

MANSION GLOBAL



Textile Art to Inspire Your Interiors

How these works can bring a rich tapestry in your home—and allow you to express your personality at the same time

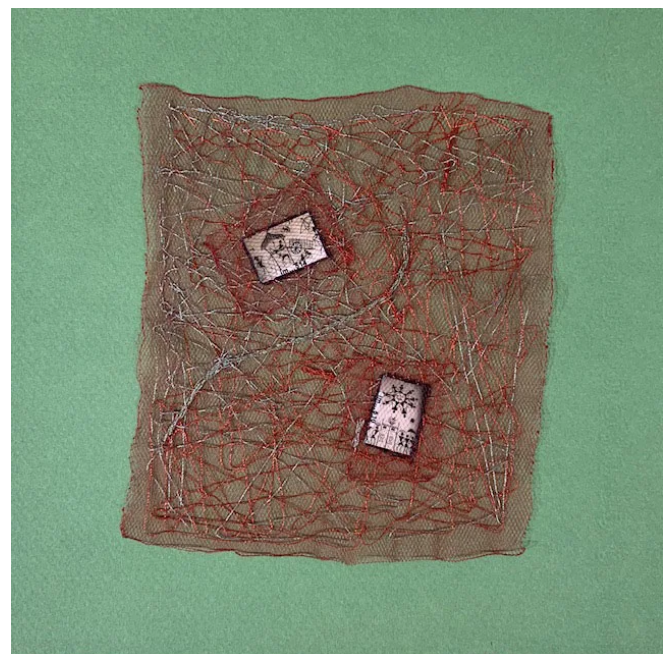
By Jennifer Tzeses

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Embroidered pieces, woven works, fiber-based creations—textile art also known as fiber art can be many things, but one thing is certain. It creates an inspired tapestry wherever you display it.

Incorporating textile art into your home can be an expression of color, life and personality.

“Because of its domestic origins, fiber art feels particularly well-suited for display in residential interiors, adding warmth and texture to any room,” said Anthony Barzilay Freund, editorial director and director of



fine art for stdibs, an upscale e-commerce anti-iques and design marketplace based in New York. “Because the medium can feel so familiar, the artist perhaps has the freedom to be more experimental or subversive than other media might allow.”

Textile art can be traced back thousands of years, and really began with clothing making. Fibers were painstakingly spun to craft thread for creating textiles. Wealthy aristocrats could get silks and colorful dyes imported from China via The Silk Road trade routes. After the Industrial Revolution, when fabric became available to the masses, it wasn't as expensive or precious, so people began working with it in novel and more artistic ways.

Weaving, embroidery, knitting and crocheting are some of the older mediums used, but today, there are myriad methods artists are dreaming up to create inspired works. Here are some of the most visionary textile artists to put on your radar and display in your home.



Norma Minkowitz

Norma Minkowitz, who was born and raised in Brooklyn but currently lives in Westport, Connecticut, learned to crochet from her mother as a young girl.

“He’s used that childhood hobby—long underappreciated as a feminine, domestic pursuit—as the foundation for a decades-long art practice as a serious sculptor,” Mr. Barzilay Freund said.

Ms. Minkowitz’s small sculptures blend crochet and drawing. He learned that by skipping stitches and varying the tension

of the thread, she had more mastery over her creations. To portray forms such as the human body, animals or plants, she crochets around objects.

In an interview with *Artemorbida* magazine, she said of her art form, “despite the repeated use of the same basic stitch, no two are exactly alike. This conveys the intimacy and imperfection of the human hand while creating a movement akin to the cross hatching of a pen-and-ink drawing. The interlacing technique that I use makes it possible for me to convey the fragile, the hidden and the mysterious qualities of my work...I am still drawing, but with fiber.”

Hung on a wall, Minkowitz’s three-dimensional works instantly create conversation and a focal point.



Miguel Cisterna

Born in Chile, Miguel Cisterna now lives and works in Paris. His work is grounded in the tradition of old-world embroidery, yet he injects a youthfulness and vitality that makes the art form feel fresh, elevated and contemporary, said Benoist F. Rut, owner of Maison Gerard gallery in New York. His hand-sewn pieces layer contrasting materials for one-of-a-kind textiles. “I love the contrasts you see in his work,” Mr. Rut said. “Previously, embroidery always referred to wealth, power and refinement. He has kept the refinement and uses what he calls ‘poor man’s materials’, such as raffia, beads and shells.”

Often iterated on fabric panels, Mr. Cisterna’s works range from traditional to ultra-modern and bring elegance into the home—whether hung on the wall or woven into upholstery.

“You can incorporate his works as upholstery for pillows, seating, screens, room dividers, lampshades or as framed artwork. For example, you can provide the dimensions for an armchair, and he will create something that can be used for the chair upholstery,” Mr. Rut said.

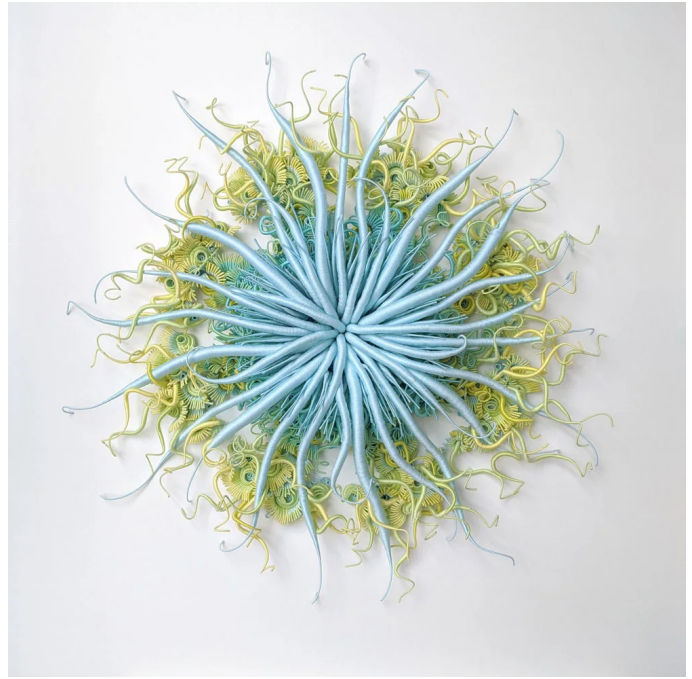
Catherine Latson

Born and raised and still living in New York, Catherine Latson takes her inspiration from nature, whether organisms seen through a microscope or creatures found floating in the sea.

“Out of simple materials—embroidery, floss and wire—she creates labor-intensive and highly complex ‘specimens’ that possess a mysterious beauty,” Mr. Barzilay Freund said.

Ms. Latson, 60, makes her creations come to life by hand-dyeing embroidery

floss in variations of one hue and then tightly wrapping the thread around a wire frame. The arduous process takes hours of knotting and whipping but produces vibrant results.



Inspired by the world underneath the water, Ms. Latson’s specimens are a nod to sea anemones and the motion of water. As she describes in her artist statement, her works “explore forms that blur the lines between animal and plant, realism and fantasy, sculpture and specimen. Each piece aims to reimagine the gracefulness, mystery, and complexity of a water-bound organism in motion.”

Latson’s three-dimensional works instantly bring a room to life with color and dimension. “Any wall of your home would be enhanced by one of these graceful, fluid creations or a larger grouping,” Mr. Barzilay Freund said.



Ani Afshar

Born in Turkey, Ani Afshar now lives in Chicago. Inspired by the ancient tribal weavings and textile traditions of Turkey and the Near East, Ms. Afshar's weavings and embroidered textile creations encompass a wide range of contextual, intellectual and emotional influences.

Though rooted in old-world techniques, Ms. Afshar, 74, is unafraid to experiment and invites the element of surprise in subject, materiality, scale, et cetera, Mr. Drut said. "She often uses a variety of layers of materials including tulle,

beadwork, embroidery, heirloom cloth and even archival black-and-white family photography resulting in wonderful abstract expressions."

Her highly personal work includes wool wall hangings, shawls, bedspreads, pillows and beaded and woven jewelry.

"Having studied in Europe and eventually moving to the States, her work is largely a culmination and reflection of these many different cultural experiences. Her work is a beautiful and intimate portrait of her life, bringing a lot of emotion," Mr. Drut said. "There's a deep-felt connection and appreciation for the aesthetic principles of this rich, old textile heritage. ... She has found such a unique way to incorporate bits of history into her works. There is something so beautiful about the way she gives pieces of history a new life and new purpose."

One of the easiest and most impactful ways to display her works is as a series, Mr. Drut said. He suggests framing them all the same way and hanging three or four in a sequenced grid pattern.

"This creates an installation that takes you on a magical journey through her life. The works range in size, so even having one framed on a wall makes for a very distinctive and alluring addition to a home," Mr. Drut said.