

Sheila Hicks

Paris-based American artist Sheila Hicks has been creating hand-woven, abstract fiber-based installations and sculptures for nearly sixty years. From large-scale commissions to gallery exhibitions, her multifaceted practice traverses the spheres of commercial production and fine art and simultaneously references indigenous traditions from around the world. The artist plays with and builds on classical textile techniques—weaving, crocheting, dyeing, and spinning—to develop her own experimental and idiosyncratic style, incorporating natural fibers, synthetic blends, and even everyday office supplies. Hicks's tactile objects and installations of riotous color and breathtaking form expand fiber's kinship to both painting and sculpture.

Featuring works from the 1960s to the present, this exhibition brings together major works from private collections and the Saint Louis Art Museum with recent examples of the artist's ongoing series of small-scale portable weavings, or *minimes*. The works on view exemplify a number of formal leitmotifs that Hicks has returned to over the years. Modular arrangements recur throughout her practice, as in *The Evolving Tapestry: Blue* (1967–68), a collection of twenty-five woven units of fringed linen and silk and *Voyage of Serpentina* (1985), comprising nineteen stuffed and knotted silk tubes and brightly colored skeins of fiber. Her ongoing interest in the relationship between painting, sculpture, and textile media is explored in works like *Masonry Panel* (1981) and *Forêt de Lin Wall Hanging* (c. 1968, reconstructed 1983), a large-scale diptych of undyed, wet-spun linen tassels that cascades off the wall in a reinterpretation of bas-relief. Other works demonstrate Hicks's playful adaptation of quotidian materials and interest in industrial design. The minime *Ringlets* (1993), for instance, is made of intertwined multicolored rubber bands and paper clips and also serves as a study for larger objects. Still other works incorporate elements



Oracle from Constantinople, 2008–10. Linen, 96 × 68 × 10 inches.
Collection of Fontene Demoulas and Tom Coté, Boston.



Audio Tour

Download the CAM app at camstl.org/app
or ask for an iPod at the front desk to hear
directly from the curator on the audio tour.



Escape to the North, 2013. Linen, silk, bamboo, and porcupine quills. 9 7/8 x 5 1/2 inches. Private collection, Miami.

of the natural world, including feathers and porcupine quills. Together, these works map a cross-section of Hicks's practice over the last fifty years and exemplify her masterful and ongoing articulation of color, materiality, space, and scale.

Sheila Hicks (b. 1934, Hastings, Nebraska) lives and works in Paris. Recent solo exhibitions include *Foray into Chromatic Zones* at the Hayward Gallery, London (2015), and *L'État du Ciel* at the Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2014). The major survey *Sheila Hicks: 50 Years* debuted at the Addison Gallery of American Art in 2010 and traveled to the Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, and the Mint Museum, Charlotte, North Carolina in 2011. Hicks's work has been widely exhibited in major group exhibitions including *Threadlines*, The Drawing Center, New York (2014); *The Whitney Biennial*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2014); and *Fiber: Sculpture 1960–Present* at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (traveled to the Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, Ohio, and the Des Moines Art Center, Des Moines, Iowa) (2014–15). Her work is in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Museum of Modern Art, both in New York City; Museum of Fine Arts Boston; The Art Institute of Chicago; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Museo de Bellas Artes, Santiago, Chile; the Museums of Modern Art, Tokyo and Kyoto; and many others. Hicks is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Smithsonian Archives of American Art Medal (2010), Officier des Arts et des Lettres, France (1996), and an Honorary Doctorate from the Rhode Island School of Design.

This exhibition is generously supported by Nancy and Kenneth Kranzberg and Friends of the Artist. Special thanks to Sikkema Jenkins & Co., New York; Alison Jacques Gallery, London; and Galerie Frank Elbaz, Paris.

Sheila Hicks is organized for the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis by Kelly Shindler, Associate Curator.

Related Events

Innovations in Textiles 10

Keynote Speaker: Jenelle Porter

Saturday, October 3, 9:30 am

CAM presents the keynote address by Jenelle Porter for Innovations in Textiles 10, a regional collaborative event celebrating fiber art, in conjunction with the exhibition *Sheila Hicks*. A leading curator of contemporary art, Porter organized the definitive exhibition *Fiber: Sculpture 1960–Present* at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston.

Contemporary Class: Sheila Hicks in Context

Saturday, December 5, 10:30 am

Open to all membership levels.

Register at camstl.org/class.

Associate Curator Kelly Shindler takes Sheila Hicks's body of work as a point of departure to discuss fiber and textiles in contemporary art.



The Evolving Tapestry: Blue, 1967–68. Linen and silk, 25 pieces, approximately 2 x 23 1/4 x 15 inches each. The Saint Louis Art Museum. Gift of Vivian and Edward Merrin. 80:1992a-y.



**Contemporary Art
Museum St. Louis**
3750 Washington Blvd
St. Louis, MO 63108
314.535.4660

Connect with CAM

Visit camstl.org

Follow [@contemporarystl](https://twitter.com/contemporarystl)
on Twitter

Like [contemporaryart
museumstl](https://www.facebook.com/contemporaryartmuseumstl) on Facebook

Follow [camstl](https://www.instagram.com/camstl/) on
Instagram

Sign up for enews
at camstl.org/news

Download the CAM STL
app from the [App Store](https://www.apple.com/app-store/)
or [Google Play](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.camstl)