the darkroom and exposed it on the screen. Three screens for each design; layers of color were laid on the screen, then squeegeed across.”

“Elisabeth Kley looks for inspiration from global art and architecture histories. And yet she conveys these motifs with a contemporary edge, one that feels both handmade and in motion.”
—Karen Patterson, FWM curator

Two artist-designed interiors continue to inspire Kley: Matisse’s sparse, light-filled chapel in Vence, France and the ornate layering of rich velvet textiles in the Fortuny Palace in Venice. “I feel that my installation is visually somewhere in between those extremes: open graphic shapes played off of intricately detailed patterns.” Pattern is the connective tissue. “I like the repetition and transformation of the design motifs of cultures over time.” Kley points to Egyptian, Roman and Greek motifs being reimagined in Europe both by Empire and Neoclassical designers, and then by the Ballets Russes. Or reimagined Islamic environments in houses of Pierre Loti and D’Annunzio or Natacha Rambova channeling Beardsley in her design for the film *Salomé*. “Pattern resonates with me because of what it does to space, how it can overwhelm,” says Kley, whose next show is September 2022 at the [Canada Gallery](#) in New York.

With a desire to upscale the ceramics even more, she plans to spend a few weeks at Cerámica Suro in Guadalajara, Mexico, where she can experiment with larger commercial kilns. She still might opt to stick with her limited 25-inch-tall kiln and stack pieces because of the logistics of moving massive ones. She also may include more textiles, perhaps exploring other techniques like stamping. Or even batik because of its serendipity. “I love the way color sits on the fabric,” she says. “Seeing that fabric on the wall is amazing.”

Elaine Markoutsas is a Chicago-based freelance design writer and editor.



Elisabeth Kley
On Wall: *X's and Stripes* (2020)
In collaboration with FWM, Philadelphia
Photo: Carlos Avendaño
Courtesy of the artist



Photo: Carlos Avendaño
Courtesy of the artist

Joey Shimoda

Living, Working and
Collecting in LA

by Paul Makovsky



Susan Chang, ASID, AIA and Joey Shimoda, FAIA, FIIDA, co-founders of Shimoda Design Group.

Courtesy of Shimoda Design Group

— How do you manage with the effects of the pandemic in the last year?

In the last year, we certainly saw a lot of trepidation on moving forward with new projects, so that created a time to reflect about the future and since we were all working remotely, we realized it's still incredibly important to be creative with other people in the same room. Creative people are triggered by the most bizarre things, and unexpected things can happen when you're with someone else working on a problem. Right now, we're working on a two-acre park that will be on the rooftop of the old post office in New York City.

We used the time during the pandemic to release ourselves from the past, and as a time to think of design in a



Griffith Observatory

Aerial view. Los Angeles, CA.

Photo: [Cameron Venti on Unsplash](#)

completely new way. It's both exciting and depressing at the same time, because it made you ask yourself what was holding you back to think like this before. It's a fantastic door opener. How much more agile can we be? Digital mapping and automation are changing the way we design things. In some ways, I'm impressed by industrial designers like Carl Magnusson and Brian Graham whose creativity works on a very high level and how they've figured out how to design furniture in a different way.

——— What are some of the things that you do now that are more impactful for you?

Travel was a big distraction, and I started doing things that I enjoyed when I was younger like riding bicycles and customizing motorcycles. Taking smaller objects like a motorbike and messing with them and changing them is very fulfilling. It's not just about beauty but my desire to create and make things also really connected to a functional aspect.

Taking up golf has also taken me to a place where all of a sudden I can experience nature in Los Angeles, primarily through public golf courses and discovering parts of LA that I had never knew existed. Places like Griffith Park and Observatory and Greek, which is right near a driving range, and near that, is Frank Lloyd Wright's Ennis House—made famous in Blade Runner—which shows LA at its best.

——— What do you love about living and working in downtown LA, where you've been since the early 90s?

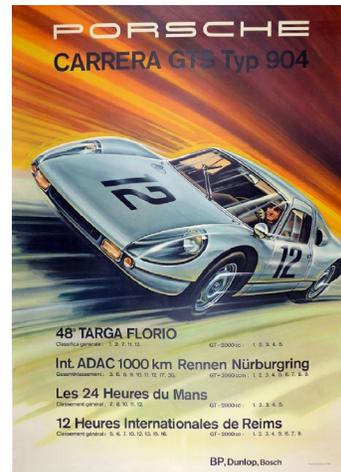
Downtown LA is fundamentally ugly and imperfect, unlike places like Santa Monica or Beverly Hills where we do a lot of our work. LA has always been an open field which makes it interesting to me. I live in a loft and it's a place where I have a lot of things that I collect like Michelin Man memorabilia. He's the iconic graphic embodiment of culture—born out of the business of making tires. As a branding identity, it's one of the most successful in the world, and connected to that came the Michelin travel guides. The weirdest thing I have is probably a 12-foot talk inflatable that was used for special occasions for Michelin. I also collect vintage Porsche racing posters from the 50s and 60s, and have a collection of architect drawings from the likes of Michael Graves, Thom Mayne, Steven Holl, Pierre Koenig, and Tadao Ando, just to name a few.



Frank Lloyd Wright's Ennis House

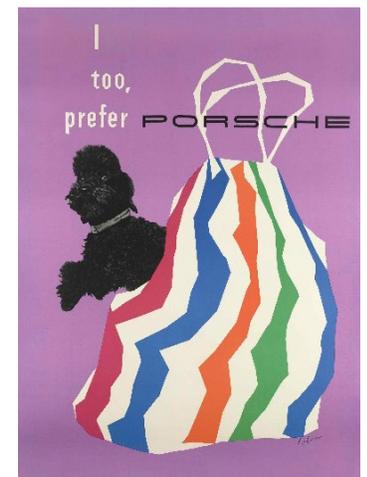
Los Feliz, Los Angeles, CA.
The house was designed in 1923 for Charles and Mabel Ennis and built in 1924.

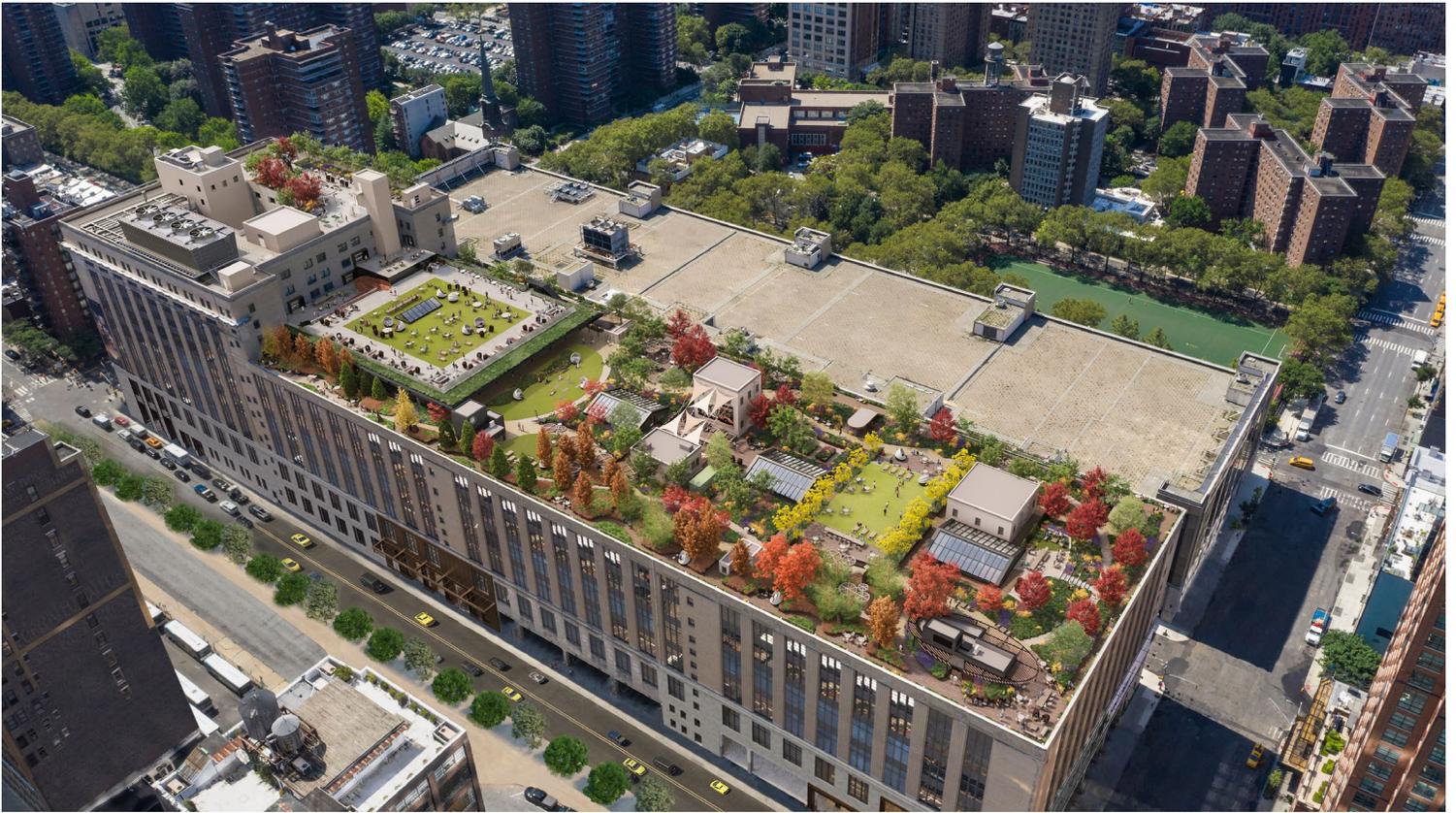
Photo: "Ennis House (3)" by Kjmagnuson is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#)



Vintage 1950s and 1960s Porsche racing posters from Shimoda's collection.

Photos: Courtesy of Joey Shimoda





Morgan North, New York City

This historic Art Deco post office in Chelsea, New York is set to become a creative office complex with a 2.5-acre private rooftop deck—the largest in Manhattan, when it's completed in late Spring 2022. The landscape design elements were jointly designed by Shimoda Design Group and HM White.

Rendering: Courtesy of Shimoda Design Group

—— What are some of your favorite places in LA?

The river underneath the Sixth Street Bridge—captured in so many movies—is a beautiful and quintessentially LA place. During the pandemic, Manuella—the restaurant at Hauser & Wirth with a great outdoor space— became our office cafeteria, and we'd eat there at least once or twice a week. And Zinc Café also has a beautiful outdoor space with a great olive tree in this kind of nowhere land. Hennessey & Ingalls—located in a mixed-used development designed by Michael Maltzan—is one of the best architecture and design bookstores in the country. I also love Little Tokyo's grocery stores and Kinokuniya bookstore with great stationery and Japanese magazines and books. For art inspiration, The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA—an old warehouse transformed by Frank Gehry— also has some of the most cutting edge art.

—— Do you have a bucket list of things to do in LA?

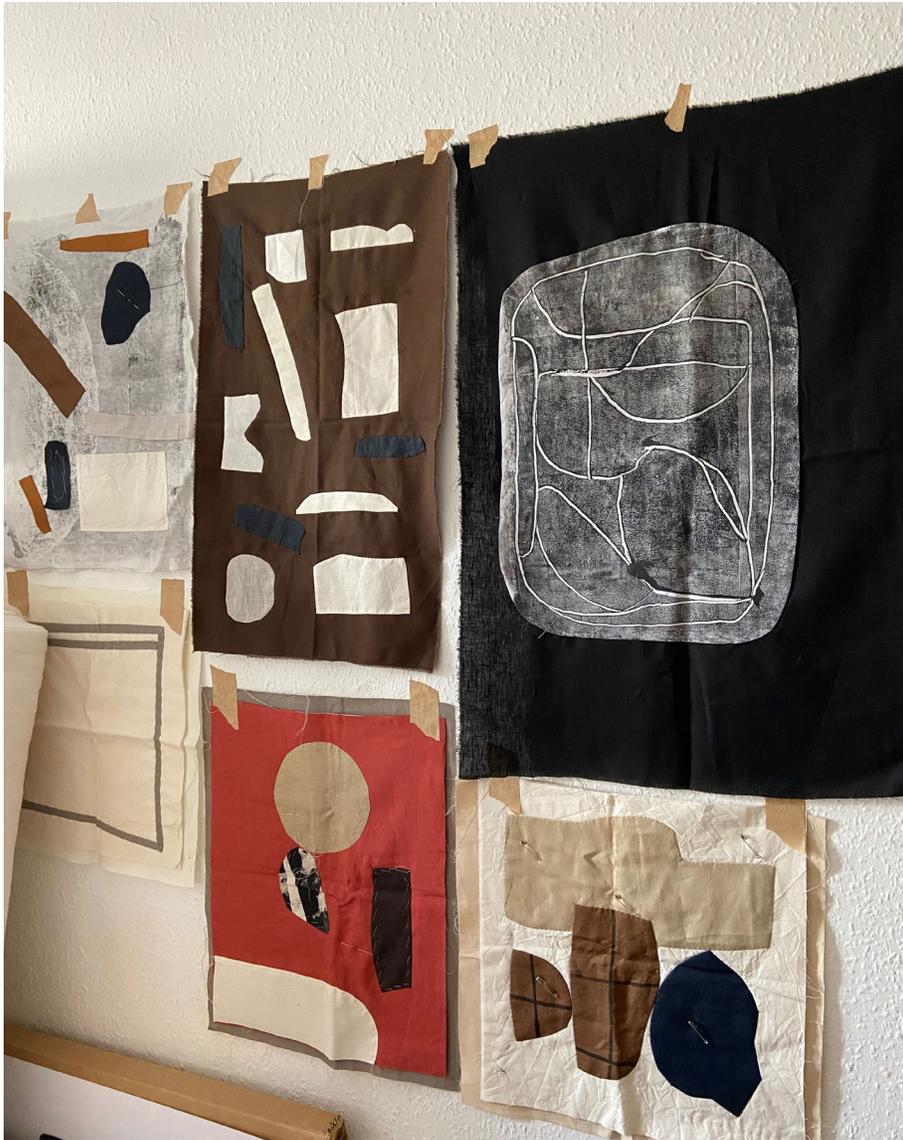
In this order: Ride the Swan pedal boats at Echo Park Lake, ride my motorbike to the mountainous parts north of Pasadena, visit more of the coast line of LA, and even something as basic as riding through Mulholland Drive— maybe with someone like Keanu Reeves.



MOCA Geffen Contemporary

Little Tokyo, Los Angeles, CA.

Photo: Charles Deluvio on Unsplash



House of Quinn
Works in Progress (2021)

Textile applique artworks made from cotton and linen.

Photo: Julius Arthur @houseofquinn

Courtesy of the artist

—— @houseofquinn

Works in Progress

Founded by UK-based Julius Arthur in 2016, House of Quinn is a place for exploration in craft, making and design by using traditional techniques and fundamental making. Arthur swapped being a menswear designer for quilt making, and using ends of textile rolls from suppliers or offcuts, he creates one-of-a-kind, abstract, collaged quilts.



Kristen Kaas
Untitled (2021)

Triple block double weave. A selection of handwoven pieces created for an upcoming exhibition that explores multi cloth weaving structures by using traditional handweaving techniques to further investigate how woven textiles become multidimensional.

Linen, silk, cotton, wool, paper, milk weed fluff and seeds.

Photo: Courtesy of the artist

——— @kristenkaas

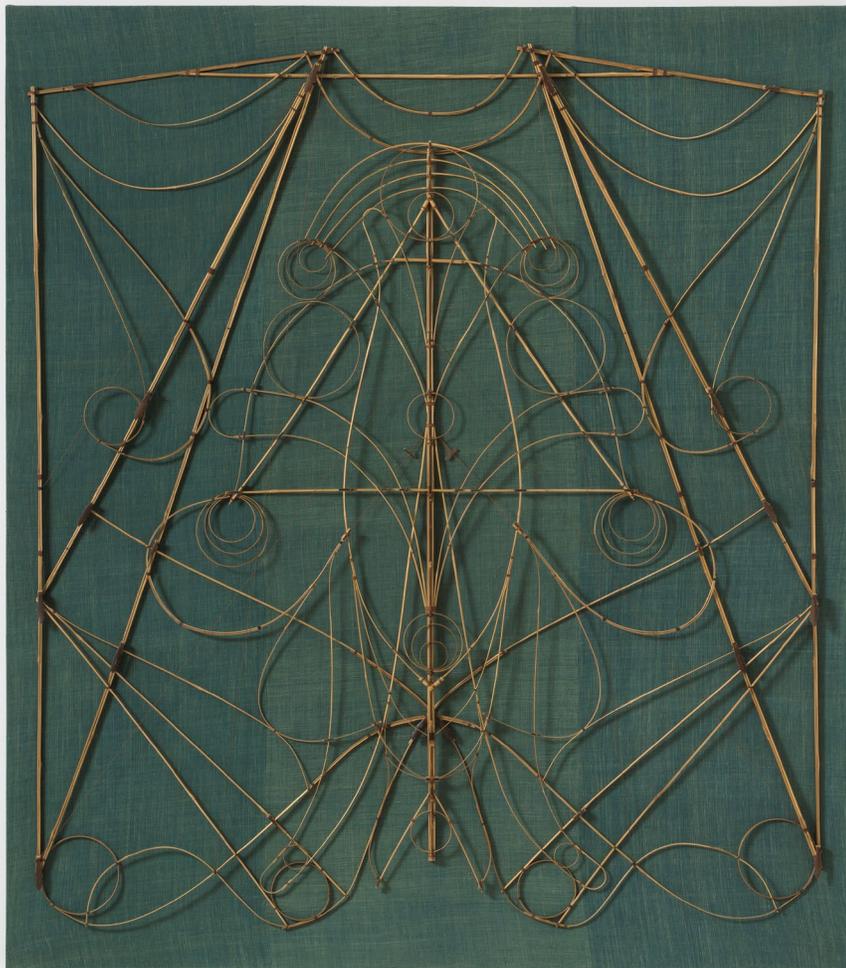
Untitled

Kristen Kaas is a designer, weaver, and fiber artist in Northern Minnesota, who uses texture and dimension to create contemporary, experimental, and functional fiber works. She explores how the tactile nature of textiles enhances our environment and how textiles elevate our daily experience.

— @louisedespont

Antimonium Tartaricum

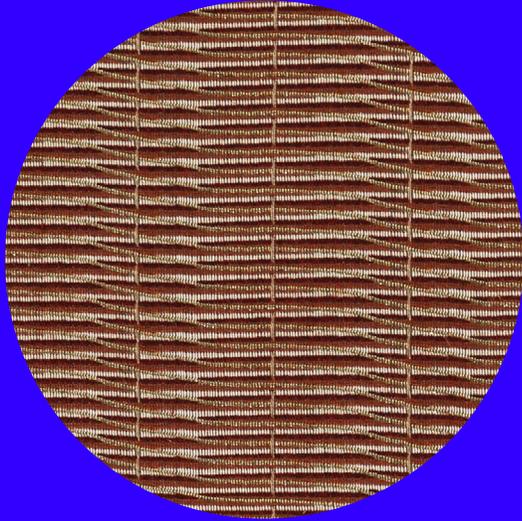
An artist based in New York and Bali, who mostly draws but also creates with bamboo and textiles, Louise Despont's work is a meditation on the intersection of the intellectual and the spiritual. Her artistic production spans drawings on antique ledger book pages to bamboo line sculptures, and her most recent work evokes balance in its most essential geometry.



Louise Despont
Antimonium Tartaricum (2020)

Bamboo, string, and glue on handwoven cotton dyed with indigo and mango leaf.
93 x 81 inches

Courtesy of the artist and Nicelle
Beauchene Gallery



Upholstery

Merge by Mae Engelgeer

Mae Engelgeer has created a cabled textile design with an unexpected accent line of metallic filaments that move sensually over the wool and cotton construction. Merge comes in six rich colorways.



Wallcovering

Aquatint

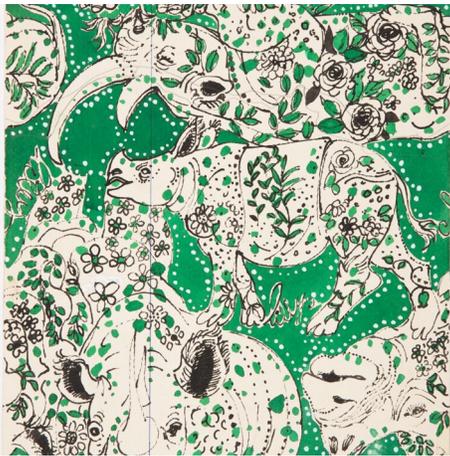
Our latest addition to the CLAIR® collection of PVC-free Type II wallcoverings, Aquatint conjures impressions of light dappled water in ten neutral, pastel and blue colorways.



Wallcovering

Laguna

Inspired by textiles in the Museum of New Mexico archives, our newest pattern in the Origins Collection is an exquisite large-scale wallcovering that speaks to the geology of the American Southwest, as well as Native American weavings, in seven colorways.



— Exhibition

Suzie Zuzek for Lilly Pulitzer: The Prints That Made the Fashion Brand

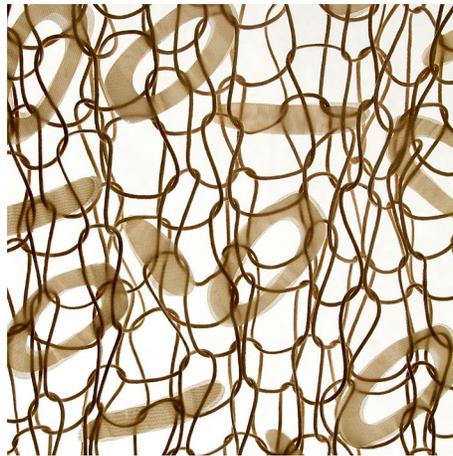
Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum
New York, NY

until January 2, 2022

The bold and whimsical prints of 1960s fashion are often associated with Lilly Pulitzer, yet few people know that most of those prints—worn by fashion icons such as First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy—were designed by Key West artist Suzie Zuzek (Agnes Helen Zuzek de Poo, American, 1920–2011). Zuzek was a staff designer for Key West Hand Print Fabrics, where Pulitzer sourced most of her fabrics—and all of her prints—between 1962 and 1985, the period during which Pulitzer owned and oversaw the company that bears her name. This is the first museum exhibition to showcase the nature and scope of Zuzek’s work and includes more than 35 original watercolors and gouaches of the artist’s work, alongside screen-printed textiles and some of the fashions that made them famous.

Suzie Zuzek
Drawing, Rhino (© January 21, 1977)

Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum
Gift of The Original I.P. LLC, 5891.2.2018
Photo: Matt Flynn © The Original I.P. LLC



— Conversation

Renata Meirelles

NY Textile Month TV
www.textilemonth.nyc

This online conversation features Renata Meirelles, a visual artist graduated from the Fundação Armando Alvares Penteado (FAAP) in Sao Paulo, Brazil, who carries out research and experimentation work in an area of textiles that moves between art, design and jewelry. Using both new technologies such as laser cutting as well as traditional manual techniques, she has developed a constructive system that combines industrial, digital and artisan techniques, creating collections composed of jewelry as well as textile objects, sculptures and panels that reveal their application to another scale.

Renata Meirelles
Panel Tear 1

Photo: Lígia Eça Negreiros



— Exhibition

Fabric of a Nation American Quilt Stories

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
Boston, MA

until January 17, 2022

This exhibition explores how the quilt has been viewed as a democratic art, and how it has continuously evolved over the centuries, shaped by a broadly underrecognized diversity of artistic hands and minds. It showcases 50 remarkable quilts—dating from the 17th century to the present day, including two quilts by Harriet Powers (1837–1910), a formerly enslaved woman from Georgia, to contemporary pieces by artists such as Sanford Biggers, Tomie Nagano, Rowland Ricketts, and Michael C. Thorpe, just to name a few.

Virginia E. Jacobs
Krakow Kabuki Waltz (1987)

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Cotton plain weave, pieced and quilted
Gift of the artist
Reproduced with permission.
Photo: © Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

— Take a Look



— Exhibition

In America: A Lexicon of American Fashion

The Metropolitan Museum of Art
New York, NY

until September 5, 2022

The first of a two-part, year-long extravaganza, this exhibition features a display of 100 men's and women's garments dating from the 1940s to the present, set in an installation inspired by a patchwork quilt. Referencing an 1856 signature quilt in the museum's collection created by Adeline Harris Sears, featuring diamond-shaped squares signed by some of the most famous Americans of the period, the exhibition is composed of white scrimmed cases that represent a three-dimensional grid – each containing a specimen of American fashion history. The exhibition features American designers including Ralph Lauren, Tommy Hilfiger and Tara Subkoff, just to name a few.

Gallery View, "Nostalgia"

Installation view of Part One: "In America: A Lexicon of American Fashion" (2021)

Part One: Gallery 132 and Anna Wintour Costume Center
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Photo: © The Metropolitan Museum of Art



— Exhibition

Color Riot! How Color Changed Navajo Textiles

Montclair Art Museum
Montclair, NJ

until January 2, 2022

Seventy vivid works — from 1860 through 1930, as well as from contemporary artists — showcase experimentation in Navajo weaving and highlighting the culture's resilience. The historical textiles are rooted in the time period when the US government forcibly placed 10,000 Diné — another name for the Navajo people, in their own language — at Bosque Redondo, an internment camp at Fort Sumner, New Mexico. During that time, Diné weavers were influenced by Hispanic textiles, and they incorporated aniline dyes, and wool yarns mass produced in Philadelphia's Germantown neighborhood. The exhibition demonstrates the innovations of the Navajo communities.

Gallery View, "Color Riot!"

Photo: Courtesy of Montclair Art Museum

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Next Issue: Spring 2022.
See you then!

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future content should be addressed
to howl@wolfgordon.com.



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