

Knitting and Knotting Together Joy in Katrina Sanchezâ?? Textile Art

Description



Katrina Sanchez

Fiber artist Katrina Sanchez makes deeply tactile and brilliantly bright knitted objects that speak of her sunny childhood in Panama, bringing a joyful and optimistic sensibility to the spaces they inhabit. The innocence of her soft, puffy creations makes them immediately appealing on a surface level, but they also form a potent means of fantasy, comfort, and escapism, for both the artist through the process of making, and the viewers who are so often invited to touch and play with her art. She says, â??My work explores ideas of community, healing, and renewal align. My artworks require many individual parts to come together to make a whole. At the heart of my practice is a drive to elicit a multi-sensory experience that engages the audienceâ??s desire to play.â?•



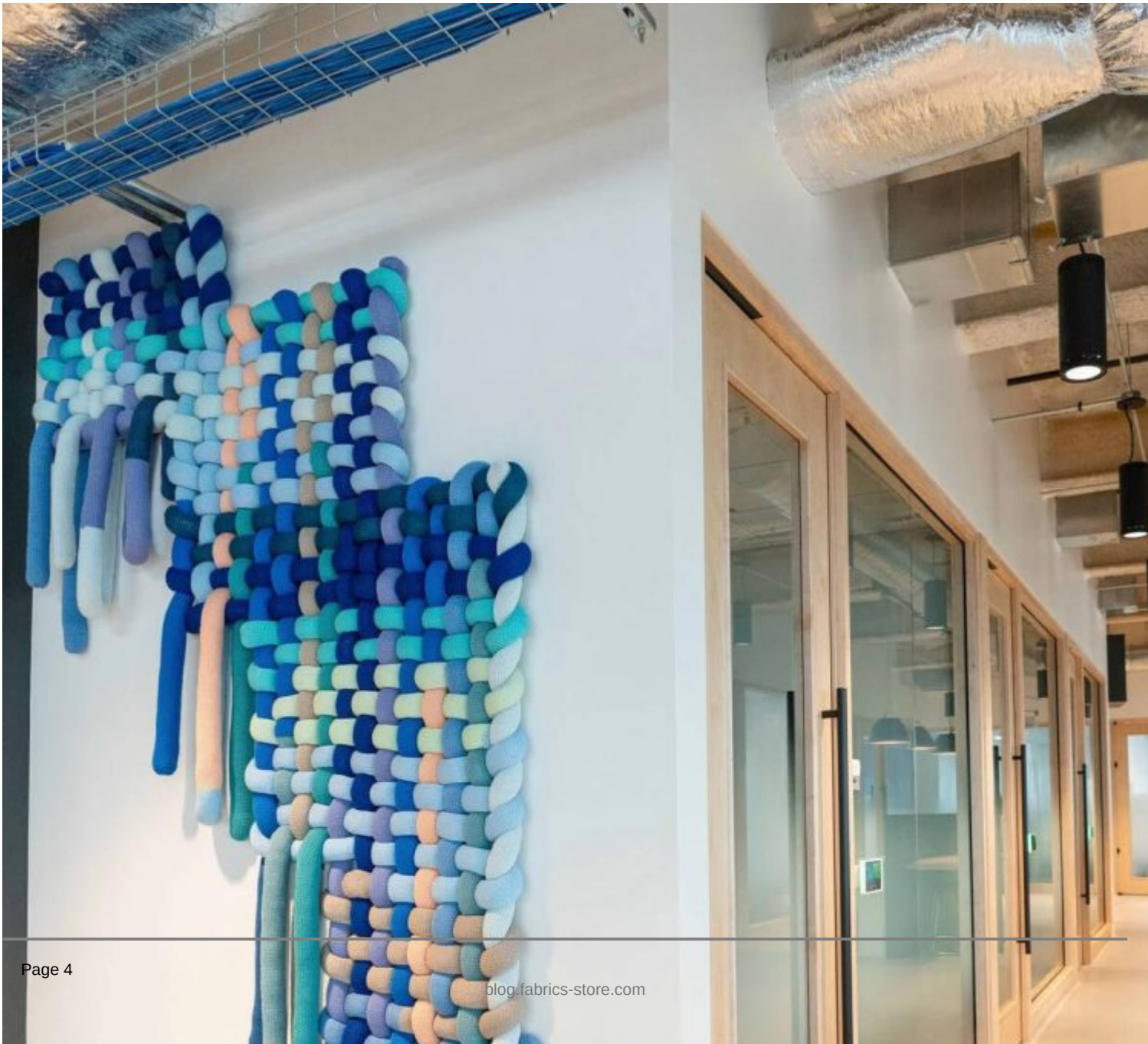
All Together Now, 2023

Sanchez was born and raised in the Republic of Panama, and the spirit of colour and play she found here during this time has come to shape her adult art. She also found creativity through family influences, explaining, â??Growing up, I attended two different middle schools and three high schools, most of which did not offer any art classes. I was always a very creative child though, I loved making all kinds of things through sewing, baking, crocheting, and painting. My mother and grandmother were some of my earliest artistic influences.â?•



Mending Joy, 2023

She pursued a Bachelor of Fine Arts at Piedmont Community College, focussing on Fiber art, alongside a BA in Hispanic Studies, but it was the simple process of darning and mending that led her towards the working style she now exhibits and sells widely today. â??I began exploring the labour-intensive and meditative process of darning in the interest of mending my partnersâ?? tattered and well-loved jeans,â?• Sanchez says, adding, â??Since then Iâ??ve continued mended clothing for others. My hands move through the fabric, weaving thread over and under to rebuild. The wonderful textures created through mending are what influenced me to create giant magnified versions.â?•



Installation view of art by Katrina Sanchez

Working with the humble process of mend-and-make-do proved a potent catalyst for Sanchezâ??s artistic career. She says, â??I began mending as a meditative process but needed to fill a gallery space. I realized if I could magnify the thread, I could magnify the pieces themselves. Darning was also traditionally thought of as womenâ??s work, not valued as fine art, so I wanted to play off of that.â?• From small, mended patches, she has gone on to create monumental installations that droop, drape, or are suspended through gallery spaces, sometimes forming giant, woven together objects resembling repair patches coming apart at the seams, through various types of knitting and weaving. Inspiration, she says, comes from fiber artists throughout history â?? these include Sheila Hicks, Joana Vasconcelos, Tanya AguiÃ±iga, Ernesto Nato, Do Ho Suh, Ai WeiWei, Yayoi Kusama, and Toshiko Horiuchi-MacAdam.



All Together Now, 2023

Sometimes Sanchez draws on the tactile properties of her work by inviting viewers to touch, explaining, â??I create interactive art because I want to share what Iâ??ve learned through the process. I love that people want to hug my pieces; to go beyond just looking at them; to sense joy and comfort in a world that is constantly otherwise.â?• But not all her work is an open invitation â?? she is quick to point out how easily textile artworks can degrade if too many hands run across their surfaces, particularly since she is making art objects designed with longevity in mind.



Katrina Sanchez

Each one-off object she makes is its own mini-universe, a site for the integration and exploration of ideas related to the human need for simple qualities of celebration, comfort, and familiarity. She says, â??Weaving different large-scale fibers amplifies the plushness and texture of the work. My sculptures evoke a desire for the viewer to touch and play. The familiarity of the textiles also offers a collective sense of intimacy, warmth, and joyfulnessâ?•.

CATEGORY

1. WEAVING
2. WOMEN IN ART

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