



beyond craft: the art fabric

Mildred Constantine / Jack Lenor Larsen

AURELIA MUÑOZ (de Ventosa)
Spanish, born 1926

Studied at the Escuela Massana de Artes y Arte Aplicadas, Barcelona. Awarded scholarship from Juan March Foundation. Exhibited at the Spanish Pavilion, World's Fair, New York, 1964; Biennale, Lausanne, 1965, 1969, 1971; "Experiencias Artísticas Textiles," Madrid, 1969; and in Scotland, Czechoslovakia, France. Represented in collections of the Museos de Arte Contemporáneo, Madrid, Ibiza; Museum Umelecko Prumyslove, Prague, Provinciehuis Noord Brabant, the Netherlands.

muñoz

Aurelia Muñoz derives inspiration from the great textile and tapestry traditions, particularly those of Spain. For these traditions she has real sympathy, accompanied by a vast fund of knowledge. In Spain and especially in Catalonia, the past is very much available. In Barcelona she finds continuity from Spanish Gothic to Gaudí to the Picasso Museum in a medieval palace.

To her, the use of the past means investigation and interpretation, rather than glorification or a revival in the manner of William Morris. She brings to the present the richness of forsaken techniques found in ancient embroideries, tapestries, and macramé.

Curiously, her earliest work, drawings, prints, and the more recent macramés relate strongly to each other. In between there was a large body of embroidered and patchwork hangings that in their color, surface richness, and subject matter appear to draw more heavily upon the wealth of the past. Although these are both inventive and exquisite, they seem part of another era, perhaps related to the early part of this century.

She has studied the ancient Spanish and Arabic origins of macramé knotting, and is drawn particularly to those Iberian sculptures with ornament fringes of macramé found in Albacete province of Spain. But the structure and the scale of her work speak of our time and particularly of contemporary architecture. Like Grossen and others working in macramé, she mostly employs sisal for her pieces. Unlike theirs, however, her work is fully volumetric. It exists in the round, is solidly, densely built, and often monumental. Most recently, she has worked on models for very large environmental projects (p. 210).

Aurelia Muñoz is deeply and intensely Spanish. A quiet crusader for contemporary expression in her country, she unites in her work and in her teaching the drive of our century with the unity of her heritage.

*Aurelia Muñoz with half of Macra I, 1969.
113" x 70"
macramé
cotton; white*

The two wings of this work form a rounded Y. The enormous surface interest derives from the twists and tonalities of the randomly spaced cotton cords—in spite of its subdued monotone. The rhythms are marked by breaks of varying lengths. Behind the Y are the free-hanging vertical cords that are also seen in Macratotem (p. 211).