

# GLOSSARY

**appliqué**  
Affixing fabric shapes to another piece of fabric (often referred to as the background fabric) to create a composition.

**beading; beadwork**  
The process by which beads are assembled to create a design, pattern or representation, often by threading them together with thread, string or wire.

**backstrap loom**  
A transportable loom where one side of the loom wraps around the weaver's back and waist and the other side is connected to a fixed point in space, with the warp threads held in tension in between.

**boro**  
From the Japanese term *boroboro*, meaning something tattered or worn out. Refers to the Japanese practice of reworking and repairing textiles (often clothes or bedding) through piecing, patching and stitching.

**braiding**  
Passing three or more strands of material over one another alternately, at a diagonal angle, to create a cord or narrow length of fabric. Also known as plaiting.

**Dutch wax prints**  
A mechanically printed cotton textile developed in the Netherlands in the nineteenth century to imitate the wax-resist designs of Indonesian batik. The cloths were subsequently shipped for sale in West Africa, where they continue to be widely worn.

**dyeing**  
The process of chemically bonding coloured substances to fibre, yarn or cloth.

**embroidery**  
A method of decorating fabric by utilising a needle and thread. Many different embroidery stitches and patterns exist, including cross-stitching, feather stitching and chain stitching.

**fibre**  
A single thread-like substance, either natural or synthetic, that can be combined to create a fabric or be spun to make yarn.

**jacquard**  
A fabric made using a jacquard loom (invented around 1803 by Joseph-Marie Jacquard), which uses a card-punching mechanism that allows for a greater number of threads to be weaved, in turn allowing intricate designs to be woven into the fabric (as opposed to printed on it).

**knitting**  
A technique for producing textile by interlacing loops of thread (usually yarn) with other loops of thread. Knitting uses only one long yarn, looped on itself, as opposed to weaving, which uses multiple threads.

**latch-hooking**  
A technique for making rugs that uses a hooked needle (called a latch hook) to interlock a canvas base and fibre (such as yarn).

**loom**  
A machine, often constructed from wood, used to create fabric by holding in place threads running lengthwise (the warp) in order to allow threads running crosswise (the weft) to be interwoven with them.

**macramé**  
A textile-making technique that uses knotting rather than weaving or stitching. From the nineteenth century onwards, it was primarily associated with sailors, who would use the method to adorn their tools or to make hammocks, but it is now widely practised to make jewellery, ornaments and decorations.

**ñanduti**  
A traditional lace from Paraguay, *ñanduti* means 'spider's web' in Guaraní, one of the country's Indigenous languages. This lacemaking method was introduced by the Spanish in the sixteenth century.

**quilting**  
The process of stitching together three or more layers of material – typically two layers of fabric with a layer of padding (or 'batting') in between – usually in a decorative design. This method is traditionally used to make bedcovers and other furnishings.

**sewing**  
The act of joining or mending fabric using stitches made with a needle and thread or sewing machine.

**sisal**  
A plant native to Mexico that is now widely cultivated internationally. It is used to make a stiff and durable fibre used to produce rope.

**soft sculpture**  
An art historical term used to describe sculpture made of fibre, cloth or other soft materials.

**stitch**  
A loop of thread created by passing a needle through a piece of fabric, or a single loop created in knitting or crochet.

**unspun wool**  
Yarn is made through a process involving scouring (washing the wool); carding (untangling and blending the wool together) and spinning (twisting the wool to create single strands of yarn). Unspun wool is the product of making yarn but stopping after the carding process. This makes very delicate-looking and light wool.

**tapestry**  
A decorative fabric textile created by weaving on a loom. The picture or pattern is created during the construction of the fabric by weaving coloured weft threads through plain warp threads. They are often flat and hung on a wall but have also been used for upholstery, curtains or to create richly decorated functional objects such as purses.

**warp and weft**  
The warp is the set of yarns in all woven fabrics that run lengthwise (vertically) and are interwoven with the weft, the yarns or threads that run horizontally.

**weaving**  
The interlacing of yarns or threads, crossing each other at right angles, to make a piece of fabric, usually on a loom.

**yarn**  
Strands made of natural or synthetic fibres or filaments that are used sewing, weaving and knitting to produce textiles.



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artists defy traditional expectations of  
textiles, embracing abstraction or  
figuration to push the boundaries of the  
medium. They draw on its material history to  
reveal ideas relating to gender, labour,  
value, ecology, ancestral knowledge, and  
histories of oppression, extraction and trade.  
Rather than dictating a chronological  
history of fibre art, the exhibition is  
organised in thematic dialogues between  
artists – across both generations and  
geographies – to explore how artists have  
embraced textiles to critique or push up  
against regimes of power. Some artists work  
alone with solitary, near-meditative  
practices, while others reflect the shared  
approach that the medium often invites,  
working with collaborators in acts of  
hand-crafted pieces to large-scale  
sculptural installations, these artworks  
communicate multi-layered stories about  
lived experience, invoking the vital issues  
embedded in fibre and thread.

Textiles are vital to our lives. We are  
swaddled in them when we're born, we're  
our bodies in them every day, and we're  
surrounded in them when we die. What does it  
mean to imagine a needle, a loom or a  
garment as a tool of resistance? How can  
textiles unpack, question, unspool, unravel  
and therefore reimagine the world around us?  
Since the 1960s, textiles have become  
increasingly present in artistic practices  
for subversive ends. This is significant as  
the medium has been historically undervalued  
within the hierarchies of Western art  
history. Textiles have been considered  
'craft' in opposition to definitions of 'fine  
art', gendered as feminine and marginalised  
by scholars and the art market. The 50  
international artists in this show challenge  
these classifications, harnessing the medium  
to speak powerfully about intimate, everyday  
stories as well as wider socio-political  
narratives, teasing out these entangled  
concerns through a stitch, a knot, a braid,  
through the warp and the weft. These



# THE POWER AND POLITICS OF TEXTILES IN ART

## Subversive Stitch

- 1 Nicholas Hlobo
- 2 Ghada Amer
- 3 Judy Chicago
- 4 Tracey Emin
- 5 Mounira Al Solh
- 6 Feliciano Centurión
- 7 LJ Roberts

## Wound and Repair

- 26 Angela Su
- 27 José Leonilson
- 28 Harmony Hammond
- 29 Louise Bourgeois
- 30 Georgina Maxim
- 31 Diedrick Brackens

## Fabric of Everyday Life

- 8 Loretta Pettway  
(Gee's Bend Quiltmakers)
- 9 Sanford Biggers
- 10 Małgorzata Mirga-Tas
- 11 Sheila Hicks
- 12 Tschabalala Self
- 13 Faith Ringgold
- 14 Pacita Abad
- 15 Billie Zangewa

## Ancestral Threads

- 32 Jeffrey Gibson
- 33 Tau Lewis
- 34 Kevin Beasley
- 35 Myrlande Constant
- 36 Jose Antonio Guzman  
and Iva Jankovic
- 37 Yee I-Lann
- 38 Yinka Shonibare
- 39 Mercedes Azpilicueta
- 40 Cecilia Vicuña
- 41 Lenore Tawney
- 42 Mrinalini Mukherjee
- 43 Magdalena Abakanowicz
- 44 Jagoda Buić
- 45 Sarah Zapata
- 46 Acaye Kerunen
- 47 Antonio Pichillá Quiacain
- 48 Yto Barrada
- 49 Solange Pessoa
- 50 Cecilia Vicuña

## Borderlands

- 16 Igshaan Adams
- 17 Kimsooja
- 18 T. Vinoja
- 19 Cian Dayrit
- 20 Margarita Cabrera

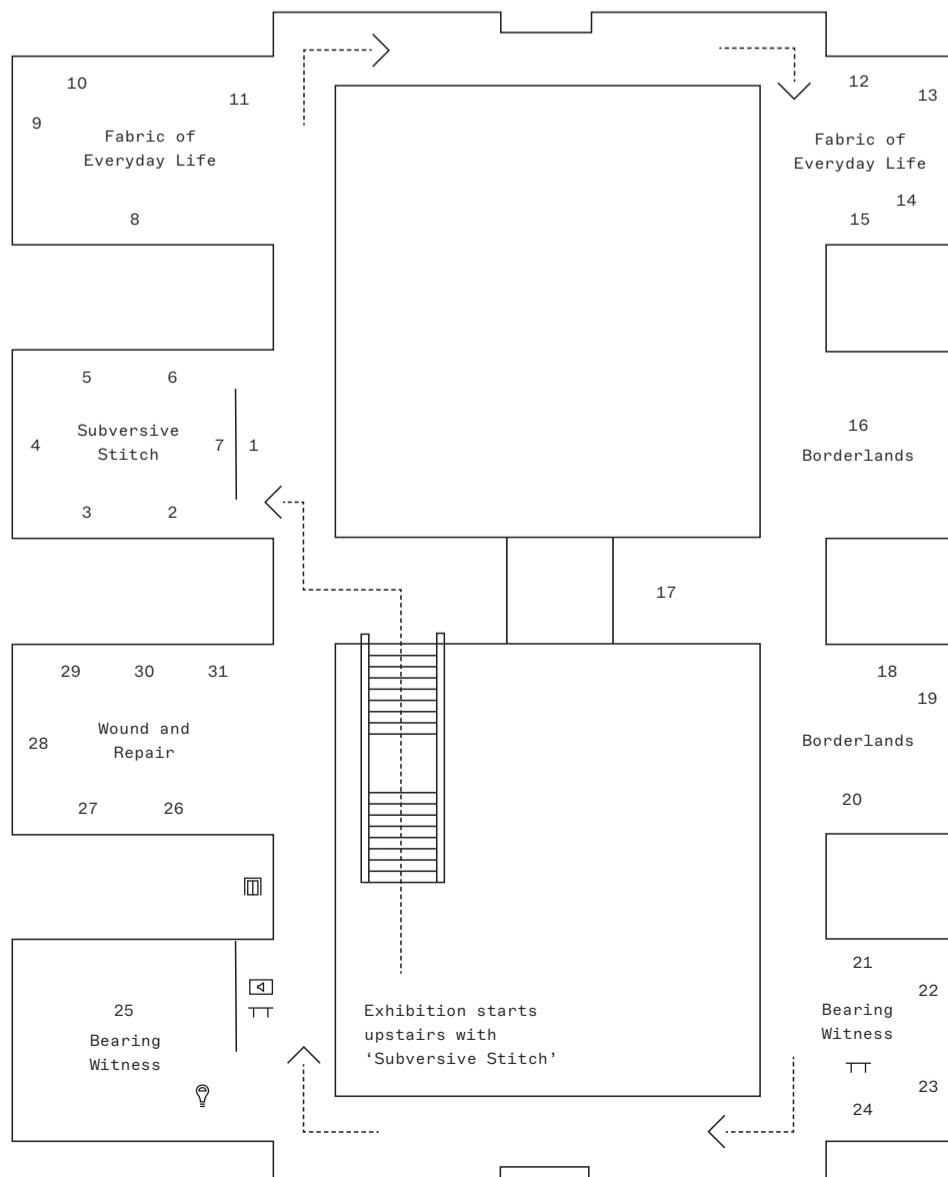
## Bearing Witness

- 21 Zamthingla Ruivah
- 22 Violeta Parra
- 23 Arpilleristas
- 24 Hannah Ryggen
- 25 Teresa Margolles

### Key

- WC Accessible toilets
- △ Cloakroom
- Aa Large print guide
- ◇ Ticket desk
- ▢ Lift
- TT Seating
- Portable seating
- 💡 Low lighting
- 🎬 Film with sound

## UPPER GALLERY



## LOWER GALLERY

