

forms, fractal growth," is reflected in her knit pieces like *Swave 2*, a dimensional rippling piece that recalls life forms, or the sea. *Polyp 2*, wool with darning knit and pop stitch, also is creamy off-white and dimensional, calling up natural forms and surfaces. The ability to design yarns with differing characteristics (stitch, spun, twisted, stretched, shrinked) and the simulation of results allows endless experiment before commitment to creation.

Rosemary Hoang, the weaving specialist, has utilized the unlimited experimentation that digital technology has added to all fabric design. Since images can transfer to weaves in different ways than the more stylized jacquard patterns permit, the combination and overlap of each area—woven, knit and printed or printed design—can seem to blend function. Also, the new fibers available through current technology allow for startling effects. Translucent, shimmering and metallic threads as well as microfibers and traditional yarns can be separated or combined on screen to find the effect most desirable to a particular designer.

In *Chrysalisweave, No. 2*, a color photograph was scanned into Adobe Photoshop, reduced to four colors, then exported to Pointacre and woven on a TIS/Textel electronic loom using black, blue, red and gold Lurex. These images are blended with the weave so that what is visible is woven cloth, rich and textural, rather than a photographic illustration.

Small samples from the *Mafar* series, woven in gold and silver wire and shown in a case, look like rare archaeological finds.

The project included collaborations with industrial firms from England, Germany and Switzerland, involved with all aspects of production; the companies also produced some of the work. Other than those in the MUTEK series, the printed pieces were all handscreened by Malcolm Cooke, who utilized computer separations and computer plotting of intricately complex images.

In a perfect world, this kind of collaboration should be sought by all design schools with industry eagerly jumping in. After all, the future of textiles—exciting designs with wonderful hand, producible and marketable—will depend on the best designers being trained in both traditional and advanced technologies with support from manufacturers. As one could see from this show, the results can be breathtaking.

*Design projects from the show at the world center for the show: Allentown Art Museum, Allentown, Pennsylvania; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.*

—Zaumi Dahlquist is an Assistant Professor in the Textile Surface Design Department at the Fashion Institute of Technology, New York City.

**Lewis Knauss** *Fog* Linen, hemp, paper twine, paper, horsehair, acrylic paint, woven and knotted, 16" x 8" x 3", 1998.



**ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA**

*Meditations on the Landscape*  
Allentown Art Museum

Entering the exhibition, *Meditations on the Landscape: Recent works by Lewis Knauss*, at the Allentown Art Museum (January 1999) was, as intended by the artist, a meditative experience. The intimate gallery illustrated the importance of installation space. Each of the small works has a mighty impact; as a body of work, a sense of various aspects of the landscape surround the viewer with a sense of completeness, a sense of belonging to the world at large.

The fourteen fiber constructions are works completed in the last few years, mostly during summers in Aspen, Colorado. Each work is built from a firmly handwoven linen



ground. Some become beaded reflections of tiny color spurts; others sprout bits of paper, reed, wire, twigs or horsehair. Many employ knots in various ways while others include acrylic paint, reed stakes, and marble chips. Titles relate ideas: *After the Harvest*, *Brush Fire*, *Fog*, *Forest Sunset*, *Beaded Meadow*, but the feelings from each are sufficient without titles. The meticulous nature of the work, bead by bead, knot by knot, thread by thread, conveys the sense of meditation, as in a quiet walk in the mountains when each step is noticed.

A viewer at the exhibition opening, discussing one work with the artist, identified from a personal memory a path in Colorado which had been the inspiration for Knauss. There is a deep impression of hidden views within layers we cannot reach or touch, but can clearly imagine.

Texture, dimension and precision are defining elements of Knauss' work. The precision is not only in the process, but also in the use of color, which sometimes is playful. Knauss says, "I create impressions of landscape line by line, first experiencing the whole scene and then becoming aware of the individual elements that create it." Even though gravity makes the threads, twigs, fabric, bits of paper and wire cascade from the wall in unpredictable ways, any configuration of each kinetic sculpture looks perfect, like grasses in a gentle wind.

Knauss has connected us to waves of grain and elements of the landscape as Dominic DiMare has conveyed his feeling for the ocean waves of California. By coincidence, this writer recently experienced real fog driving in Colorado, making a keen connection with the site of Knauss' work, *Untitled Fog* woven with knotted pile, hemp, linen, paper twine, rice paper, horsehair and acrylic paint. There is a deep impression of hidden views and reaching out from the inside of the cocoon of fog for hope in potential exterior life connections when the fog lifts. A contrasting work is more flat, with visible layers of wrapped and stacked hemp colored in four segments calling forth landscape variations that remind one of time passing as measured by changing light on a mountain.

Not all of the works are idyllic; *Brush Fire* (5) transfers a sense of death, tragedy and rebirth that strikes the landscape as it does human life. The difference between Knauss' work and some more explicit, pictorial and what might be considered "angry" expressions in contemporary tapestry and fiber art is that his work allows us to have a profound response without dictating the circumstances that elicit our response. *Forest Sunset* (7) doesn't say, "this is what a sunset looks like," but rather, "this is how one might feel responding to the sunset." The work is the seed of the creative impulse transferred to the public sensitivity for nurturing. Knauss states: "The

issue of art as meditation is not what is being done or produced but the total presence of body and spirit in the process of creating."

Michele Boardman, curator of the textiles collection of the Allentown Art Museum organized this exhibit, the third in a series of contemporary fiber artists (following Lenore Tawney and Ted Hallman). She commented: "Knauss' art is the celebration of the small wonders of the natural world."



**Lewis Knauss** *Landscape Accumulation #11 (Brush Fire)* Linen, hemp, paper twine, reed, acrylic paint, woven and knotted, 16" x 16" x 4", 1998.

The Allentown Museum now holds the largest collection of Knauss' works. The Cooper Hewitt Design Museum of the Smithsonian Institution in New York City and the Philadelphia Museum of Art in Philadelphia include Knauss in their collections as well as Citicorp, Lucent Technologies, Xerox, and many other corporations and individuals.

**REFERENCES**  
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—**Peggy Whitney Hobbs** is a fiber artist and Adjunct Curator of Exhibitions, Lehigh University Art Galleries, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.