

ZOOM

A timely survey of shows, views, people, and work

On Our Radar Alicia Scardetta



THE FIRST THING MOST PEOPLE notice about Alicia Scardetta's weavings and wall hangings is their prismatic array of tropical colors: coral pink, turquoise, neon yellow, magenta. The 26-year-old Brooklyn artist says her playful palette was inspired by the Nickelodeon cartoons she watched as a kid, her family's Mexican heritage, and her upbringing in sunny San Antonio, Texas. She's also described her work as riffing on childhood friendship bracelets.

"A lot of adults seem afraid of using vibrant colors or having them in their homes," Scardetta says. "The color makes my pieces different from what people expect when they think of textile art."

Scardetta's pieces have quickly found a following since she began making them about five years ago. Her work has been shown in several group exhibitions and featured in boutiques around the country and on the popular shopping site One Kings Lane, where they sold well. On Instagram, she has more than 9,000 followers.

Color on the Side

Day job: Managing the wholesale business of Coral & Tusk, a Brooklyn company that specializes in embroidered home goods.

Time spent: Her large pieces – up to 50 by 18 inches – require four to six weeks of steady work in the evenings and on weekends.

Motivation: "My pieces celebrate girlhood and youth, and I'm not afraid of being feminine, because weaving has historically been done by women."

Heroes: Sheila Hicks, Lenore Tawney, Anni Albers.

Craft-school connections: Teaches at the Textile Arts Center, where she's also had a residency. She's been a tapestry assistant at Penland School of Crafts and studied at Haystack Mountain School of Crafts.

Big plan: She hopes to do more residencies and eventually focus on fiber art full time.

Scardetta got interested in textile art when she was a student at Pratt Institute. After seeing historical weavings on several blogs, she became curious about the medium and found her way to the Brooklyn branch of the Textile Arts Center. She interned there in 2011 and was

immediately hooked. She continued her studies in fine art and drawing, earning her BFA in 2012, while building a frame loom, investing in cotton and wool yarn and metallic threads, and taking classes at the center.

Scardetta makes two kinds of work: wall hangings with

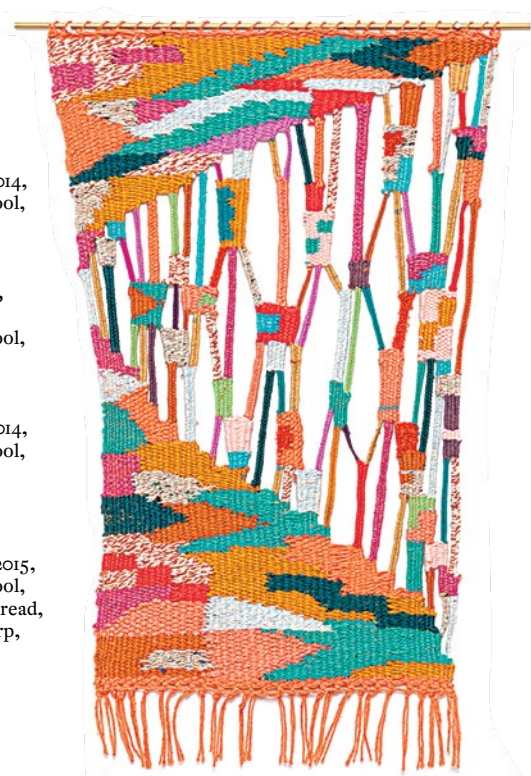
cotton ropes wrapped with yarn, connected at various junctures by wrapping; and weavings with open spaces filled with wrapped cords. Sometimes many wrapped cords hang off the weavings in a sort of hammock formation, giving them a sculptural quality

strongly reminiscent of Sheila Hicks' work. Scardetta says her first such piece, *Melted* (2014), was a breakthrough: "It got me off the wall, and then I made another piece with even more hanging cords, which I call appendages. The three-dimensional quality of textiles

is definitely something I'm continuing to investigate." "I discovered the wrapping technique because I was interested in negative space," Scardetta recalls. The wrapped cords allow her to create interesting negative forms, and she loves that. In *Jaws II* (2014),

near the top, the weaving breaks into a forest of wrapped cords on an angle; weaving resumes in the lower half, creating an effect like an open jaw chomping through the piece. "This is time-consuming work that's made by hand, and I hope people see that in

the work – the hand, and time, in physical form," she says. "And I hope my pieces stir up good feelings – because it's happy work." ~LIZ LOGAN
ascardetta.com
Liz Logan is a freelance writer in Brooklyn.



OPPOSITE LEFT: **Melted**, 2014, cotton, wool, 21 x 11.5 in.

LEFT: **Tamarisk**, 2014, cotton, wool, 34 x 18 in.

RIGHT: **Jaws II**, 2014, cotton, wool, 20 x 12 in.

BOTTOM RIGHT: **Forever**, 2015, cotton, wool, metallic thread, cotton warp, 20 x 18 in.

Photos: Will Ellis