

# Making a Mark

THE ART OF SELF EXPRESSION

March 11 – May 7, 2023

**WACH**  
WOMEN'S ART CENTER *of the* HAMPTONS

# Making a Mark

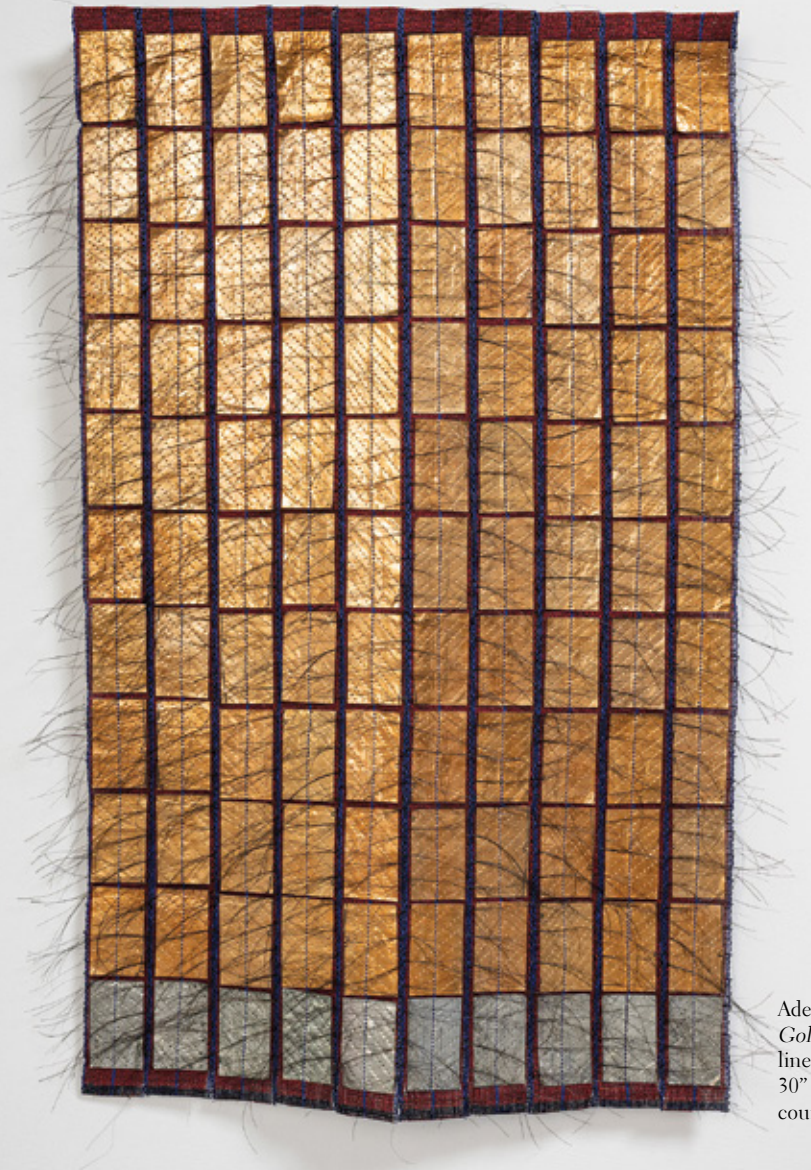
THE ART OF SELF EXPRESSION

Adela Akers  
Robin Gianis  
Helena Hernmarck  
Candace Hill  
Tamiko Kawata  
Sue Lawty  
Deborah Luken  
Aby Mackie  
Norma Minkowitz  
Alexandra Pacula  
Ulla-Maija Vikman

March 11 – May 7, 2023  
Bay Street Theater  
curated by:  
Wendy Van Deusen, *director*  
Women's Art Center of the Hamptons

**Making A Mark** is a celebration of self-expression and its power to encourage and inspire others to do the same. The act of creation, of self-belief, begins with making a mark. It requires courage and a willingness to follow one's inner visions to a fully realized creative outcome. From brush strokes to repurposed textiles, the artists in this exhibition make their mark in a dizzying array of media. From the quiet, rhythmic patterns of Sue Lawty to the striking visual storytelling of Candace Hill, Making a Mark presents an engaging exhibit of local and international artists sharing their artistic view of the world.

**WACH** is grateful to have this opportunity at **Bay Street Theater** to showcase women artists. Bay Street Theater is a vital part of the east end community that brings joy to the community with lively programs and events for people of all ages. We are thrilled to partner with Bay Street to bring visual arts to this premier performing arts venue of the Hamptons.



Adela Akers (USA) b.1933  
*Golden Red*, 2017  
linen, horsehair and metal foil  
30" x 21"  
courtesy of browngrotta arts



Adela Akers  
courtesy of Archives of  
American Art, Smithsonian  
Institution

## Adela Akers

Born 1933, Santiago de Compostela, Spain resides in the US

Adela Akers is a Spanish-born textile and fiber artist residing in the United States whose career, which began in the 1950s, has spanned the entire history of modern fiber art. She is represented in numerous public and private collections including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City and the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, DC. Akers has received awards from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Pollock-Krasner Foundation, and was an artist-in-residence at the de Young Museum in San Francisco in 2014. Akers was elected a Fellow of the American Craft Council in 2008.

### Artist Statement:

“Before attending the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and Cranbrook Academy of Art, I completed studies to be a pharmacist. My background in science has strongly influenced my artwork. The choice of materials and process emerges from that experience. There is a mathematical discipline in the way the work is constructed. This mathematical sequence is in strong contrast to the organic process (handweaving) and materials (linen and horsehair) that bring the work to fruition.

Even when I don't know the outcome, it is the transformation of the materials by the repetitive hand manipulation that leads me to the final expression. It is always a discovery when reaching the end.

All the steps are important and contribute to the final work. Narrow strips are woven sequentially; horsehair is inserted at intervals. When the metal foil is used, it is cut in narrow bands to fit at intervals.

It is my intention to externalize both process and materials and their interaction in order to create a richer surface, which is the focus of the work. In the search for answers or solutions, the questions get better and the possibility of a miracle is ever present.

The completion of each piece raises questions that form the fabric of work to come.”



Adela Akers (USA) b.1933  
*Silver Blue*, 2017  
linen, horsehair and metal foil  
30" x 21"  
courtesy browngrotta arts



Robin Gianis  
courtesy of the artist

## **Robin Gianis**

Born 1964, USA

“I live art through my life and try to keep it in my everyday routines. The way I live and work every day, artmaking is always going on around me. It is an endless process, a way of life, and a progression towards something that never ends. Creating through my life is the process that inspires me every day.”

Robin Gianis (USA) b.1964  
*Floribunda I*, 2021  
wire, wire mesh, paper towels, pva  
glue, led lights  
27 x 26 x 6"  
courtesy of the artist

Robin Gianis (USA) b.1964  
*Floribunda II*, 2021  
wire, wire mesh, paper towels, pva  
glue, led lights  
18 x 18 x 5"  
courtesy of the artist





Robin Gianis (USA) b.1964  
*Tried and True*, 2022  
glazed ceramic  
various dimensions  
6 x 6 x 3.5"  
courtesy of the artist



## Helena Hermmarck

Born 1941, Stockholm, Sweden

Helena Hermmarck is a Swedish-born artist and handweaver recognized for revolutionizing tapestry as a medium suited to modern architectural environments. Her goal in the medium of tapestry is to create the illusion of movement, or fool the eye regarding the viewing distance where the image can be clearly read.

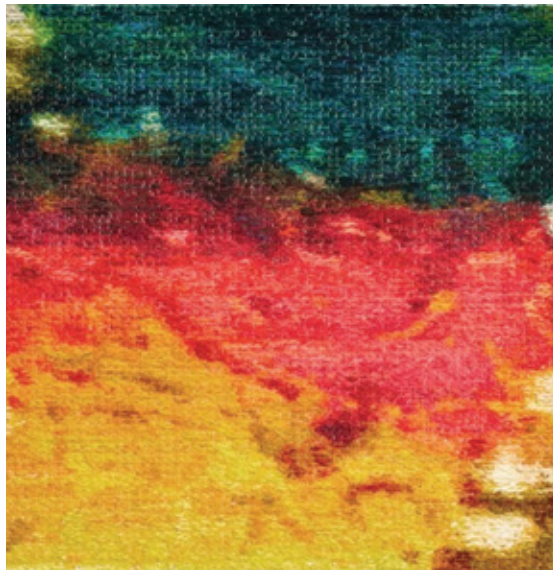


Helena Hermmarck  
courtesy of WACH

Helena Hermmarck was born in Stockholm, Sweden in 1941. Her mentors were three Swedish pioneers of the modern movement in textiles: Alice Lund, Edna Martin, and Astrid Sampe. After graduating from art school in Stockholm in 1963, she moved her studio to Canada and later to England before settling in the United States in the mid-1970s. Hermmarck now maintains an active studio in Connecticut, USA. She continues to support Swedish textile arts, and collaborates with Swedish spinners, dyers, and weavers on each commission. Her closest collaborators have been Wälstedts Textilverkstad, a spinning and dyeing mill in Dala-Floda, Sweden, and Alice Lund Textilier, a weaving atelier in Borlänge, Sweden.

Hermmarck's signature is her ability to harness light and color as conduits for spectacular illusion in handwoven textiles. Using a technique of her own invention, she conjures details from our visual world: sunlight on water, sails swelling in the wind. The gloss of photo paper, the graininess of photocopies, even creases in a weathered page have served as sources of technical inspiration in the continuous evolution of her technique.

Each tapestry begins with an image, and is realized over months of weaving row-by-row at the loom. Skeins of yarn are rolled into balls and arranged according to the logic of the rainbow. These colors blend in countless variations as the weaving progresses, creating a sense of visual impact unique to Hermmarck's technique and to the lustrous rya wool that is her primary material. Seen from a distance, Hermmarck's tapestries present a powerful, unified impression. Up close, her compositions dissolve into innumerable color mixtures interlaced as warp and weft.



Helena Hermmarck  
(Sweden/USA) b.1941  
*Wool Illusion*, 2016  
wool, linen, cotton,  
punchinella  
35.25" x 35"  
courtesy of the artist



Helena Hernmarck  
(Sweden/USA)  
b.1941  
*Knit Illusion*, 2017  
wool, linen, cotton,  
punchinella  
45.25" x 35"  
courtesy of the artist



Candace Hill  
courtesy of Laurie Lambrecht

## Candace Hill

“As a multimedia art person, I began as a child painting and always knew that would be my profession along with joint poetry. Supplied with oil paints by parents and relations and books enough, rainy days became opportunities for the need for a happy something to do. Painting and the various thread arts throughout life began by the teaching of my mother’s mum and a good enough professional art school attended (Albert Pels) which set portraiture, still life, and street scenes in motion. To this day I am still making views of us in the lion’s den, horses being mounted for take-off, children literally, beings amazingly abducted, gun violence summoned, women held in torturous captivity, all the palindromic delights of a child growing up in country home burnished in the heath, cliffs, and gilded golden dreams that summertime brings. I’m grateful for painting keeping me fresh and intact enough to produce likely in some sort of scenario the effects of far-reaching tombs for the American obelisk. We need a different kind of abstracted impressionism that courageously deals with the words “hearth and home “ without making us wildly unsafe in hearth and home where turrets dominate, still mostly grow up polished and delightfully acquired to be drawn on paper shadow boxing (even as the body weakens past creativity said artists and all people need sufficient common sense).”



Candace Hill (USA)  
b.1945  
*The Narrowing of What  
is Scene and Taut*,  
2021-22  
oil paint and silk on  
canvas  
36 x 49”  
courtesy of the artist



Candace Hill (USA)  
b.1945  
*Fumes Rising From  
Pyres Woe Man*, 2021-22  
oil paint, cotton on  
canvas  
49 x 36"  
courtesy of the artist



Tamiko Kawata

## Tamiko Kawata

Born 1936, Kobe, Japan

### Artist Statement

It happened to be.....

I was born female

I was born in Kobe Japan, 1936

I grew up in Tokyo from 5 years old

I chose.....

to become an artist

to live in New York City in 1962

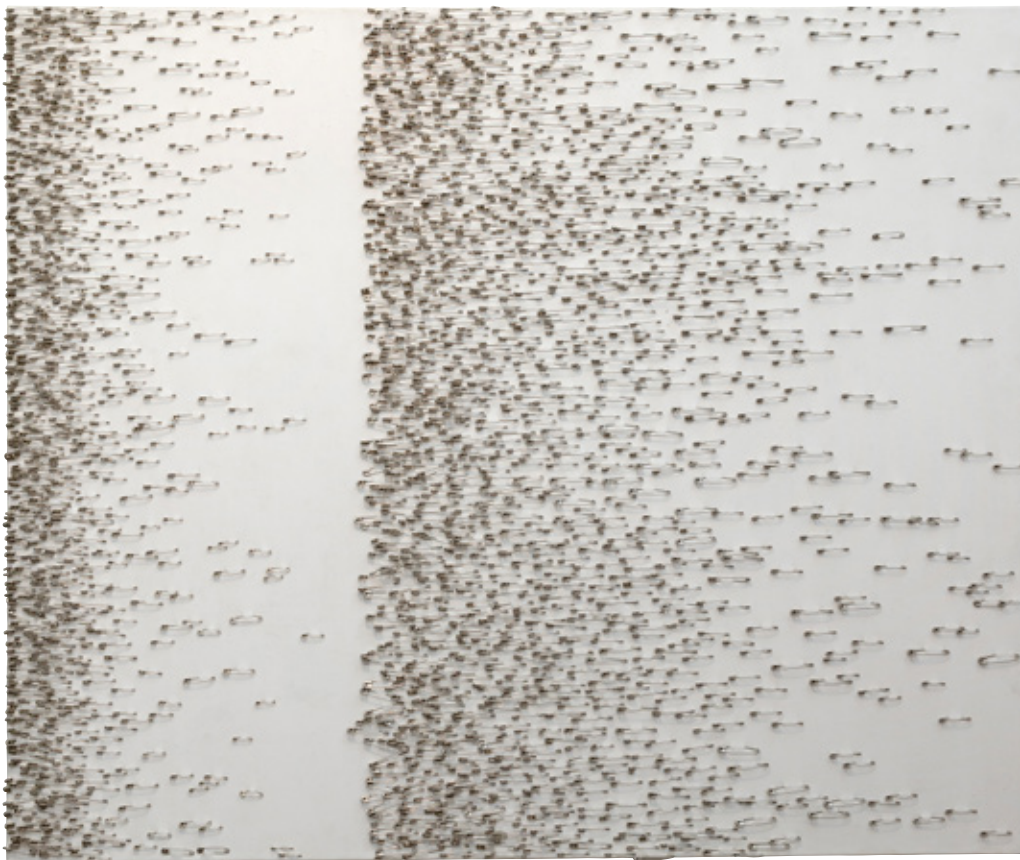
to become American citizen in 2004

“Through my artwork, I am searching for another vision and way of thinking for my life in the space between installation works, sculptures and wall works. For forty years I have used overlooked objects from our daily life as my media. Discarded materials are important to me because of environmental issues and also as a reflection of my current life. My choice of materials and interpretation are influenced by the differences that I experience between life in America and in Japan, where I grew up. I often use repetition and aim to create energy and chaos, within quiet stillness. In *Hyperallergic*, Seth Rodney wrote, “[Kawata] works with meticulous manipulation of unassuming everyday materials that entered her new life [in America]. At the same time her work is a rigorously modernist practice that walks the bridge between the 1960’s and now.”

Bauhaus and Dadaism spoke to the wounded youth in post-World War II Japan and I was not an exception. I grew up learning from the Gutai Group and observing them in my formative years in Japan. *Serpent*, my 70’ long safety pin sculptures wrapped like a sinuous Gutai around a tree. At the same time learning these philosophies from classes taught in the Bauhaus curriculum became a solid core for my way of thinking and artmaking.

As I enter this last phase of my life, I yearn to make large and small scale works that will have a lasting presence. I’ve made more than thirty maquettes, some that I hope to enlarge and fabricate in permanent recycled materials so that people actually walk through them.

The different culture I encountered when I took my first step on this continent had a powerful impact on me. Most of my work is related to this impression I had in those early days.” Tamiko Kawata



Tamiko Kawata (Japan/USA)  
b.1936  
*Stillness Within*, 2002-2004  
safety pins, acrylic on canvas  
42" x 48"  
courtesy of the artist



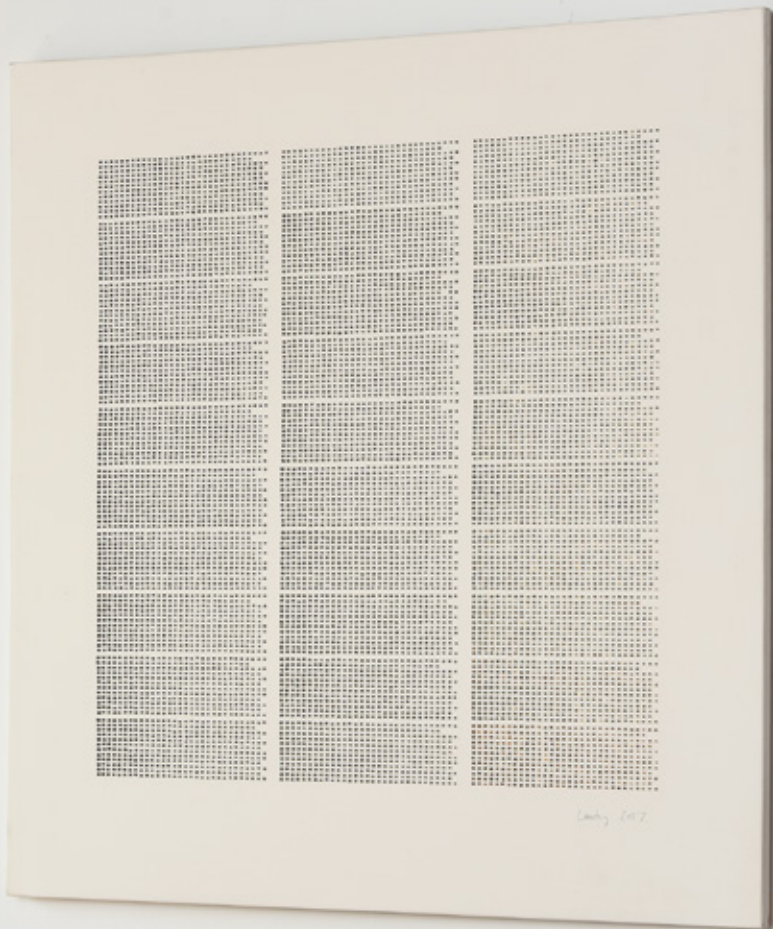
Sue Lawty  
courtesy of V&A Images

## Sue Lawty

Born 1954, Chesterfield, Derbyshire UK

Sue Lawty is a highly experienced artist, designer, and teacher, whose work is in collections worldwide including the Victoria and Albert Museum, London where she held a year-long residency. Prestigious Artist Research Fellowships include the Smithsonian Museums in the US and the University of Leeds. Lawty's work is rooted in an emotional, spiritual, and physical engagement with the land. Subtleties of material and construction are explored intuitively and meticulously to build particular textual languages. Lawty's work has appeared in numerous exhibitions in the UK and abroad, including the International Triennial of Tapestry in Lodz, Poland; the Bankfield Gallery and Museum in Halifax, UK; the Victorian Tapestry Workshop in Melbourne, Australia and the Cheney Cowles Memorial Museum in Spokane, Washington.

Sue Lawty's stone drawings are made from individual found marks: tiny water worn fragments of rock collected from the coast and laid out in rhythmic order. 'Rock and stone play a large part in my understanding for their embodiment of structure and time' says Lawty. 'I am interested in refining an idea down to its essentials. Within this repetitive construct we are invited to notice each distinct unique fleck, which, like ourselves; like every minute of time, is unrepeated and unrepeatable. *Triginta Annis* continues Lawty's exploration of visualising number. In this work each stone mark represents one day; a total of 10,958 days laid out in three vertical decades.



Sue Lawty (United Kingdom)  
b.1954  
*Triginta Annis* (Thirty Years in  
Latin), 2017  
natural stone on gesso  
27" x 26"  
courtesy of browngrotta arts





Deborah Luken  
courtesy of Richard Lewin

## Deborah Luken

Born 1949, New York

Deborah Luken has shown extensively in the New York metropolitan area, and has had work at the Delaware Art Museum and the Heckscher Museum of Art. Her work has been reviewed on numerous occasions by the New York Times. She is a graduate of the Parsons School of Design's Master of Fine Arts Program, in Painting.

"I articulate the roots of abstraction that are embedded in the core of representation. Patterns repeat themselves. Not just within the individual pattern, but a pattern can take on many incarnations. These pattern relationships can be seen throughout the visible world, tying together seemingly unrelated things. The human brain is able to discern the differences between all of these repeating patterns, the waves of the ocean and the waves in the sand have the same pattern, and yet they are so easy to tell apart. Looking at the differences and the similarities that patterns contain, such as those that appear in tree roots or branches as they relate to the patterns of the internal systems of humans and the patterns sent back by the Hubble Telescope of the outer reaches of the universe, there appears a striking resemblance between all three, yet there are undeniable and huge differences. As these patterns are deciphered as to where the similarities occur and where they deviate, there is a narrow corridor where they become one, that is what I paint. This interconnectedness is the catalyst that I use to probe into ideas on the human condition. Water is the most destructive force on our planet, but without water life would not exist. This dichotomy was placed in my path by Superstorm Sandy. The patterns created by incoming and outgoing water, are the patterns of destruction. The life affirming qualities of water resounds in the ability to regenerate and grow. These patterns contain elements of each other in a symbiotic cycle.

Words set up a structure that allows navigation through time, concept, context and point of view. The visualization of the various manifestations that are possible with words reaches hard into the archeology of how they are perceived, interpreted, and ultimately utilized. Each of the words that appear in these images are charged with a full component of the complexity of meaning, through color, composition, the very physicality of the paint itself, each word settles into an isolation of significance. Although I use words in my daily life, they had not appeared in my work until recently when they popped up and demanded recognition on the picture plane."



Deborah Luken (USA) b.1949  
*Exigent*, 2009  
oil on canvas  
50" x 50"  
courtesy of the artist



Aby Mackie  
courtesy of Elqui Medina

## Aby Mackie

Born 1977, Spain

Aby Mackie is a Barcelona-based artist whose wall-based sculptures are unified through a materials-led methodology combining storytelling and social commentary. Recurring themes can be identified as materialism, consumerism, value and memory. Each series investigates the interconnectedness of these themes through the language of materials.

Often in Barcelona, the contents of entire homes are either thrown onto the streets or auctioned off at Encants Vells market upon the death of a final occupant. The creation of Mackie's work is driven by the selection and repurposing of objects and textiles from these two practices in order to explore ongoing cultural concerns. This roots Mackie's artistic process in the everyday existence of the unrecognized, uncelebrated, unknown lives of Barcelona's residents.

Mackie is captivated by the unobvious silent material witnesses to a life lived; a worn bed sheet, a stained tablecloth, a moth-eaten gown. Such artifacts bare the marks and physicality of human nature, possessing a poetic power. They are simultaneously valuable in their uniqueness and worthless in their deteriorated, decontextualized state. Each piece created from these objects is therefore both the artist's personal expression of the hidden memories embedded in the original items, and a way to explore the recycling and re-contextualising of meaning and value in contemporary society. The experience and memories of others, imagined and real, fuse seamlessly with Mackie's own through the salvation, destruction, and discordant juxtaposition of materials.

A rich mix of influences can be seen through Mackie's work in terms of concept (the found object sculpture of Picasso, Miro, Tapies, Grau-Garriga), techniques and materials (Anatsui) and subject matter and aesthetic sense (Basquiat, Schwarz), inviting the viewer to create their own connections and interpretations and encouraging a personal storytelling through materiality.



Aby Mackie (Spain) b.1977  
*We Can All be Saved 10*, 2022  
Repurposed textile, gold leaf, shellac  
73" x 25" x 0.5"  
courtesy of browngrotta arts



Norma Minkowitz  
courtesy of browngrotta arts

## **Norma Minkowitz**

Born 1937, New York, New York

“For many years I have been exploring the possibilities of crocheted, interlaced sculptures stiffened into hard mesh-like structures. The web-like fabric defines volume and form. Process becomes a part of the content and both structure and surface are achieved simultaneously. These mesh sculptures often make statements about enclosures and entrapment. They can suggest the safety of a shelter or a cage from which there is no escape. The vessels take the form of human bodies and body parts, as well as natural and geometric shapes. Interaction between the forms and the themes of containment create work that is both personal and psychologically complex.

I often dwell on the mysterious cycles of death and regeneration. In many of my works twigs and branches are left inside and are visible in an eerie way through the exterior of the sculpture, often suggesting connections to the human skeletal or circulatory systems. The outer netting obscures the shape within creating a sense of ambiguity in the shadows of the work. On the surface, paint and stitched lines appear and disappear depending on the light and viewing position. Intricate and random patterns are created by the nature of the open mesh structures. All of these elements combine to convey a sense of energy as the viewer moves around my sculpture. Conceptually, the interlaced fibers can lend a wonderful duality—simultaneously creating a delicate quality, but also implying the strength of steel mesh—symbolic of the human condition.

Drawing continues to be important to me and I find that the threads and wires I use mimic the cross hatching and irregularities of my pen and ink drawings. My sculpture evolves into a three-dimensional drawing. Recently I have been filling the open spaces of the fiber’s netting with modeling paste having plaster-like consistency. This process creates a surface that focuses on and highlights the lines I draw with stitches, introducing a bas relief of concept, energy and movement. I often highlight these drawn lines with colors of paint.

As my work evolves, one thing remains consistent: I am engaged in creating works that weave the personal and universal together.” Norma Minkowitz



Normna Minkowitz (USA) b.1937  
*Cyclone Coming*, 2019  
mixed media  
27" x 25"  
courtesy of browngrotta arts



Alexandra Pacula  
courtesy of the artist

## **Alexandra Pacula**

Born 1979, Poland

“My work investigates a world of visual intoxication; it captures moments of enchantment, which are associated with urban nightlife. I am fascinated by the ambiance of the city at night and its seductive qualities. The breathtaking turbulence of speeding vehicles and hasty pedestrians evoke feelings of wonder and disorientation. The vibrant lights become a magical landscape with enticing opportunities and promises of fulfillment.

In our seemingly content society, there is a struggle to achieve greater levels of enjoyment. We explore various environments and activities in search of pleasure.

Extravagant lights of night environments seduce us to participate in curious events, enticing us to experience new forms of satisfaction.

In my oil paintings I aim to capture various atmospheres that occur in such environments. Through observation and documentation, I assemble images, which become visual tools for my paintings. I concentrate on how the mind perceives and evaluates surroundings while under the influence of a social climate.

I recreate the feeling of dizziness and confusion by letting the paint blur and allowing shapes to dissolve. I suggest motion to slow down the scene and capture the fleeting moments, which tend to be forgotten. The sense of motion is intensified with the use of quick vigorous lines and sharp perspectives. By interpreting lights in graphic or painterly ways, I create a sense of space, alluding to a hallucinogenic experience. I want the viewer’s eye to travel within my composition and experience a familiar, exhilarating event of an actual nightly excursion.” Alexandra Pacula



Alexandra Pacula  
(Poland/USA)  
b.1979  
*Distant Glow*, 2021  
oil on panel  
24" x 18"  
courtesy of the artist





Alexandra Pacula (Poland/USA)

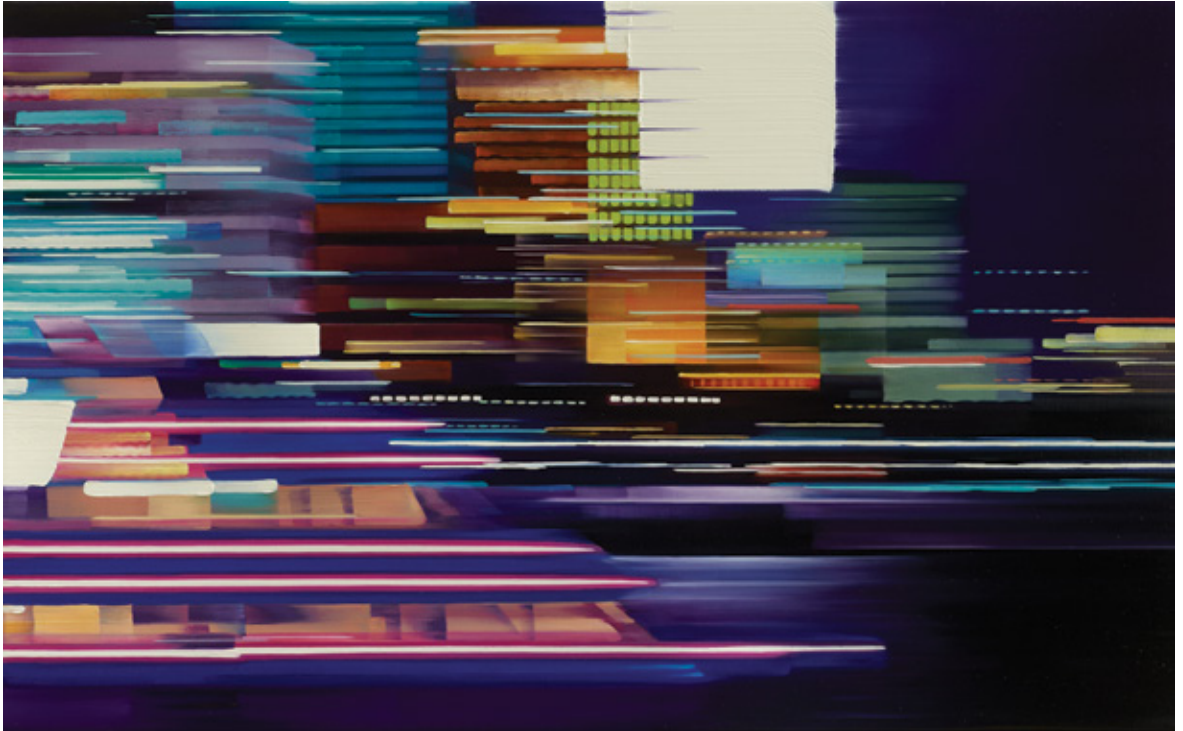
b.1979

*City Life*, 2021

oil on panel

12" x 18"

courtesy of the artist



Alexandra Pacula (Poland/USA)  
b.1979  
*Transient Blur 2*, 2020  
oil on linen  
26 x 16"  
courtesy of the artist

## **Ulla-Maija Vikman**

Born 1943, Oulu, Finland

Threads stretched like a warp form a surface that Ulla-Maija Vikman paints as a painter would a canvas. She repaints and washes the threads two or three times to achieve the tones she wants. Known as “Finland’s colorist,” her work has been selected for numerous government building commissions, including the UN General Assembly in New York, when Finland was host. “My inspiration is the material itself,” says Vikman. “The vertical threads have their own natural rhythm complemented by the horizontal patterns. Like a weaving, the pieces are based on vertical and horizontal elements.” Vikman’s work is always hung at some distance from the wall, which gives the impression of being in free fall, floating in the air. The slightest breeze or draft makes the threads move, affecting both the light and the form of the work. This kinetic effect brings the piece to life within its environment.



Ulla-Maija Vikman (Finland) b.1943  
*Reed*, 2003  
painted viscose, steel frame  
73 x 10.5"  
courtesy of browngrotta arts

## **Acknowledgements**

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browngrotta arts  
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### **Our Exhibiting Artists**

Adela Akers, Robin Gianis, Helena Hermmarck, Candace Hill, Tamiko Kawata, Sue Lawty, Deborah Luken, Aby Mackie, Norma Minkowitz, Alexandra Pacula, Ulla-Maija Vikman

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The Women's Art Center of the Hamptons supports and elevates women thinkers and makers through residencies, educational initiatives, community programs, exhibitions and events for the enjoyment and enrichment of the human spirit with accessibility to all.



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