



## THE TEXTILE MUSEUM

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** December 17, 2001

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**Press Preview:** Wednesday, February 13, 2002, 2:00 pm

### **Hi-Tech Textile Art at The Textile Museum** **Exhibition to Showcase Six Contemporary** **Textile Artists Using Cutting Edge Technologies**

**February 15 – July 28, 2002**

**December 17, 2001, Washington, DC** — *Technology as Catalyst: Textile Artists on the Cutting Edge*, an exhibition featuring the work of six contemporary artists using revolutionary textile techniques, will be on view February 15 – July 28, 2002 at The Textile Museum in Washington, DC. The exhibition includes artists Susan Brandeis, Lia Cook, Junco Sato Pollack, Cynthia Schira, Carol Westfall, and Hitoshi Ujii. Many of the works were created especially for this exhibition. The exhibition is curated by Rebecca A.T. Stevens, Consulting Curator, Contemporary Textiles, The Textile Museum.

#### **Exhibition Overview**

*Technology as Catalyst* explores the interconnected role of hi-tech equipment and handwork in the creation of textiles. Each of the featured artists makes use of digital printing and/or weaving equipment to make art that builds on traditional textile concepts. The exhibition illustrates how these new technologies liberate artists from many of the limitations traditionally associated with the production of textiles and serve as a catalyst for pushing the boundaries of contemporary textile art.

While advanced textile technologies are highlighted in the exhibition, curator Rebecca A.T. Stevens points out that “the equipment does not make the art...it is the hands and minds of creative people who draw on their knowledge of our shared textile past while embracing the methods of the present.”

By making use of new printing and weaving technologies, the artists are able to refine their designs and enhance their creative processes in ways not previously possible. With new technologies the artists are able to create maquettes, thus honing ideas before executing the final piece. They can expand (or contract) the scale of their work, use images from any source, including their own drawings and photographs, and can manipulate the images quickly to develop their ideas. New technologies



Lia Cook  
*The Frog Princess, 2001*  
(detail)  
Twill weave with  
complementary wefts of  
cotton & rayon

**-more-**

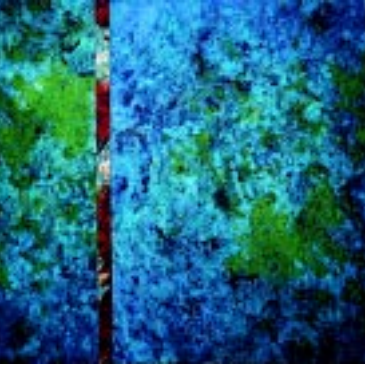
2320 S Street, NW Washington DC 20008

also free artists from many of the physical demands of textile production—allowing them to focus on the creative aspects of translating their ideas into tangible works of art.

In an essay from the exhibition catalogue, Bhakti Ziek observes that “weaving has stayed vital and relevant because it has mutated and adapted to the new technologies of every era. It has been an inclusive growth, seamlessly building on its previous incarnation so that each new ‘edition’ is compatible with the previous ‘release.’”

### The Artists & Their Work

**Susan Brandeis** juxtaposes patterns, textures, and color to create thematic composites that communicate the essential qualities she finds in nature. Starting with white fabrics and fibers, Brandeis builds up surfaces of dyed fibers, appliquéd materials in felt and cotton, and stitched areas to replicate nature’s complex layering of imagery. She has taught at the School of Design at North Carolina State University since 1982, where she also coordinates the program in Fibers and Surface Design. Her work has been exhibited widely in the United States, as well as in England, Ireland, Japan, the Netherlands, Columbia, and at the International Biennial of Tapestry in Lausanne, Switzerland.



Susan Brandeis  
*Quintessence*, 2001  
Fabric Construction  
52" x 56"  
Photo by Marc Brandeis

Using a digital loom to realize her designs, **Lia Cook’s** work draws on imagery from childhood photographs and recent self-portraits. A master weaver and dyer, Cook is interested in the construction of imagery in textiles and how that imagery can be altered through painting,

dyeing, finishing processes, and the manipulation of the weave structure itself. Through her use of digital technologies, she is able to address issues of scale, creating installation-size pieces that encourage the viewer to reconsider the traditional notion of “textile.” Many of her works are draped for installation to exaggerate the tactile and sensual aspects of the fabric. Cook is a Professor of Art at the California College of Arts and Crafts, where she has taught since 1976. Her work is found in numerous collections, including the Cleveland Museum of Art; The American Craft Museum, New York; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Renwick Gallery, Washington, DC; and the French National Collection of Art, Paris.

**Junco Sato Pollack** makes use of a new dye sublimation process, to investigate the synthesis of natural and artificial, old and new, East and West in her work. Pollack’s abstract imagery on sheer synthetic fabrics lends a weightless, ambient quality to her art. Her works are hung from the ceiling, suspended in space away from the wall, allowing them to take their shape in fabric, light and shadow. Pollack is Associate Professor of Art and Head of the Textiles Program at the School of Art and Design at Georgia State University in Atlanta. She has exhibited her work nationally and internationally, including exhibitions at the Musée des Tissus Historique de Lyon, France and Museo Nacional des Bellas Artes, Santiago, Chile.



Junco Sato Pollack  
*Sky/Clouds/Wind*, 2000  
Devore, shibori, and dye  
sublimation on metallic  
polyester

**Cynthia Schira** is among the contemporary textile world’s most influential figures. She has been using computerized looms since 1983 to create complex woven textile structures and was one of the first fiber artists to fully appreciate the potential of computerization for the handweaver. Her work uses repeat patterning as a visual metaphor for the varying cyclic and repetitive aspects of life/nature. Her work is in the collection of museums around the world including the Art Institute of Chicago; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; and the Museum Bellerive, Zurich.

Digital printer **Hitoshi Ujiie** combines a hands-on approach with computer technologies (digital printing) to produce botanically inspired surface designs. Ujiie established Hitoshi Ujiie Design in New York after working as a print designer in the textile firm of Jack Lenor Larsen. Ujiie has produced numerous textiles for exhibition and for the international home furnishing market. Currently, he is an Assistant Professor in the Textile Department of Philadelphia University (formerly Philadelphia College of Textiles and Science). Prior to that, he coordinated the Textile Program at Parsons School of Design in New York. **Ujiie will be in residence at The Textile Museum between January and April 2002. Using The Textile Museum's collections as inspiration, he will develop new work and demonstrate his techniques for Museum visitors.**

Master of many textile techniques including dyeing, weaving, printing and sewing, **Carol Westfall** combines several of these processes in her current work. Westfall's recent explorations have made use of the digital printer in creating her art. Beginning with a photograph she has taken on a travel or research trip, Westfall manipulates these images to create her personal statement. She then uses the digital printer and handprinting processes to produce her art—atmospheric textile installations that sometimes incorporate sound. Westfall has taught and lectured in Japan, England, Switzerland, Mexico, and India. Her work is in the collections of the Delaware Museum of Art, New Jersey State Museum, and the Zimmerli Museum.

### Organizers & Catalogue

*Technology as Catalyst: Textile Artists on the Cutting Edge* is organized by The Textile Museum and curated by Rebecca A.T. Stevens, Consulting Curator, Contemporary Textiles. The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue featuring essays by Rebecca A.T. Stevens; Bhakti Ziek, Assistant Professor, Department of Art and Design, University of Kansas, Lawrence; and R. Alan Donaldson, Professor of Textile Design, North Carolina State University (Raleigh).

The exhibition will be on view at The Textile Museum through July 28, 2002 and will then travel to North Carolina State University (Raleigh) Gallery of Art & Design.

The *Technology as Catalyst* catalogue and exhibition are supported in part by Friends of Fiber Art International, North Carolina State University, and The Rau Foundation.

Hitoshi Ujiie's residency at the Museum is supported by *Artist as Catalyst*, a program of the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation made possible by major funding from the Heinz Endowments, The William Penn Foundation, and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts.

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Founded in 1925 by George Hewitt Myers, The Textile Museum is an international center for the exhibition, study, collection and preservation of the textile arts.

The Museum explores the role that textiles play in the daily and ceremonial life of individuals the world over. Special attention is given to textiles of the traditional societies of the Near East, Asia, Africa and the indigenous cultures of the Americas. The Museum also presents exhibitions of historical and contemporary quilts, and fiber art.

With a collection of over 17,000 textiles and carpets and an unparalleled library, The Textile Museum is a unique and valuable resource for people locally, nationally and internationally. For further information, call 202-667-0441.

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**For more information or photographs**, please contact Julia Neubauer, Public Information Assistant, The Textile Museum, 202-667-0441, ext. 17. The Textile Museum is a private, non-profit museum open Monday through Saturday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm and Sunday 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm. Admission is free; suggested donation \$5.00.

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