Neville Wakefield:
How do you feel about the designation textile artist? Is it like ceramic artist something that once carried slight pejorative connotations but has recently undergone rehabilitation and if so why?

Marie Hazard:
I do consider myself a textile artist, and I am proud to be associated with this medium. Yet at the same time, I am aware that this label carries a set of connotations that I want to escape, resist, challenge, or destroy.

First, textile art –like ceramics– is strongly associated with craft, and therefore with tradition. The common image of textile is that it is slow, somewhat conservative, highly skilled, and meticulous. It is perceived as gentle and compliant, much like the stereotype that is projected onto the overwhelming majority of women who still practice it today. Of course, I am grounded in my craft. But precisely for that reason, I want to move beyond the traditional image of craftsmanship. I try to bring a different energy, to integrate other technologies –such as digital printing– as well as everyday, banal materials that break with the noble ideal of craftsmanship that the luxury industry has recently reinstated.

For example, here I weave with hemp, a traditional material, yet I use it in a deliberately non-craft—or even anti-craft—way. I subvert it by combining it with non-noble materials and digital printing, in order to disrupt the image of the woman seated behind her loom.

More importantly, textile art– again, much like ceramic art– is often dissociated from art practices that are considered more conceptual. We do not readily imagine a textile artist as a conceptual artist, or as someone engaged in a broader visual or plastic inquiry, asking larger questions about space, light, or perception. There is a division of intellectual labor, which is also a gendered division: media coded as masculine are more readily associated with conceptual research, while textile is relegated to the realm of the *arts décoratifs*, presumed to have less conceptual and visual depth.

For me, on the contrary, textile is not simply a medium; it is a language, a matrix –a kind of metasystem, if you like–, capable of articulating multiple dimensions, experiences, sensations, and media. Textile offers a particularly fertile ground for exploring the production of space, as well as light, sound, and even smell.

In this project, for instance, I asked the artist Camille to appropriate the sounds of the loom and transform them into a soundscape. To me, the loom is a machine that produces assemblages: the textile functions as a *trame* (weft / structure), a structure that brings together heterogeneous elements, generating a space, a situation, and fixing it in time. It is a language that shapes an experience.

In this sense, textile art is very close to video art. I have already experimented with video, and I intend to pursue it further. In my view, both operate through layering: a repeating *trame* onto which space, light, and sound are inscribed. Textile is supple, permeable, malleable—it allows precisely for this kind of articulation.

And yet, a video artist will almost always be perceived as more “modern” than a textile artist. For me, the two operate in fundamentally similar ways: both are practices of assemblage. One can think, for instance, of Pierre Huyghe’s videos, which are fundamentally about creating associations between spaces, light, humans, and non-humans. And yet, his work is assumed to be more conceptual, more avant-garde. Once again, the gendered dimension is very present: it is also a much more masculine-coded practice. Conversely, weaving tends to be reduced to a traditional gesture, crushed under the weight of its own history.

To me, textile is the postmodern medium *par excellence*, precisely because it is about reconstituting ties and connections–between techniques, forms of labor, materials, and living beings–about weaving together a reality that has been torn apart.

So yes, I am proud to be considered a textile artist. But it will not be my cage.

(Textile is not a craft; textile is the matrix!!)

Neville Wakefield:
If textile is, as you say, a 'matrix' capable of holding space, sound, and perception, what would it actually take—for institutions, critics, or audiences—to begin reading textile work through that expanded, conceptual lens rather than through the inherited framework of craft? In other words in what is the blue pill and what is the red?

Marie Hazard:
It begins, I think, with art school. When I started weaving as part of my textile design training, I was told repeatedly that it was impossible to make textile and art simultaneously. It was deeply frustrating. I had to fit into predefined boxes to validate my semesters; everything was subordinated to technique. I had to learn hundreds of patterns I no longer use. And yet, after graduating, I stayed in touch with some of my professors — and today, they know it is possible. In 2024, ten years after I began my degree at Central Saint Martins, I had the opportunity to show my work in London alongside that of a Japanese ceramic artist I deeply admire, Masaomi Yasunaga. My professor came to the opening, and I believe she appreciated the dialogue taking place there. So even within art and design schools, the misconception persists: that textile cannot be as intellectually demanding or formally challenging as painting. It may be an uncomfortable thought, but it is an urgent one. We still tend to read textile too exclusively through the prism of technique, and refuse to engage with it conceptually.

For me, there is no hierarchy between low and high art — i.e. the 1990 MoMA exhibition High and Low: Modern Art and Popular Culture. Textile can be a point of convergence: it is at once sculpture and painting,. When I look at Rauschenberg's work, which I have encountered across multiple visits to Gladstone Gallery in 2022, 2023, and 2025 — the Venetians and Early Egyptians (1972–1974), Spreads and Scales (1975–1983), with their domestic textile elements: irons, dish towels, wallpapers — and Synapsis Shuffle — what strikes me is an artist who understood how to systematically dismantle borders. This has always been in the back of my mind since I first learned to weave, though it takes time to fully inhabit that deconstruction. But that deconstruction of textile is essential, to it's always been a means of survival, and I need this radicality. Perhaps in Europe, the legacy of the Beaux-Arts tradition — with its firmly delineated disciplines — has made this harder to undo.

There has recently been renewed institutional interest in key figures of post-war modern textile art. Olga de Amaral's retrospective, first assembled by the Fondation Cartier in Paris, is now travelling internationally. Isabella Ducrot will have her own retrospective next year. But the younger generation remains scarcely shown and even less critically engaged with — despite the fact that, I would argue, they go further. They are more radical in deconstructing the medium and crossing it with others. I am thinking in particular of Eric N. Mack, whose work deconstructs painting itself — almost entirely executed in textile, and largely without stretcher bars. Conceptually, it opens an entirely different perceptual field.

The role of criticism is also at stake here. Leafing through the archives of Jackie Winsor — old issues of ARTnews, New York magazine — I was struck by how much sharper the critical writing once was. Today, criticism around textile lacks bite. It is too polite, too cautious. This may be a broader symptom across mediums, but I am convinced we have largely stopped reading criticism because it has become too smooth, too frictionless. And associating textile with writing that is bland or overly accommodating does nothing to advance its cause. Textile, to my mind, is

the punk of art mediums: it refuses the norms, resists being confined to the mould of craft — and that refusal deserves a critique equal to its radicality.

To finish, I have a quote from Roland Barthes. He's a very important author to me, who've I have engaged with deeply as part of series of works exhibited in Paris in 2021. Here it is translated to English: "The etymology of the word 'text' is textile [textile, tissu]. But whereas previously criticism unanimously placed the emphasis on the 'finished' textile (the text being a 'veil' behind which one had to go in search of the truth, the real message, in short the meaning), the current theory of the text turns away from the text-as-veil and seeks to perceive the fabric in its texture, in the interlacing of codes, formulae, signifiers, within which the subject places and undoes itself — like a spider that would dissolve itself into its own web." He compares textile with writing, and to me he gets the point exactly: textile is not just a craft and a support for something else, like a painting. Textile is both the technique and the concept. And I am the spider that dissolves in the weaving.

Neville Wakefield:
You describe textile as "the punk of art mediums" precisely because it resists containment — not only materially, but conceptually. Being old enough to have been witness to the many trajectories and incarnations of punk I'm also acutely aware of that other history of being absorbed, aestheticized, and rendered safe by the institutions it once opposed. Do you worry that the current institutional embrace of textile risks neutralizing its radicality? Or is there something inherent to weaving, stitching, knotting, and entanglement that continues to resist capture — something that keeps textile unstable, difficult, even dangerous within contemporary art discourse?

Marie Hazard:
I completely agree with you, and indeed as we discussed textile has never been conceived as something punk. That's precisely the problem, it's still perceived primarily as a craft and a traditional medium – feminine, and therefore docile. The bar is very low, and I don't think that the current institutional interest in textile can really make it worse, even though of course institutions inherently de-punk anything they touch.

Anyway, my own effort and intention as an artist, in my own corner, is precisely to take it towards more radicality, more punkness. When I say that textile is the punk of art mediums, I mean it in a broad sense, including sewing, weaving, and embroidery. I'm always asking myself, how do you subvert the craft from the inside? How do you push it beyond itself without losing it? These are obviously very difficult questions but it's at the heart of my practice.

For example, at first, when Victoire suggested this exhibition, I was a bit afraid, because immediately I associated the farm with the mythical image of a woman spinning yarn in a hemp field and weaving it. A boring story, in my view – too literal, too earthbound. So for me it was a challenge to accept this proposal, because it's something that I had never done, and which came with the risk of carrying something very artisanal and very "craft". Maybe people are going to see this, and indeed it's part of it, but for me the whole challenge is to play with this context – the farm, the hemp, the traditional weaving – and to take it somewhere else, both esthetically and conceptually, to give it a radical twist, something that breaks with a narration of timelessness and continuity.

For this exhibition, my thinking and research started with a residency I did in Tambacounda, Senegal, with the Josef & Anni Albers foundation. There I built my own loom and wove with whatever material I could find around me, including old inner tubes from the motorbike of the foundation's technician. Those inner tubes are actually widely used locally to repair objects or

attach them. It's an amazing material. With this project at Le Marais I continued working with it and I combine it with hemp, but also linen and coco. A kind of exchange of status takes place between these materials: the rubber threads become more noble, at the same time as they give some of their roughness to the others.

For the monumental work, I wove coco fiber, linen, and hemp. Here, the massive scale gives strength to the weaving – to show how powerful it is, how much of a presence weaving actually has in our world, for people to finally see it, open their eyes! Maybe it's too literal, but the space called for such a move. I finished this work about two months ago, just before you came to the studio. Yet inside me I knew that this piece was too well-behaved, that something was missing. I felt like it was too traditional, it was not quite my language yet. Now inner tubes run through the piece – some stitched onto the surface, others falling off it. They bring weight, and a reflection of light that settles on the rubber.

For another piece, I wove with linen offcuts that one of my collectors gave me. They come from a huge textile factory in the North of France, which has closed down. I assembled all these offcuts on my loom. At first sight you might think the piece is made of sheep wool. But once it's pressed, all the threads are compacted, and the image digitally printed over them is one I took in 2022 in Mexico City.

For me, weaving is intrinsically powerful when it breaks out of a craft framework, when it's combined with other materials that make it more interesting. But this Tambacounda research with different materials was in fact a continuation of one that began during my studies in London. I couldn't afford to buy thread, so I started using whatever I could find on the streets of Camden: pieces of wood, tires. Later I gave that up – the materials weren't noble enough, or so I felt, since I was now exhibiting in galleries. I did other interesting work, but after a while I needed to bring these materials back, as a way to recover my own voice and language. I was exhausted by the relentless art world and market. I'm part of it but I always feel split in two, because I don't come from that wealth or that politeness. My journey has been shaped by intimate and family struggles. I don't have the right codes – and I'm proud of it. It was only when I left my gallery in Paris that I came back to these materials – and rediscovered the joy of weaving. I think my most recent weavings are the most accomplished of the past decade.

In pushing textile beyond weaving, in making it refuse to be docile, I'm searching for my own language. It's a continuous process. That's what's tough and beautiful about textile, it's unstable and it always opens so many possibilities.