



LIZ COLLINS



ABOUT LIZ COLLINS

Liz Collins' textile work encompasses large-scale sculptural commissions, two- and three-dimensional wall art, and performative installations, and often incorporates digital media, design and decorative arts. Her practice engages the public around themes of energy, emotions and relationships, and regularly includes programming for museums, public spaces, educational institutions and families.

Employing a range of natural to synthetic materials, incorporating vivid colors, dynamic patterns, and emphasizing textures and inventive structures, Collins enjoys pushing the limits and doing the unexpected across the spectrum of textile media. Her artworks surround the viewer in vibrating color fields to explore the boundaries between painting, fiber arts and installation. The cacophonous play of optics, texture, color and scale, recreates her wavering experience of the world as a place of stupendous wonder and cosmic energy.

Collins received a BFA (1991) and MFA (1999) in Textiles from RISD. Upon earning her MFA she launched her own knitwear-focused fashion label, developing a following for her innovative collections. In 2003 Collins joined the RISD faculty and moved into making art, eventually leaving RISD in 2013 to more fully pursue her art and design career. She has since taught at SAIC, MICA, Pratt, Parsons, and Moore College, and has been a visiting artist and critic at many art and design schools.

Collins lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.





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/ 3 /

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This sculptural installation of seven billowing sail-like structures was commissioned for a glass cube public café space overlooking the East River in Manhattan.

The fabric, in silk and polyester, was originally developed by Liz Collins as part of a design project with a major U.S. luxury textile manufacturer and fabricated in Italy. It was custom cut and sewn for this project to evoke the flow and feel of sails in the wind.

The commission was inspired by the memory of the artist's father, a Navy captain and lifelong sailor who shared his love of the water with his daughter.



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This installation, in a former office suite at 4 Times Square in Manhattan, was commissioned by the directors of Spring/Break Art Show for the 2017 edition of the fair. The space included cabinets, closets and a bathroom. There were several other artist and gallery installations in the surrounding office spaces.

Collins transformed this conventional office environment into a zone that became another Energy Field of sorts, where vibrating pattern and vibrant color activated a neutral space from the floor to the ceiling. Using the doorless cabinets as showcases for paintings, drawings and textile pieces, and the bathroom and closets to project video works by artist Lauryn Seigel, Collins occupied the space in a dynamic and unexpected manner, including transforming the wall-to-wall carpet with cardboard and gaffers' tape, and directing suspended video cameras into mirrors.





Energy Field is a long-running installation created as a lounge and social space for visitors and students. Designed for congregation, conversation, and study, Energy Field has been the site of meetings, public dialogues, improvisational dance performances, sonic meditation, and more during the academic year.

Energy Field is designed to revitalize the lounge/visitor through color, shape, and texture. It is a new age crystal cave viewed through a pop post-modern lens. With exploding supernovas on the ceiling, chevrons on the wall, and stripes on the floor, the brash sharpness is offset by plush carpeting, raining yarn, and upholstered furniture. Energy Field is a liminal space intended to invite both prolonged exploration and rest. A mirrored wall extends the room into the next dimension while at the same time functioning as a grounding device, i.e., "I am here now. Here I am."





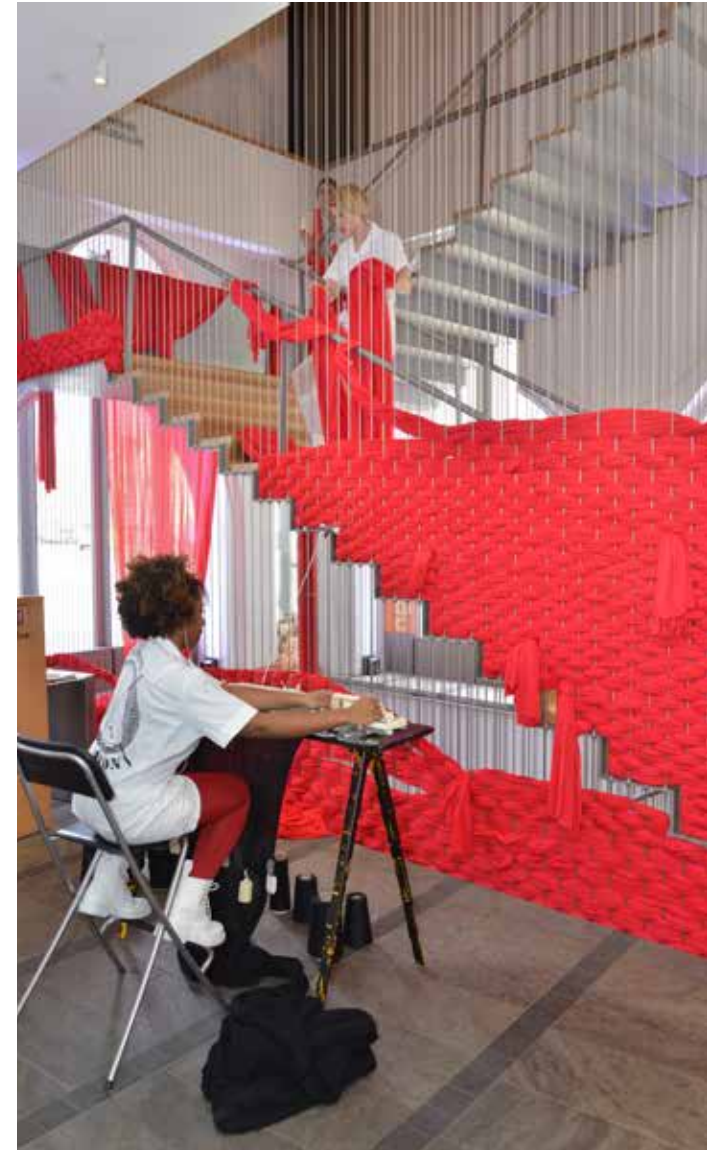
This site-specific installation and live labor performance was the fifteenth and final iteration of Knitting Nation.

Collins turned the museum atrium into a knitting and weaving factory, while revealing the dynamic and rich relationship between textiles and architecture. The open stairwell was transformed into a large tapestry as her factory crew wove a continuous soft wall that grew as the day progressed.

Presented in conjunction with the exhibition "In Time (The Rhythm of the Workshop)," which explored the relationships between materials, bodies and value in industrial manufacturing, the installation was the conclusion of Collins' Artist Studios Residency, a four-month artist residency at the museum.

Knitting Nation foregrounds the human labor behind textile fabrication and apparel manufacturing, and acts as a commentary on the relationship between humans and machines, global manufacturing, trade, labor and more.

Collins enacted her Knitting Nation installations in various locations from 2005 through 2016, including MoMA, New York; the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston; Rhode Island School of Design; Skidmore College; and other public spaces.



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Sitting Room was the first installation of a series that Liz Collins has created using the concepts of domestic space, environments that immerse people in active pattern, and living in and with art.

AMP Gallery was, at the time, on the ground floor of a colonial, and otherwise residential house in Provincetown, Massachusetts. Collins was invited to take over one of the two main rooms that comprised the gallery. The house felt like a home, and Collins took her typical site-responsive approach of determining quickly how the space could transform. Through bringing in familiar domestic elements — a rug, comfortable chairs, subdued lighting, wallpaper, curtains that were all custom made for this project —and hanging her art made in the same visual language as the design elements, Collins was aiming to create a synthesized environment that was meant to both seduce and agitate visitors; to stimulate and soothe. This installation exemplified the dualism Collins often explores in her art, creating relationships that carry tension and release, attraction and repulsion, darkness and light.

The project marked the beginning of an ongoing collaboration with celebrated designer Harry Allen, with whom Collins designed and made the seating and lighting.



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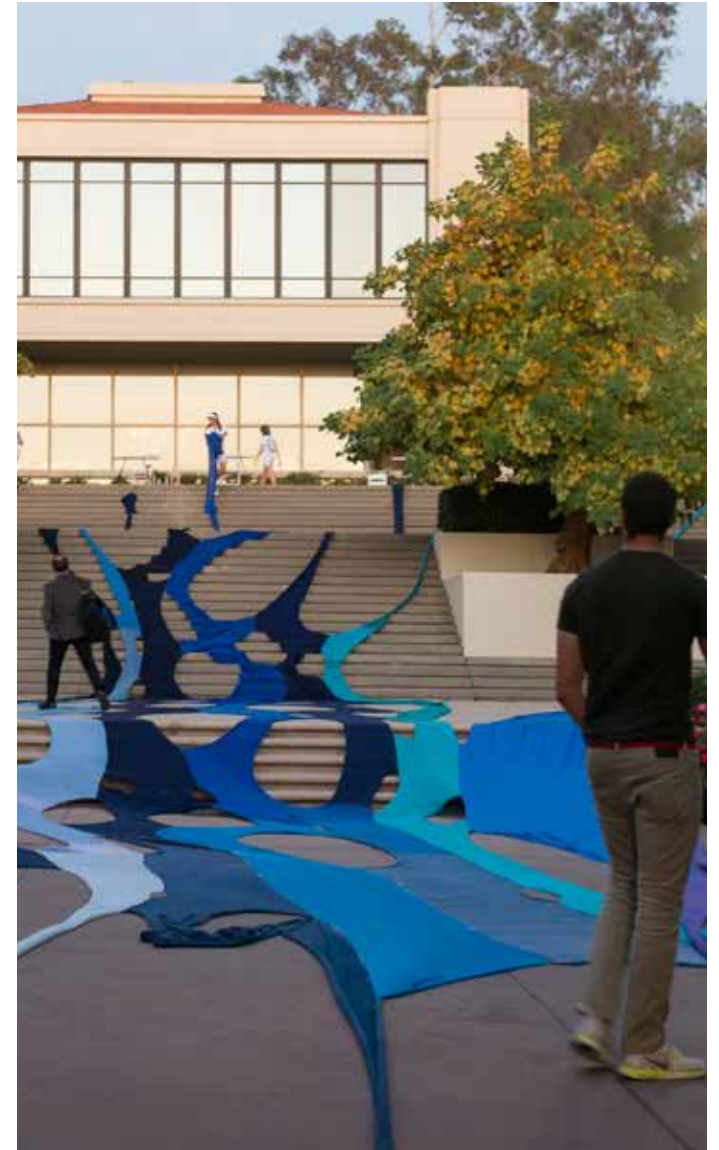


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Liz Collins worked with Advanced Projects in Interdisciplinary Arts students at Occidental College to theatricalize the connection between body and machine, textile and space that is at the invisible center of globalized garment manufacturing. As the knitters sway in rhythm with their machines, the chromatic streams of knit yardage serve as architectonic scale drawings.

Collins brought Knitting Nation 12 to Occidental College as the inaugural Wanlass Artist-in-Residence. In addition to the daylong site specific performance, Collins' residence featured the installation Distancer-Pursuer and a public dialogue with noted art historian, Julia Bryan-Wilson.

The Los Angeles campus was the first west coast site of Knitting Nation.



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Liz Collins was the inaugural Wanlass Artist-in-Residence at Occidental College in 2013. This residency program allows an artist to investigate aspects of their practice and share it with the College campus-wide, encouraging cross-campus collaboration and thoughtful, sustained interaction between artist and students.

Collins' two-week residence featured the gallery installation *Distancer-Pursuer*, part of the artist's zig zag fringe series, in addition to the *Knitting Nation 12* performance and a public dialogue with noted art historian Julia Bryan-Wilson.

This installation was a response to the unique triangular space that is the gallery portion of the Mullin Sculpture Studio designed by Levin and Associates. Collins came up with the idea of a geometric and vibrating mountain range with black yarn attached in erratic zig zag webs that alluded to electric current and created and connected lines of energy and tension in the angles of the room.

Distancer-Pursuer is a therapeutic term used to describe an interpersonal tension dynamic in relationships. It occurs when one partner, seeking security and to relieve anxiety, metaphorically reaches for the other (wanting more contact) and in response the second partner may feel overwhelmed and relieve anxiety by withdrawing.



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Knitting Nation 10: Domestic Swarming was staged at MoMA Studio: Common Senses, as a response to Fritz Haeg's Domestic Integrities rug.

Liz Collins and five other knitters created narrow cords in a spectrum of colors that fed directly from knitting machines into piles of cording, which were then braided directly into the rug. No cutting, no knots, just six contiguous cords of color feeding the piece for five hours straight. Visitors were welcome to observe this swarming and learn about the process, while also contributing to crocheting the circular Domestic Integrities rug using discarded textiles.

This closing event for MoMA Studio was an invitation to our many communities to find comfort, conversation and nourishment through creative interactions and potluck offerings of homemade items from jams and pickles to bread and tea.



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/ 18 /

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Knitting Nation 7 was a concert of a quintet of knitters. Situated on a stage, five knitters knit a pile of red cotton yardage over the course of six hours. Darkness Descends was an endurance test of hard labor: an un-choreographed dance, and a militaristic display of a dark emotional state.

Helen Molesworth, the chief curator of ICA Boston, commissioned new iterations of Knitting Nation to include in the Dance/Draw exhibition, which explored the multi-layered relationship between contemporary dance and drawing of the past 40 years.

Other artists featured in this exhibition included Jeanine Antoni, Paul Chan, and Yvonne Rainer. Darkness Descends was supported and funded by the McColl Johnson Fellowship.



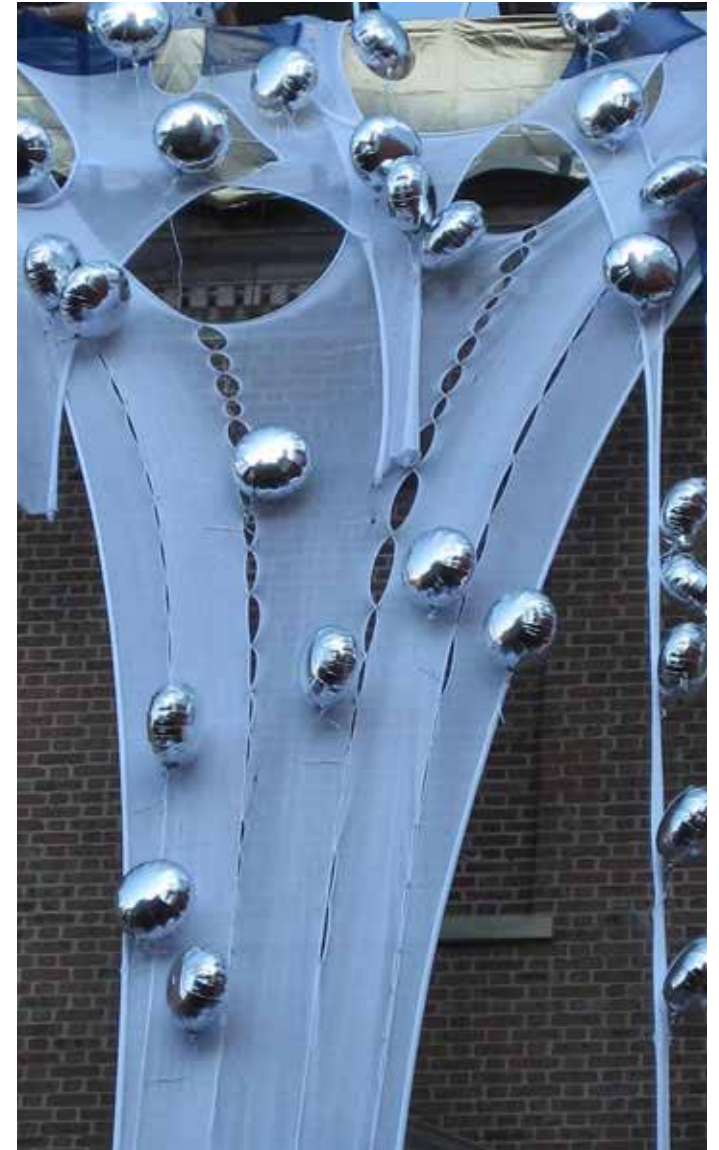
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This performance installation was conceived in response to an invitation to celebrate a new building in the heart of Providence during Fall Festival at Rhode Island School of Design.

Inspired by the Chace Center's half brick and half silver finish, Knitting Nation 5 used white metallic yarn and entangled dozens of silver mylar balloons into the yardage. Knitters were stationed on the roof allowing the yardage to drape down the side of the building.

Unlike other Knitting Nation iterations, the audience watched from the ground — only to see the steady accumulation of knit yardage grow from the roof of the center for three days. A live video feed of the knitting production played on the ground level.



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Liz Collins' team of knitters recreated an homage to the original rainbow pride flag while orators took turns reading replies from an international internet poll question: "How do you feel about the rainbow flag?" The public was invited to reply to the question though an open-mic incorporated in the installation.

The rainbow pride flag was designed by Gilbert Baker in San Francisco in 1978 to symbolize the diversity of the gay community. The flag has since become an internationally recognized icon of LGBTQ politics, communities and market-based identities.

During the performance piece, in six hours, eight knitters constructed a massive knit pride flag that functions as a sculptural object.



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SOLO EXHIBITIONS / PERFORMANCES / INSTALLATIONS

- 2017 Inheritance, Commercial Commission Installation, NY
 2017 Rain Installation, Industry City, NY
 2017 Energy Field - Times Square, Spring/Break Art Show, NY
 2016 Energy Field Phase 2, Tang Museum, Saratoga Springs, NY
 2016 Fringe, WantedDesign, Seaport Studios, NY
 2016 KN15: Weaving Walls, Museum of Arts And Design, NY
 2015 Energy Field, Tang Museum, Saratoga Springs, NY
 2015 KN14: The Matter At Hand, Business Fashion+Design Accelerator, Brooklyn, NY
 2015 KN13: Weaving Factory, Collective Design, NY
 2014 Having It All, Heller Gallery, NY
 2014 Sitting Room, Amp Gallery, Provincetown, MA
 2013 Distancer-Pursuer, Wanlass Gallery, Occidental College, Los Angeles, CA
 2013 KN12: H2O, Occidental College, Los Angeles, CA
 2013 KN11: Stripped Bare, Jedinstvo, Zagreb, Croatia
 2013 Touching The Void, Textile Arts Center, NY
 2012 KN10: Domestic Swarming, Museum of Modern Art, NY
 2012 KN9: Accumulation, Tang Museum, Saratoga Springs, NY
 2012 Mend, Underline Gallery, NY
 2012 Magic Eye Intervention, Mildred Complexity, Narrowsburg, NY
 2011 KN8: Under Construction, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, MA
 2011 KN7: Darkness Descends, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, MA
 2010 KN6: Mapping, Tillinghast Farm, Barrington, RI
 2009 Textiles and Tactics, Out North Gallery, Anchorage, AK
 2009 Doll Cave, AS220, Providence, RI
 2008 KN5: Architectural Embellishment, RISD Museum, Providence, RI
 2008 KN4: Pride, Waterplace Park, Providence, RI
 2006 KN3: The Stripe Game, RISD, Providence, RI
 2006 KN2: Atelier, Felissimo Design House, NY
 2005 Safe, Knoxville Museum of Art, Knoxville, TN
 2005 KN1: Knitting During Wartime, Governors Island, NY



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SELECT GROUP EXHIBITIONS / 2017-2012

- 2017 Trigger: Gender as a Tool and a Weapon, New Museum, NY
- 2017 Tie Up Draw Down, Center for Creativity, Craft & Design, Asheville, NC
- 2017 WantedDesign Brooklyn, Industry City, NY
- 2017 Collection #3: Room with Its Own View, Chamber, NY
- 2017 Expanded Visions, Leslie-Lohman Museum of Gay and Lesbian Art, NY
- 2017 Made in Turkiye, NoLAB @ Haskoy, Istanbul, Turkey
- 2017 Laguna Art Prize exhibition, sculpture finalist, Arsenale, Venice, Italy
- 2017 Thread by Thread, LMAK Gallery, NY
- 2017 Expanded Visions, Fifty Years of Collecting, Leslie-Lohman Museum of Gay and Lesbian Art, NY
- 2017 Post- Election, September Gallery, Hudson, NY
- 2016 TSA Flatfiles, Tiger Strikes Asteroid, NY
- 2016 RE//Woven, Monserrat Gallery, Beverly, MA
- 2016 Dazzle Camouflage: Hiding in Plain Sight, Sun Valley Center for the Arts, Sun Valley, ID
- 2016 Queer Threads, Boston Center for the Arts, Boston, MA
- 2016 CounterCraft: Voices of the Indie Craft Movement, Fuller Craft Museum, Brockton, MA
- 2016 Intimacy and Materiality, Helen Day Art Center, Stowe, VT
- 2015 Queer Threads, Maryland Institute College of Art
- 2015 Fiberlicious, Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery
- 2015 Who's Afraid of Feminism?, A.I.R. Gallery, NY
- 2015 Over, Under, Through, J & M studio residents show, NARS Foundation, NY
- 2014 SHEROES, Lamp Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
- 2014 Queer Threads, Leslie-Lohman Museum of Gay and Lesbian Art, NY
- 2013 Queer Style: From the Closet to the Catwalk, FIT Museum, NY
- 2013 Tool at Hand, Museum of Contemporary Craft, Portland, OR
- 2012 Common Senses, Museum of Modern Art, NYC
- 2012 Dance/ Draw, Tang Museum, Saratoga Springs, NY
- 2012 BGSQD Pop-up Shop, Strange Loop Gallery, NY



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SELECT GROUP EXHIBITIONS / 2012-2003

- 2012 SHOP Anew, Underline Gallery, NY
- 2012 Fuel for the Fire, 535 W20th St/ Dawn Kasper in Residence at David Zwirner, NY
- 2012 ReMix: ReFraming Appropriation, SOMArts! Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- 2012 Pepe and Puntar's Lucid Dream Lounge, Participant Gallery, NY
- 2012 Tool at Hand, Philadelphia Art Alliance, Philadelphia, PA
- 2011 Tool at Hand, Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee, WI
- 2011 Dance/Draw, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, MA
- 2011 YES!, Buonnacorsi & Agniel Gallery, Providence, RI
- 2011 Cries of San Francisco, Southern Exposure Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- 2011 Queer it Yourself, SOMArts Cultural Center, San Francisco, CA
- 2009 World of Queer Craft, Craftland Gallery, Providence, RI
- 2009 Product, International Gallery for Contemporary Art, Anchorage, AK
- 2009 Queer Craft, Advocate & Gochis Galleries, Los Angeles, CA
- 2009 Threads, SOMArts Cultural Center, San Francisco, CA
- 2008 A Century of Change: Art and Design from the 20th Century, RISD Museum, Providence, RI
- 2008 Vested Interest, Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, WI
- 2008 Gestures of Resistance, Gray Matters Gallery, Dallas, TX
- 2008 Evolution/ Revolution: The Arts and Crafts in Contemporary Fashion and Textiles, RISD Museum, Providence, RI
- 2008 Shelter, 516 Arts, Albuquerque, NM
- 2007 The Handmade Goes Digital, Museum of Arts and Design, NY
- 2005 The Muster, Governors Island, NY
- 2005 Fall Vernissage, Dinaburg Fine Arts, NY
- 2005 Woven, Gallery W52nd, NY
- 2003 Made in Brooklyn, Felissimo Design House, NY
- 2003 Runway Madness, American Textile History Museum, Lowell, MA



SELECT AWARDS / FELLOWSHIPS / RESIDENCIES

2017 Siena Art Institute Visiting Artist Program
2015 Museum of Arts and Design Artist in Residence Program
2015 Nominee for United States Artists Fellowship
2015 Nominee for Tiffany Foundation Fellowship
2015 Haystack Open Studio Residency
2014 Yaddo Artists Colony Residency
2014 Haystack Open Studio Residency
2013 CEC ArtsLink Grant
2013 Queer Zagreb Residency, Zagreb, Croatia
2011 The Rhode Island Foundation Robert and Margaret
MacColl Johnson Fellowship in Fine Arts
2010 Mildred's Complexity Residency, Narrowsburg, NY
2009 RISD Alumni Association Award for Innovation in
Education and Scholarly Pursuits
2009 Alaska AIR Residency
2006 United States Artists Target Fellowship in Crafts and
Traditional Arts
2001 Rhode Island Slater Center for Design Innovation Grant
2000 Artist Fellowship, Rhode Island State Council of the Arts
2000 Design Vision Award, GenArt

COLLECTIONS

FIT Museum, New York, NY
RISD Museum, Providence, RI
Tang Museum, Saratoga Springs, NY
School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Fashion Resource Center,
Chicago, IL
Leslie-Lohmann Museum of Gay and Lesbian Art, New York, NY

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