

ARNOLFINI

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THREADS: 'BREATHING STORIES INTO MATERIALS'

8 JULY TO 1 OCTOBER 2023

Artist Bios

(Authored by the artist)

Caroline Achaintre

Caroline Achaintre works conceptually at the intersection of abstraction and objectivity. She creates characters, faces, masks, fantastical creatures and forms between object and subject. Her abstract pieces are still creatures, at least the skins of creatures – objects with soul, between human and animal. Constants in Achaintre's seemingly animate oeuvre are the masquerade, the archaic, the dark, and the mysterious – bordering on the uncanny.

Having trained as a blacksmith her early work was in metal and watercolor, but this has largely been superseded by installations – first in Styrofoam, later in wool and ceramic. Now that textiles and ceramics have been emancipated from attributions to the domestic in art since the 1960s/1970s, the artist (born in 1969) can unreservedly use all the techniques and materials that are suited to her subjects and explorations of form.

What interests Achaintre about the media of wool, ceramic, and watercolour are their materiality, surface effect, and intuitive work process. The production process is very physical and energetic – and as such the pieces convey a certain aura and intensity. With the technique of tufting, pictures with a relief character emerge from individual threads of wool that are shot through the back of a canvas. Achaintre's language of form and iconography are rich and diverse.

Stylistically her work contains references to German Expressionism, to Primitivism, to the Arts & Crafts movement, and to Fauvism. Thematically and formally, the artist explores Central European carnival and Mardi Gras customs. Influences from horror, the fetish, heavy metal, and science fiction find their way into her creative work, as does her examination of how ethnological collections are presented in museums. As such she alludes among other things to the legacy of colonialism, to aspects of psychoanalysis, and to niche aspects of youth culture.

<https://carolineachaintre.com>

Mounira Al Solh

Mounira Al Solh (b. 1978, Lebanon, lives and works between Beirut and Amsterdam) is a visual artist embracing inter alia video and video installations, painting and drawing, text, embroidery, and performative gestures. Irony and self-reflectivity are central strategies for her work, which explores feminist issues, tracks patterns of micro-history, bears witness to the impact of conflict and displacement, is socially engaged, and can be political and poetically escapist all at once. Her practice utilises oral documentation, multidisciplinary collaboration and wordplay to explore themes of memory and loss.

Motivated by acts of sharing and storytelling, change and resistance, Al Solh strives to craft a sensory language that defies nationality and creed.

In 2008, Al Solh started NOA Magazine (Not Only Arabic), a collaborative initiative co-edited with collaborators such as Fadi El Tofeili, Mona Abu Rayyan and Jacques Aswad. She co-founded NOA Language School in Amsterdam (2013), which functioned as a temporary research platform for investigations into the relationships between language and immigration.

Al Solh has had exhibitions at Museumsquartier Osnabruck, Germany (2022); BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, UK (2022); Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (2020); Jameel Arts Centre, Dubai (2018); Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha (2018); and The Art Institute Chicago (2018).

She has also participated in group exhibitions including the Sharjah Biennial (2023); Museum Het Valkhof, Nijmegen, the Netherlands (2022); Busan Biennale (2022); ROZENSTRAAT, Amsterdam (2022); Musée National de Pablo Picasso–La Guerre et la Paix, Vallauris, France (2020); Palais De Tokyo, Paris (2020); Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven (2020); C'arré d'Art Musée d'art contemporain de Ni^mes (2018), Documenta 14, Kassel and Athens (2017); Venice Biennale (2015); New Museum Triennial, New York (2012); Sharjah Biennial 9 (2009); and 11th International Istanbul Biennial (2009), among others.

Mounira Al Solh continued...

She is the winner of the ABN AMRO Art Award (2023), is one of seven shortlisted artists for the Artes Mundi 10 prize (2023); received the Uriot Prize from the Rijksakademie, Amsterdam (2007) and the Black Magic Woman Award, Amsterdam (2007). She was also shortlisted for the Abraaj Group Art Prize, Dubai (2015) and nominated for the Volkskrant Award, Amsterdam (2009). Her video Rawane's Song won the jury prize at Videobrasil (2007).

She learned the double bass at the national conservatory of music in Lebanon, then studied painting at the Lebanese University in Beirut (1997–2001) and Fine Arts at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy in Amsterdam (2003–2006). She was also a research resident at Rijksakademie, Amsterdam (2007–2008).

www.mouniraalsolh.com and www.sfeir-semmler.com/galleryartists/mounira-alsolh/biography

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Olga de Amaral

Olga de Amaral was born Olga Ceballos Vélez in Bogotá, Colombia in 1932, where she continues to live and work. She studied Architectural Drafting at the Colegio Mayor de Cundinamarca in Bogotá, leaving for the USA in 1952 to study textiles at the Cranbrook Academy of Art outside of Detroit, Michigan. Amaral spins base matter into fields of color and weaves tectonic lines through space, unselfconsciously testing the borders between crafted object and the work of art. From the flat surfaces of tapestry through to resolutely three-dimensional sculptural forms made from fibre, the Colombian artist's work spans more than 60 years, in turn reaching even further back to the spiritual qualities and ancient craquelure of medieval icon paintings or else the rigour and simplicity of the modernist grid, as if run through a loom.

www.lissongallery.com/artists/olga-de-amaral

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Ifeoma U Anyaeli

Ifeoma U. Anyaeji is a Nigerian neo-traditional artist born in Benin City who decided to take-up art as a full-time career exploring her boundaries, as a female artist beyond the conventions of her initial academic training in painting. She later went on to pursue her earlier interest in sculpture and engaging further her passion for non-conventional art making and repurposing discarded objects, an interest stimulated by the constant environmental problems she encountered around her community particularly from non- biodegradable plastic bags and bottles.

While experimenting with these discarded environmental pollutants, engaging possible processes of object remaking and reuse especially with non-conventional art making techniques and traditional craft processes, Anyaeji developed a style of art she calls "Plasto-Art". This is an eco-aesthetic process of remaking, where she transforms her primary medium - used non-biodegradable plastic bags and bottles - by applying her crafting skills in a receding traditional Nigerian hair plaiting technique called Threading, combined with traditional basketry and fabric weaving techniques. Using this technique, Anyaeji creates conceptually complex and organic sculptures and installations, with intricate textures and colours, that reference architectural forms, domestic spaces and furnishings, reiterations of cultural experiences, and discourses about the human body.

www.ifeomaanyaeji.com

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Will Cruickshank

Will Cruickshank (b.1974 UK) has a multidisciplinary practice which includes sculpture, film, photography, and printmaking, alongside machines and participatory works. His recent practice has focused on making objects through the development of experimental machinery, materials, and production methods. This began in three grain silos in Essex, which he converted as studio spaces in 2015. Often repurposing equipment such as cement mixers, bikes, or potters wheels he has devised complex makeshift weaving machines, improvised lathes, printing presses, and water carving techniques. This period of research was funded by Arts Council England through 2018- 19.

Cruickshank's practice focuses on a studio-based development of experimental machinery, materials, and production methods. His work often places an importance on colour, pattern and symmetry, whilst appearing to be connected to something unknown and sacred. This air of devotion can perhaps be explained by his meticulous processes using improvised tools, and complex makeshift devices, created by Cruickshank from repurposed cement mixers, bikes, and potters' wheels. It is a sensitivity to the possibilities of his materials and machines that drives the work, making a practice grounded in learning by doing, and thinking through making.

Artist Awards, Residencies and Fellowships include Arts Council England. DYCP award for studio research, 2018-2019, Artist in Residence; Supernormal Festival, Oxfordshire 2010-2014; Working Title Residency, Aspex Gallery, Portsmouth, 2011; Artist in Residence, Coleman Project Space, London, 2008; Arts Council England International Artists Fellowship, initiated by Braziers International Artists Workshop. Lijiang Studios/Golden Dragon Street Studios, Zhongdian, Yunnan Province, China, Residency, 2007; Braziers International Artists Workshop. Braziers Park, Oxfordshire, 2006. Cruickshank is represented by Bolee and Workman.

www.willcruickshank.com and www.boleeworkman.com/artists/53-will-cruickshank/

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Monika Žaltauskaitė Grašienė

Monika Grašienė is a visual and textile artist and the Associate Professor and Head of Textile Media Art Program in Kaunas Faculty, Vilnius Academy of Arts, Lithuania. Educated VAA Master of Arts, Art Licenciata degree, Esmod, Paris, France, Bergen Academy of Arts (KHiB), Norway. As an artist, she has become well-known worldwide, receiving numerous awards with her work collected by museums and private collections.

The artist has been referred to as the “textile architect”, and “the master of computerized Jacquard weaving”, her works have been exhibited in various galleries and museums around the world, including Poland, Latvia, Germany, Sweden, France, Portugal, the United Kingdom, Japan, India, and USA. Since 2013 she has been a board member of the Kaunas Biennial. She has curated and managed a number of local, national and international exhibitions and projects, including a major Kaunas Biennial. Her focus is on building international relations between artists, organizations and cultural operators through interdisciplinary art projects, artist promotion and networking.

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Young In Hong

Young In Hong (b. 1972, South Korea) is a visual artist based in Bristol, working across installation, sound, performance, textile and drawing. Hong describes herself as an artist looking for ways to question the idea of 'equality', and how equality can be practiced through art. The practice of equality to Hong is tested through exploring marginalised cultural practices as well as through questioning the hierarchy embedded in society. Having enhanced her sewing skills from seamstresses at Seoul's Dongdaemun market, where such female labour is considered lower class, Hong tries to question the role of female craft and labour in the history of modern Korea.

Hong has presented work at Kunsthall Extra City Antwerp (2023), Seoul Museum of Art (2022), National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul (2019), the Korean Cultural Centre London (2017), Block Universe Festival London (2017), *fig-2* ICA London (2015) and Gwangju Biennale (2014).

younginhong.com and www.pkmgallery.com/artists/young-in-hong

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Lubaina Himid

Lubaina Himid (b. 1954, Zanzibar) lives and works in Preston, UK, and is Emeritus Professor of Contemporary Art at the University of Central Lancashire. She is the winner of the 2017 Turner Prize and the 2024 Suzanne Deal Booth | Flag Art Foundation Prize.

Himid has exhibited extensively in the UK and abroad. Significant solo exhibitions include: *So Many Dreams*, Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne/Plateforme 10, Switzerland (2022); *Water Has a Perfect Memory*, Hollybush Gardens, London (2022); *Lubaina Himid*, Tate Modern, London (2021); *Spotlights*, Tate Britain, London (2019); *The Grab Test*, Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem, The Netherlands (2019); *Lubaina Himid*, CAPC Bordeaux, France (2019); *Work From Underneath*, New Museum, New York (2019); *Gifts to Kings*, MRAC Languedoc Roussillon MidiPyrénées, Sérignan (2018); and *Invisible Strategies*, Modern Art Oxford (2017).

<https://lubainahimid.uk> and <https://hollybushgardens.co.uk/artists/lubaina-himid/>

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Raisa Kabir

Raisa Kabir is an artist, textiles researcher and weaver based in London. Kabir utilises woven text/textiles, sound, video and performance to materialise concepts concerning the interwoven cultural politics of cloth, with archives of the body and colonial geographies. Kabir's (un)weaving performances use queer entanglement to comment on structures of trans-national power, global production, and the relationships between craft and industrial labour.

She has exhibited work internationally at; The Whitworth, Glasgow International, Liverpool Biennial, CCA Glasgow, British Textile Biennial, Ford Foundation New York, The Tetley, Raven Row, Textile Arts Center NYC, and the Center for Craft Creativity and Design U.S; and has lectured on her research at Tate Modern, ICA London, The Courtauld, and the V&A.

<https://lids-sewn-shut.typepad.com>

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Alice Kettle

Alice Kettle is internationally renowned for being a pioneer of her art form, with an application and process that makes her a unique creator and maker of art. Her work is regarded as boundary breaking and contemporary in its process, yet it also evokes a deep sense of the fundamental with its themes. Kettle depicts contemporary events and the experience of being in the world in her stitched tales, which spring from mythology and storytelling. She draws references from the history of figurative textiles and monumental narrative tapestry. In Kettle's narratives these allusions tell of her own encounters, of transformative experiences and the continual process of growth, renewal, change, decay, and the counterpoints of tragedy and hope. Her approach is immersed in the relationship we as humans have with nature, the world and each other. "We are part of the material world as physical beings" she says "... implicated in a generative cycle of relation-ships."

Her fine art training at the University of Reading, links her to an influential generation of contemporary painters such as Terry Frost, Mali Morris and Albert Irvin, all of whom were her tutors. You can see the legacy of their work present in her mark-making, colour and energy of line. Yet, unlike theirs her work is largely figurative. Turning to textiles after her time at Goldsmith's, Kettle's work contributes to a tradition of thread narrative in Britain, which began in the 11th century with the Bayeux tapestry, and with the histories of women who have long communi-cated their lives and experiences through textile work. Her work is in 23 International Public Collections.

<https://alicekettle.co.uk> and <https://candidastevens.com/artists/33-alice-kettle/overview/>

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Ibrahim Mahama

Ibrahim Mahama was born in 1987 in Tamale, Ghana. He lives and works in Accra, Kumasi and Tamale. His work uses the transformation of materials to explore themes of commodity, migration, globalisation and economic exchange. Often made in collaboration with others, his large-scale installations employ materials gathered from urban environments which are repurposed and draped over architectural structures.

In 2019, Mahama opened the artist-run space Savannah Centre for Contemporary Art (SCCA) in Tamale, Ghana, followed by the opening of a vast studio complex, Red Clay, in Janna Kpenɔ in 2020 and a renovated silo building, Nkrumah Volini, in 2021. Encompassing exhibition space, educational facilities and an artist-residency, these institutions represent Mahama's contribution towards the development and expansion of the contemporary art scene in his home country.

https://whitecube.com/artists/artist/ibrahim_mahama

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Richard McVetis

Richard McVetis (b.1983) studied at Manchester School of Art before studying at the Royal College of Art, where he teaches. McVetis has been shortlisted for several distinguished prizes, including the Jerwood Drawing Prize, UK, 2011 and 2017, and the international Loewe Craft Prize, 2018. In addition, McVetis has shown work nationally and internationally at several exhibitions, including The British Textile Biennial, UK, 2021; RENEW at Kettles Yard, UK, 2019; Loewe Craft Prize, Design Museum, London, UK, 2018; 'Form + Motion' – a major exhibition with the British Council, South Korea, 2017. In 2022 his first solo show was at the Craft Study Centre, Farnham.

McVetis' practice is deeply rooted in process, and intrinsic to this is hand embroidery. He records time and space through multiple dots, lines, and crosses. These meticulously rendered stitches reflect a preoccupation with the repetitive nature of process. McVetis explores the subtle differences that emerge through ritualistic and habitual making. These inscribed stitches mark the hand's rhythms, a delicate performance of obsessive intricacy, refinement, and gesture. They record human presence, time and decay, each stitch or line acting as a marker for lived time, an embodiment of thought and patience. These physical, tactile, and repetitive modes of creation allow him the time to see and think, to occupy a space. McVetis believes in the truth and potential of materials to reveal and understand our intrinsic relationship to nature and our place in it. Recent works examine the connection to material and place through personal histories and address questions of class and race.

www.richardmvetis.co.uk/ and <https://cavalierofinn.com/artists/76-richard-mvetis/>

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Farwa Moledina

Farwa Moledina is a Muslim artist working primarily with textile. Using imagery from art history, architecture and her own culture and lived experience, she creates patterns that often take the form of large installations which explore faith, family, and the histories of Muslim Women. The patterns she designs are inspired by the Islamic Design Principles, such as those of recurrence, symmetry and abstraction. Currently, she is interested in how the western historical art narrative portrays the Muslim woman, and whether this has impacted how Muslim women are viewed in the contemporary world.

www.farwamoledina.com

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Lucy Orta

Lucy Orta's visual arts practice employs a diversity of media including drawing, sculpture, and performance to realize major bodies of work that address key social and ecological challenges. She also works as part of the artistic partnership Lucy and Jorge Orta. Amongst their most emblematic bodies of work are: 'Refuge Wear' and 'Body Architecture', portable minimum habitats bridging architecture and dress; 'Nexus Architecture' investigates alternative models of the social link; 'HortiRecycling' and '70 x 7 The Meal' question the local and global food chain and rituals of community feasting; 'OrtaWater' and 'Clouds' reflect on water scarcity and the problems arising from its pollution and corporate control; 'Antarctica' considers the effects of climate change on migration; and 'Amazonia' explores interwoven ecosystems and their value to our natural environment.

www.studio-orta.com

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Anya Paintsil

Born 1993 in Wrexham, North Wales, Anya Paintsil is a Welsh and Ghanaian artist working primarily with textiles. From rug hooking to embroidery, her assemblages evoke tactile tapestry on the one hand, and constitute semi-sculptural interventions on the other. Playful and profound, flippant and forceful, her practice engages the language of fibres - of all kinds - with interrogations of materiality and political personhood.

www.edcrossfineart.com/artists/44-any-paintsil/overview/

Anousha Payne

Anousha Payne b. 1991, lives and works in London. Her work explores the boundaries between personal experience, fiction and myth. Informed by Indian folkloric stories and personal fiction, it plays on ideas of the performative powers of objects and chance, the combination of moral dilemmas and magic alongside characters with transformative qualities. Often deploying reptile skin, her ceramics are intended as hybrid objects, a reminder of the fluidity and shared qualities between humans, animals, the natural world and inanimate objects. Ceramic sculptures are adorned with jewellery and textiles, acting as cultural signifiers whilst questioning material hierarchies and values. Another element to her work is storytelling through simple gestures and expressions, reflecting on human interaction and communication. The deployment of bharathantyam hand gestures are used as a way of connecting with cultural heritage, as well as being used for their known symbolic meaning. Anousha Payne graduated from Camberwell College of arts with a BA in 2014. Recent exhibitions include thick mud, slowly oozing at Stellerhighway, New York, Potheads at Swivel Gallery, Ny York and Tangled toes, twisted ears at Public Gallery, London. Upcoming shows include a solo exhibition at Deli Gallery in New York, a group show with Sperling, Munich, and a group exhibition with SuperSuperMarkt, Berlin. www.anoushapayne.com

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David Penny

David Penny is an artist from Manchester. His practice often responds to site and is developed through archival and practice-based approaches to research. Photography is considered as an open and explorative tool for investigation where images are posed speculatively. He works with moving image, sculpture, and digital processes to create gallery installation. Exhibitions include 'Paper Geographies' – Arles Photo Festival;; 'A Fallen Line of Marble Drums' – Snehta, Athens; 'Remote Work' - Grundy Gallery, Blackpool; 'Screen for Another Focus' - Dovecot Gallery, Edinburgh; 'A Quality of Distance' - METAL, Liverpool; 'Spatial Correspondences' - RAUMX, London; A Lecture Upon the Shadow - Open Eye Gallery, Liverpool & ShanghART, Shanghai.
<https://davidpenny.info/Screen-For-Another-Focus>

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Anna Perach

Anna Perach (1985, Ukraine) is an Israeli artist living and working in London, UK. She holds an MFA in fine art (distinction) from Goldsmiths, University of London (2020). In 2022 Anna presented a solo show with Edel Assanti in London and took part in Arrtissima with ADA gallery where she won the Carol Rama award. She has exhibited internationally at galleries including: Hales gallery (London, UK), Sommer gallery (Basel, Switzerland) and Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art (Herzliya, Israel). In 2021 Anna received the Ingram prize and Gilbert Buys sculpture award. Recent publications include Artfotum and Art Maze Mag.

www.annaperach.com

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Celia Pym

Celia Pym is an artist living and working in London. She has been exploring damage and repair in textiles since 2007. Working with garments that belong to individuals as well as items in museum archives, she has extensive experience with the spectrum and stories of damage, from small moth holes to larger accidents with fire.

Her work has been exhibited most recently in *Empathy for People, Empathy for Things*, UH Arts+Culture (2022), *Gorgeous Nothings*, Bartha Contemporary (2022), *Eternally Yours*, Somerset House, London, (2022), *Say Less*, Herald St, London (2022) *Radical Acts: Harewood Biennial 2022*, Leeds, (2022), *Keep Being Amazing*, Firstsite, Colchester, Essex (2022) and *On Happiness: Joy + Tranquillity*, Wellcome Collection, London (2021). Pym was shortlisted for the Woman's Hour Craft Prize and the inaugural Loewe Craft Prize in 2017. Her work is held in the Musée National de Monaco and Crafts Council UK collections. She is an Associate Lecturer in Textiles at the Royal College of Art in London and in 2022 published her first book – *On Mending: stories of damage and repair* with Quickthorn Press.

<http://celiapym.com>

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Yinka Shonibare

Yinka Shonibare CBE RA (b. 1962) in London, UK, studied Fine Art at Byam Shaw School of Art, London (1989) and received his MFA from Goldsmiths, University of London (1991).

His interdisciplinary practice uses citations of Western art history and literature to question the validity of contemporary cultural and national identities within the context of globalization. Through examining race, class and the construction of cultural identity, his works comment on the tangled interrelationship between Africa and Europe, and their respective economic and political histories.

In 2004, Shonibare was nominated for the Turner Prize and in 2008, his mid-career survey began at Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, travelling in 2009 to the Brooklyn Museum, New York and the Museum of African Art at the Smithsonian Institute, Washington D.C. In 2010, his first public art commission 'Nelson's Ship in a Bottle' was displayed on the Fourth Plinth in Trafalgar Square, London and is in the permanent collection of the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London.

In 2013, he was elected a Royal Academician and was awarded the honour of 'Commander of the Order of the British Empire' in 2019. His installation 'The British Library' was acquired by Tate, London in 2019.

Shonibare was awarded the prestigious Whitechapel Gallery Art Icon Award in March 2021. A major retrospective of his work opened at the Museum der Moderne, Salzburg in May 2021 followed by his co-ordination of The Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, London which opened in September 2021.

The survey solo exhibition, 'Yinka Shonibare CBE: Planets in My Head', opened in April 2022 at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, Grand Rapids, Michigan followed by the unveiling in June of a major new sculptural work, 'Wind Sculpture in Bronze I' at Royal Djurgården, Stockholm.

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Yinka Shonibare continued

In November 2022, Shonibare hosted the international launch of Guest Artists Space (G. A. S.) Foundation, a non-profit founded and developed by the artist. The Foundation is dedicated to facilitating cultural exchange through residencies, public programmes and exhibition opportunities for creative practitioners from around the world. The multi-use live/work residency spaces are set across sites in Lagos and a rural working farm in Ijebu, Ogun State.

Shonibare's works are in notable museum collections internationally, including the Tate Collection, London; Victoria and Albert Museum, London; National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institute, Washington, D.C; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; National Gallery of Modern Art in Rome and VandenBroek Foundation, The Netherlands.

<https://yinkashonibare.com/>

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Esna Su

Central Saint Martin's graduate Esna Su breathes stories into materials to create evocative handcrafted pieces. Her body of work subtly explores the issues of identity and memory and how these are shaken in the context of political instability. Su envelopes her pieces with heritage, using traditional Turkish techniques of weaving, twining and crochet. Despite the traditional aspects of the pieces, they are mutated into wearable sculptures as Su translates them into her own language with the use of her own methods. Her collection "The Refugee and The Burden" were exhibited in the UK as well as in Netherland, Switzerland, South Korea, China.

<https://cockpitstudios.org/makers/esna-su>