



FERNE JACOBS INTERIOR NATURE

JUNE 9 – JULY 31, 2020



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Presented exclusively in a Virtual Viewing Room



Interior Nature highlights eleven textural sculptures by Los Angeles-based artist Ferne Jacobs (b. 1942). Jacobs has been a leader in the fiber textile field for decades, setting herself apart through her innovative approach. Inspired by ancient basket-making techniques, Jacobs developed a unique method of building her signature forms through a process of coiling and twining waxed linen thread around cord, creating rows upon rows of wraps. The completed works embody striking silhouettes and resemble organic shapes found in nature. The variety of colored thread mimics hues and subtle gradations found within the earth, from warm ochres and reds, to cool greens and blues. While some possess multiple tones, such as *Medusa's Collar* (2010), others embrace one uniform color, as seen in *Waves* (2019).

Jacobs's artistic process is meticulous and slow. She never begins a piece with a preconceived notion of what its final form will look like. Instead, Jacobs allows the introspective process of wrapping to lead her to the end results. Specific themes surface in her work, such as nature and the human body. These motifs are evident in her titles, such as *Transparent Globe* (2015), *Waves* (2019), *Spine* (2013), and *Circulatory System* (2013). Jacobs sees this constant, timeless figure, always present but always in flux. Dance-like, each of her tactile silhouettes represents an aspect of this process: they curve, twist, slope, and stretch. Of the pieces in this exhibition, six are free-standing sculptures while five are intended to be hung vertically on a wall. They range in scale from 10 x 8 x 6 inches (*Transparent Sunlight* - 2016) to 54 x 16 x 4 inches (*Interior Passages* - 2016).

In reflecting on the motivations behind her art, Jacobs explained: "Doing work of this kind makes me feel a deep connection to a timeless past that emerges out of the earth. I am a link in bringing this ancient way of being into my own time, hopefully making it relevant as an art form, and helping nurture it into the future."

—Nancy Margolis Gallery, 2020

I would like to share two experiences that moved me regarding my work. The first one was at the University Art Museum of Arizona, Tempe, Arizona. It was an exhibit of the Sara and David Lieberman Collection, of which my work was a part. When you entered the Museum, there was an open space next to the entrance and welcoming counter. Inside the Museum was their collection. What moved me was that in the open space at the entrance, there were just three objects: a sculpture by Ken Price, a painting by Willem DeKooning, and a wall piece of mine. They looked beautiful together, and shared this simple space with room to contemplate each separately.

The second experience was at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. I had been told that my piece called *Soft Paddle* had been on view. I was visiting Boston, and asked to be dropped off at the Museum to see if it was still up. It was in the room of the Daphne Farago Collection.

I walked through the Museum, stopping in the Post-Impressionist room. I fell in love with a Vincent van Gogh painting and stood contemplating it. Then I walked into the next room and without thinking, turned my head to the left. There was my piece on a wall by itself. Turning around to look at it, I could also see the van Gogh painting. It is as if they were hanging next to each other, (because the van Gogh painting was on a wall facing the same direction as mine, and the doorway was positioned so that I could see them at the same time with nothing between).

I stood there looking from the van Gogh to my work and back again, mesmerized by their proximity. Van Gogh's painting had this frenetic energy, like so much of his work. This constant movement, which I am so fascinated by. Looking at my piece, I felt this similar energy, but so differently expressed, intense, but very quiet. I watched them somehow in my mind, relating with each other having this dialogue. What an experience for me, maybe the most special in my life.

— Ferne Jacobs, 2020



Ferne Jacobs in her studio, mid-1970s; photograph from *The Los Angeles Examiner*

Ferne Jacobs working on *Swan Wave*, 1993



CAROUSEL, 2008

Coiled waxed linen thread

15 x 16 x 11 inches



MEDUSA'S COLLAR, 2010

Coiled waxed linen thread

18 x 14 x 19 inches





FLIGHT, 2011

Coiled waxed linen thread

16 x 20 x 13 inches





SPINE, 2013

Coiled waxed linen thread

45 x 15 x 7 inches





CIRCULATORY SYSTEM, 2013

Coiled waxed linen thread

45 x 21 x 3 inches





TRANSPARENT GLOBE, 2015

Coiled and twined waxed linen thread

9.5 x 8 x 6 inches





TWO ANGELS, 2015

Coiled and twined waxed linen thread

28 x 14 x 6 inches





TRANSPARENT SUNLIGHT, 2016

Coiled and twined waxed linen thread

10 x 8 x 6 inches





The excitement for me is in the details, going so slow that I spend a great amount of time in them. It is as if I can find the form through the details, creating a body that emerges by each wrap of the thread, cell by cell.

FERNE JACOBS

INTERIOR PASSAGES, 2016

Coiled and twined waxed linen thread

54 x 16 x 4 inches





ORIGINS, 2018

Coiled and twined waxed linen thread

51 x 17.5 x 4 inches





WAVES, 2019

Coiled and twined waxed linen thread

7.5 x 10.5 x 7 inches





EDUCATION

- 1976 M.F.A. Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, CA
1970 UCLA, "Off-loom Techniques in Fiber," Neda Ali-Hilali, Summer
1967–71 Haystack Mountain School of Crafts, scholarship student, Olga d'Amaral
1967–68 Dominic DiMare, private lessons in weaving, San Francisco, CA
1966–67 California State University at Long Beach, Weaving, Mary Jane Leland
1965 California State University at San Diego, Weaving, Arlene Fisch
1964–65 Pratt Institute, Painting, New York, NY
1960–63 Art Center College of Design, Los Angeles, CA

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2020 Nancy Margolis Gallery, *Interior Nature*, online exhibition
2012 Nancy Margolis Gallery, New York, NY
2008 Nancy Margolis Gallery, New York, NY
1999 Sybaris Gallery, Royal Oak, Detroit, MI
1998 *Selections 1995–1998*, Nancy Margolis Gallery, New York, NY
1996 Joanne Rapp Gallery, Scottsdale, AZ
1995 *Uncommon Threads*, Sybaris Gallery, Royal Oak, Detroit, MI
1994 *Ferne Jacobs, Recent Work*, Nancy Margolis Gallery, New York, NY
1992 Sybaris Gallery, Royal Oak, Detroit, MI
1991 *Recent Fiber Sculpture*, Franklin Parrasch Gallery, New York, NY
1989 *Viewpoints*, Sybaris Gallery, Royal Oak, Detroit, MI
1983 Miller/Brown Gallery, San Francisco, CA
1980 *Ferne Jacobs, Fiber Work and Drawings, a Retrospective Exhibit of 10 Years Work*, Rex W. Wigmall, Museum Gallery, Chaffey Community College, Alta Loma, CA
1977 Hadler/Rodriguez Galleries, New York, NY
1972 Galleria del Sol, Santa Barbara, CA

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2016 Nancy Margolis Gallery, New York, NY
2015 *Extreme Fibers*, Muskegon Art Museum, Muskegon, MI, traveling to the Dennon Art Center, Traverse, MI
2013 *Repetition & Ritual*, New Sculpture in Fiber, The Hudgens Center for the Arts, Duluth, GA
2011 *All Things Considered IV*, Fuller Craft Museum, Brockton, MA
Golden State of Craft: California: 1960–1985, Craft and Folk Art Museum, Los Angeles, CA
2009 Museum of Arts and Design, New York, NY
High Fiber, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Renwick Gallery, Washington D.C.
2005 *Intertwined, Contemporary Baskets from the Sara and David Lieberman Collection*, ASU Art Museum, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ
Transitions/Translations: Innovations in Basketry, Gallery One, Washtenaw Community College, Ann Arbor, MI
2004 *Contemporary Fibers*, Wignall Museum/Gallery, Chaffey College, Alta Loma, CA
Celebrations, Nancy Margolis Gallery, New York, NY
Fiber Biennial 2004, Snyderman-Works Galleries, Philadelphia, PA
2003 *California Looms: Woven & Constructed*, Craft and Folk Art Museum, Los Angeles, CA
Transcending Process: Contemporary Fiber, Brookfield Craft Center, Brookfield, CT
Generations/Transformations: American Fiber Art, American Textile History Museum, Lowell, MA
Grand Opening Exhibition, Racine Art Museum, Racine, WI
2002 *Los Angeles Artists/Los Angeles Collectors: Contemporary Baskets*, Los Angeles International Airport, CA
Coming of Age, Mint Museum of Art/Craft and Design, Charlotte, NC
Escape from the Vault: The Contemporary Museum's Collection Breaks Out, The Contemporary Museum, Honolulu, HI
Exhibition of the Permanent Collection, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Renwick Gallery, Washington D.C.

- Fiber Arts Today*, Mobilia Gallery, Cambridge, MA
Threads on the Edge, a selection of works from the Daphne Farago Collection, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA
 2000 *Survey Fiber 2002*, Snyderman-Works Galleries, Philadelphia, PA
Surface-Strength-Structure: Pertaining to Line, Snyderman-Works Galleries, Philadelphia, PA
Miniatures: 2000, Helen Drutt, Philadelphia, PA
The Nature of Fiber, Stone Quarry Hill Art Park, Cazenovia, NY
 1999 *The Art of Fiber*, Stone Quarry Hill Art Park, Cazenovia, NY
 1997 *Vessels*, Armory Center for the Arts, Pasadena, CA
Contemporary Art Basket, Ohio Crafts Museum, Columbus, OH
 1996 *Life Work - Individual Expression in Fiber*, El Camino College Art Gallery, Torrance, CA
 1995 *Exploring Along the Outer Edges*, Sculptural Basketry, Craft Alliance Gallery, St. Louis, MO
Fiber: Five Decades, from the permanent collection, American Craft Museum, New York, NY
 Denno Museum Center, Northwestern Michigan College, Traverse City, MI
Arduous Happiness, Santa Monica College Art Gallery, S.M., CA
Sculptural Baskets, Joanne Rapp Gallery, AZ
 1993 *Linen*, Fashion Institute of Technology, New York, NY
Baskets, Mobilia, Cambridge, MA
 1992 *Pro-Art Fiber Group Exhibition*, St. Louis, MO
Fiber Art - New Directions for the Nineties, Manchester Institute of Arts and Sciences, NH
Sensibilities: Substance and Surface, Biada Art Gallery, Mount St. Mary's College, Los Angeles, CA
Four Artists Reflect 1971-1991, The Society for Contemporary Crafts, Pittsburgh, PA
Craft Today USA, organized by the American Craft Museum, NY
 1988 *Up From L.A.*, Palo Alto Cultural Center, Palo Alto, CA
Frontiers in Fiber: The Americans, organized by the North Dakota Museum of Art (traveling exhibition through Japan, Korea, and mainland China)
Basketry '88 / Evolution into Sculpture, Wita Gardiner Gallery, San Diego, CA
Material Images: 15 Fiber Artists, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH
 1987 *The Modern Basket: A Redefinition*, Pittsburgh Center for the Arts, Pittsburgh, PA
The Ritual Vessel, Twining Gallery, New York, NY
New Work by Artists, Craft Museum, NY
The Eloquent Object, The Philbrook Museum of Art, Tulsa, OK
Fiber Synthesis, Brea Gallery, Brea Civic and Cultural Center, Brea, CA
Baskets as Sculpture, Miller/Brown Gallery, San Francisco, CA
Poetry of the Physical, American Craft Museum, New York, NY
 1986 *Fiber Re/Evolution*, Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee, WI
 1985 *Textile Constructs*, California State University at Northridge, Northridge, CA
Selection '85, American Craft Council Benefit, Windows on the World, World Trade Center, New York, NY
Fiber: Small Scale Works of Art, Modern Master Tapestries, Inc., NY
 1984 *American Basket Forms*, Brookfield Craft Center, Brookfield, CT
American Craft Traditions, San Francisco International Airport, CA
Basketry, Gallery Eight, La Jolla, CA
 1982 *Tradition in New Form*, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, MA
Other Baskets, Craft Alliance, St. Louis, MO
 1981 *Made in L.A.*, *Contemporary Crafts '81*, Craft and Folk Art Museum, Los Angeles, CA
Old Traditions / New Directions, The Textile Museum, Washington D.C.
The Masters, Gallery Eight, La Jolla, CA
Beyond Tradition: 25th Anniversary Exhibition of the American Craft Museum, NY
Fabrications, Riverside Art Center and Museum, Riverside, CA
 Mandell Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
 1980 *Synopsis Gallery*, Winnetka, IL
The Contemporary Basket Maker, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN
Opening Invitational Exhibition, Greenwood Gallery, Washington D.C.
 Elizabeth Fortner Gallery, Santa Barbara, CA
 1979 *The Basket-Maker's Art*, The Elements Gallery, New York, NY
Clay & Fiber Gallery, Taos, NM

- Intimate Statements*, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM
- Art Renewal Show I, Fall*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA
- 1977 *Fiber Works, an International Invitational Fibers Exhibition*, Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, OH
- 1976 *California Design '76*, Pacific Design Center, Los Angeles, CA
- American Crafts*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL
- California Women in Crafts*, Craft and Folk Art Museum, Los Angeles, CA
- 1975 *Craftsman's Art*, Fairtree Gallery, New York, NY
- Opening Exhibition of the Hadler Galleries*, New York, NY
- 1974 *First World Crafts Exhibition*, Ontario Science Center, Toronto, Canada
- First International Exhibition of Miniature Textiles*, British Crafts Centre, London, England
- 1973 *Three Artist Exhibition*, Fairtree Gallery, New York, NY
- Fiber Works*, Lang Art Gallery, Scripps College, Claremont, CA
- 1972 *Sculpture in Fiber*, Museum of Contemporary Crafts, New York, NY
- Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington, Seattle, WA
- Fiber Structures*, The Denver Art Museum, Denver, CO
- Fiber Art by American Artists*, Ball State University, Muncie, IN

HONORS & AWARDS

- 2005–06 Flintridge Foundation Award for Visual Artists, Pasadena, CA
- 1995 Named a Fellow of the College of Fellows, American Craft Council
- 1991 Artist in Residence at La Napoule Art Foundation, La Napoule, France
- 1977–78 National Endowments for the Arts Fellowship
- 1973–74 National Endowments for the Arts Fellowship

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

- Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of American Art, Washington D.C.
- Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY
- Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA
- De Young Museum, San Francisco, CA
- The Mint Museum of Craft and Design, Charlotte, NC
- Museum of Arts and Design, New York, NY
- Contemporary Museum, Honolulu, HI
- Detroit Institute of the Arts, Detroit, MI
- Erie Art Museum, Erie, PA
- Oakland Museum, Oakland, CA
- Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, RI
- Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh, Scotland
- Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, CT

When I work, I enter a mysterious place where I don't know where I am, or where I will end up. There is some hidden reality to find. It is always present. It is up to me to remain open to it.

FERNE JACOBS



Ferne Jacobs with *Origins*, 2020; photograph by Gary Leonard

