

DESIGN

KNOW-HOW AND DECOR DETAILS THAT MAKE THE LOOK



FROM LEFT JAN ERNST
'FOREST CANDELABRA
05' WHITE STONEWARE
CANDELABRA,
MATTHEW DESNEVES
'CAULK' CHAIR IN CAULK
AND POLYSTYRENE,
FRANCES V.H MOHAIR
'DIE EIER' MOHAIR
RUG, MEECO STUDIO
'PINA COLADA' DRINKS
CABINET IN VEGAN
LEATHER WITH
KARAKUL AND MOHAIR

ON THE CUSP

Conceived as the meeting point of functional art and collectable design, *House & Garden's* CUSP exhibition challenged 11 local designers to create one-off, material-led pieces that redefined their industry

TEXT AND INTERVIEWS PIET SMEDY
PHOTOGRAPHS KARL ROGERS
PRODUCTION THEA PHEIFFER
LOCATION ASPIRE ART



FROM LEFT
JAN ERNST
'MUSHROOM'
STONEWARE SIDE TABLE
IN WHITE, DESIGN
AFRIKA 'GRASSLAND 1'
CYPRESS, IMIZI RIVER
REED AND GRASS CHAIR

It was on an uncharacteristically crisp November afternoon last year when I first met with the ceramic designer Jan Ernst to conceive a unique design exhibition. We were all still in hopeful recovery from the slew of whiplash government regulations and restrictions that had turned, well, everything upside down. Jan and I were really only acquaintances at the time, in fact, we had only met twice before, I think – once when we photographed his portrait for the magazine and another time at the launch of his first collection of pieces. I mention this not because it is unusual – it is not; meeting new designers is quite literally my job – but because there was just a feeling that this time was different, that *something* was coming – something remarkable. It turns out it was not so much a feeling as a premonition.

By the time Jan and I met, the rationale behind the exhibition was already fully formed: to elevate collectable design to the level of fine art (we named it CUSP to reflect that transition point). Internationally, the divide was already being bridged but, locally, there just was not anything like it, in terms of medium or mind set and, where it did exist, it was heavily gallery controlled.

The prospect was irresistible, and in the proceeding six months, friendships were forged, design norms challenged and creativity pushed to the limit as the first edition of the CUSP exhibition came together. The premise was simple enough: 11 independent designers would be tasked with creating one-off pieces that, through a partnership with Aspire Art, would showcase at the gallery and art auctioneer's Cape Town property (a former nunnery turned exhibition space) for an audience of investors, buyers and industry leaders. The brief was open, with the only parameter being the material – each designer was allocated a 'hero' material to work with, be it steel, glass, cork or marble – the rest was up to them.

Here, in their own words, the 11 designers who launched the CUSP exhibition and their industry-re-defining work.

JAN ERNST

JAN ERNST

'Through design we get to solve problems, be they practical, aesthetic or social. Good design has the power to elevate how we perceive and experience our immediate environments that have an impact on our psychological state. Through my work, I try to imagine how an object will add value to a space and how people will respond to it before I begin to make it.

'I spend many hours exploring ideas, doing research and mulling over previous designs. It is important for me to have an honest expression through my work. Clay allows for that because it will leave even a fingerprint if not attended to. I would like my work to pique people's curiosity and make them question their way of thinking – these pieces create the best sort of conversations.

'As a designer and maker, I am aware of the challenges from a conceptual and manufacturing point of view. Collectable design focuses on storytelling and craftsmanship, something that has disappeared with mass-produced designs. The role of collectable design, then, is to safeguard the skills, knowledge and stories passed



JAN ERNST

on through generations, to reinterpret and celebrate these ideas in contemporary ways and keep them precious.

'I position the work I create in the collectable design realm. Every piece I create must tell a story about a landscape or a natural phenomenon that inspires me. I then take these stories and turn them into functional designs.

'The "Womb Table Lamp 03", part of the Womb Lighting Collection that I launched in Brussels in May this year, focuses on the dual concepts of birth and light, inspired by the Cederberg Caves that provided shelter to the first people living there. The "Walking" candelabra, on the other hand, is an evolution of my Forest Candelabra Collection, which is inspired by the mystery, intrigue and unknown of the forest. In both cases, the idea came first since I knew I would be working with clay. Finding a balance between the aesthetic and pragmatic is not always easy; it requires interrogation and compromise until a happy medium is found.

'Collectable design, unlike pure industrial design, can touch on similar philosophical and conceptual topics as fine art. The result might be functional in nature, but the intellectual processes are the same. In fact, there is an additional component of interrogation that fine artists do not have to deal with. I was drawn to collectable design because storytelling is pivotal to my work. The idea of creating a limited number of objects is appealing because it ensures the work stays precious and one-of-a-kind.' janernst.com ▶

MEANCA NEETHLING



the make progressed. I find balance in functionality, so using this as my core element, the design shaped into what was available material-wise and how this can be manipulated and reworked. I did not work with a theme rather than working with what was available and how this could be transformed. I experimented with how these materials can be translated into functional designs and how we can use existing resources through techniques of quilting, weaving and upholstery keeping traditions relevant and evolving.

'All three pieces started with a wood and steel frame with different materials manipulated to create finishes: the "Lucky Look" chair was upholstered in a felt that is made locally from recycled plastic bottles; the "Here Comes The Sun" floor lamp features pure merino wool and Belgian linen, digitally printed with an ombré design and woven wool details. The "Pina Colada" drinks cabinet was the most ambitious to execute. Built in collaboration with local craftspeople, the structure is covered with a mineral, non-woven vegan leather, which is a natural textile made from pineapple-leaf fibre waste, a by-product of existing pineapple harvest, and their use creates an additional income stream for farming communities. South African merino and karakul wool left over from rug production add detail to the doors. The legs slot into a hand-woven rug that was made by master weavers in Somerset West. This was a true testament to the power of collaborative design.' meecostudio.com

MEANCA NEETHLING

MEECO STUDIO

'My approach to design is illustrative with an imaginary narrative that binds my work with character and emotion. Core tenets of longevity and functionality guide my works, pushing deeper into the duality of life where beauty and creativity flourish, even (or perhaps, especially) when seemingly uncomfortable. For me, tactile design – and blending the elements of colour, form and texture – elevates our senses, creating a connection through visual stories, an awareness that starts conversations, evokes curiosity and draws your imagination into a reimagined dream world. As designers, we have a responsibility, now more than ever, not only to create beautiful pieces, but have a positive impact through considered design and innovation in our choices. It motivates and inspires me every day.

'My approach is simple with a complex execution that elevates traditional techniques, using fabrics that are recycled and natural. We must slow down this fast-paced and disposable consumerism mindset and bring back the heirloom generation that celebrates craftsmanship. For the exhibition, I wanted to see how far I could push materials in building these structures. I wanted to create drama and unusual shapes and bring an element of surprise.

'My starting point was material, as I wanted to focus on innovation and waste or repurposed materials. This approach definitely dictated some elements of the design and evolved as

KHOSI LETEBA



KHOSI LETEBA

BUPA STUDIOS

'I have been fascinated by functional objects from a young age, having always looked at things with an eye for what they could be. Approaching design like this allows physical human engagement with a product while bettering the quality of life, both functionally and emotionally. Design, to me, is a tool for sharing stories, concepts and ideas the user can connect with. What excites me most about design is being able to create pieces that marry functionality and aesthetic harmoniously and that question what one views as design and art. I have always seen myself as a generalist more than a specialist in the creative industry, which allows me to broaden my horizons in terms of exploring ideas and concepts that flow between disparate fields of design. I am hoping to connect people with products on an emotional level because I believe such connections bring value and create memories. I believe design can also be used as a tool for cultural progression embodying what was, what is and what could be through finding inspiration from our roots to exist in the modern world.

'The thinking behind the Cubism collection was to showcase the relationship between art and design and how they can co-exist in one space and connect. As the name implies, the pieces were inspired by the Cubism movement, the concept focusing on processing furniture pieces into abstract, fragmented artworks. I believe good design is not just about how it looks but how it feels – and that sits at the core of Bupa Studios. We believe life is a feeling process; emotions are at the root of our connections and unite humanity.

'In creating the "Oxiloron" Stool and shelves for the "Xiloron" side table, I chose mild steel metal, particularly for its properties – able to be bent and welded seamlessly. I also used wood as a natural material as a foil to the robust, man-made material.

'In my opinion, collectable design is an artistic expression that allows you to engage with the work practically on a daily basis, creating memories around and with it.' [@bupa_studios](https://bupa_studios)

FROM LEFT WIID DESIGN
LARGE HARD-CARVED TIMBER
TORTOISESHELL, INLAND
COLLECTIVE 'ROCK BLOOM'
GLASS AND SANDSTONE
COFFEE TABLE, DESIGN AFRIKA
'GRASSLAND 2' PINE AND
GRASS COFFEE TABLE, INLAND
COLLECTIVE 'IGNEOUS'
MIRROR WITH BRASS PATINA





ROSS ROBERTSON

MATTHEW DASNEVES

MATTHEW DASNEVES

'I guess, being an architect, I have always been in the functional design world, but my journey, specifically into furniture making, was an act of desperation, to be honest. I was not able to fully realise my own creative interests as an architect, so, frustrated by the daily grind, I needed to find another creative outlet, one that would give me the time and space to explore different sorts of ideas. In the same breath, the very thing I struggled to come to terms with also became the grounding for my furniture work; much of my inspiration comes from my work as an architect and the hours spent on construction sites. The motivation comes from being able to explore ideas, the fact that you can create something from seemingly nothing. Things start in your head and slowly reveal themselves through the making process.'

'I always try to approach the making process following the same steps. Firstly, I look to make things myself as I find there is a lot of creative potential and knowledge that gets lost when you hand over the manufacturing to someone else. Secondly, I always focus on having a strong sense of materiality expressed



MATTHEW DASNEVES

ROSS ROBERTSON

OLIVER WHYTE

'I was first introduced to the ideas of collectable design after attending an exhibition by Southern Guild many years ago. My mind was blown – I did not know people made furniture that looked like that. This idea of discovery still motivates me today.'

'Personally, I try to bring a re-imagination of the archetypes of furniture and offer clients not just another table or chair. I want to offer them something they did not realise they wanted or liked.'

'I have been working in polyurethane for a while, but the idea and the material go hand in hand. I want to make pieces that tick the box of function as a pre-requirement, but I spend the majority of the time exploring the form and amplifying that to remake what a shelf or wall light could be. I build the basic frame out of wood, like a skeleton, and then hand-shape and carve the foam onto the "bones", which is mainly intuitive (I do not work with CAD drawings). I usually start with a sketch, but that is as planned as it gets; each mark or cut line informs the next, and this is how the piece is born. There is freedom in movement.'

'I want the viewer to be challenged by what they are looking at, and every time discover something new. I think more time should be spent on form than function. We have been trying to perfect the absolute best this or that for long enough – let us bring back imagination.' oliverwhystudio.com

through an as-simple-as-possible manufacturing process. That was what I really enjoyed most about the exhibition itself – the wide open brief allowed me to work on ideas that aligned with their own interests.'

'My pieces in the exhibition are part of an ongoing series that explores the caulking process. Most people might be familiar with this: it is the rubber sealant used around fittings in the bathroom and home. I am constantly fascinated by the creative potential in seemingly ordinary processes. For me, the interest in using the caulking process and rubber as a material came from the idea of exploring what could happen if I took a process and material traditionally used in the building industry and turned that into something desirable. To that end, the pieces are made from offcut polystyrene that is then carved and assembled into functional forms and a caulking gun is then used to lay beads of rubber sealant onto the polystyrene. The caulked sealant is both functional and decorative as, structurally, it creates a resistant, flexible coating for the polystyrene, transforming the objects into durable furniture. The act of caulking the sealant adds a decorative dimension, which creates a richly textured surface pattern. Every movement of the caulk gun is made visible like brushstrokes in a painting.'

@matthew.dasneves

MPHO VACKIER

THEURBANATIVE

'From the onset of my career, I have always believed in creating pieces that serve more than aesthetics, and because of my pragmatic engineering background and approach to design, functionality has been one of the key elements of my design process. The design philosophy of TheUrbanative, and, I guess, myself by extension, is to create multifunctional pieces of furniture and products that endeavour to connect people through shared storytelling. While we are furniture designers, our role is really to foster an atmosphere of authentic connection and, through these connections, we continue to witness and experience change. I am constantly in awe of the far-reaching branches of design and its ability to influence ways of living, working, playing, loving, interacting and being.'

'The trajectory of my journey began by the drive to create heirlooms for my son, who is part African and part European; pieces that he can live with at home that are not just one thing but, like him, a layered and intricately woven network of multiples that make up the whole. I firmly believe design that is attentive to cultural diversity inherently appeals and connects a larger and equally diverse group of people.'

'I initially approached the pieces presented in the CUSP showcase guided by the material of choice, which was steel in all its forms and finishes. While I am constantly guided by



MPHO VACKIER

practicality, functionality and purpose when I design, I relish the visual tension created by contrasting elements, materials and ideas – and the result thereof. That is why both pieces presented were a combination of the same material treated in multiple ways. Adding to that layered approach, I absolutely love collaborations. Partnering with other craftspeople who are experts allows us to push our thinking further and really reimagine new possibilities.'

'The first piece showcased, the "Aya" console, is inspired by Adinkra symbols of the Ashanti in West Africa. The Adinkra symbols hail from the Ashanti and Akan kingdoms of West Africa, which today spans Senegal to Nigeria. Each symbol of the Adinkra represents a collection of related concepts around an ideal. To wear, use or be given an Adinkra is to call on or embody those ideals in life and practice. This console comprises a steel structure, with a handcrafted ostrich eggshell top by Avoova and brass-plate details.'

'The "Luminous Makeba" side table and light, our second piece, is a homage to multiple steel finishes; a conversation of powder-coated rolled-steel tubes, black nickel-chrome-plated ball-chain, textured stainless steel and brass joining details. The form of the 'Luminous Makeba' takes its cues from the lines, forms and textures seen in African hairstyles – particularly the Wambo tribeswomen in Namibia in the '40s, who would lengthen their braids to their ankles through the use of sinew extensions – putting the African identity front and centre while challenging beauty standards and how they are represented. This piece is a layering of materials and stories; a portal to the past in its inspiration and to the future in its production.' theurbanative.com ▶



MURRAY KING BINKY NEWMAN

DESIGN AFRIKA

'Design Afrika's founding mission was to revitalise the ancient skill of basket weaving in Africa. We have been doing this for 27 years. It became apparent that the weavers' skills needed to be elevated to an art form to preserve and sustain their expertise. So, we produced woven sculptures. However, we then felt that to keep the art of weaving relevant, we needed to produce pieces that were both sculptural and functional.

'Functional design and art are produced by highly creative and talented people – it is impossible to define one without the other. Both require knowledge of materials and their possibilities and limits, and how they can be transformed into something that is beautiful to look at. While a piece of design has a different end goal – to be functional – one can employ the same processes that go into conceptualising and bringing to life a piece of art.

'Our goal is to illustrate how weaving with organic materials can be developed into an art form. We feel that we have a responsibility to preserve the ancient knowledge and techniques that, in the modern world, are at risk of being forgotten.

'As with working in any medium, the fibre materials that we use in basketry present particular constraints that need to be overcome. To accommodate these challenges, the designers need to dig deep to find creative solutions that push the limit of the material. In the end, it is the material that dictates the design process, which is ever-evolving and organic.

'Across the globe, basketry came about to perform specific functions but became a vehicle for important cultural and historical knowledge. We may not have the same need for baskets as our ancestors did, but we can still weave our stories into objects that have relevance today.

'In the design sector, the artisanal and handmade are under threat owing to the lack of material recognition for the skilled artisan. Elevating their craft to design status through incorporating a design element assures sustainability.

'What was unique with CUSP was that it allowed us to ignore all the usual product development steps and go straight into the experimental stage. It gave us the chance to have fun with our creativity without restraint.

'We work with organic materials such as palm fibre, mountain grass and sedge river reed to make our baskets, but we have been wanting for some time to combine "found" wood with our weaving techniques. CUSP was the perfect opportunity to experiment and develop this idea.' designafrika.co.za

FROM LEFT WIID DESIGN 'NEURAL PATHWAY' NORDIC PINE AND STAINLESS STEEL WOODEN CUBOID BENCH IN BLACK, MEECO STUDIO 'LUCKY LOOK' RECYCLED FELT AND KARAKUL CHAIR, FLORAL-AND-WAX INSTALLATIONS BY MYŪZU AND OKRA CANDLES FEATURED THROUGHOUT THE CUSP EXHIBITION AT ASPIRE ART



MURRAY KING AND
BINKY NEWMAN

KEVIN FRANKENTAL & FANIE VAN ZYL

LEMON COLLECTION

'I do not want to design for design's sake. I want to put things out into the world that are aesthetically beautiful, have a function and are made to last. It is a fine line because there is a commercial aspect to it. I love the quote, "It is easy to be different but difficult to be better". I often think about that.

'I am a bit of an idealist in the sense that I think many things were better "before". My inspiration generally comes from the past and has a sense of nostalgia. I want to honour great work – be it architecture, design or art – and try to modernise it in a tasteful, respectful manner. That is good design.

'For me, functional design is about the making. I love factories and manufacturing techniques. You can view something on a screen or you can 3-D print it, but it is never the same as going into a factory and working with a brilliant craftsman who has been doing it for years. Unfortunately, it is a dying art form, and I think the role of a good designer is to ensure their pieces are created in a way that allows people to work as much as possible with their hands. This is what keeps the industry going; this is where the real magic happens.

'Design also involves looking at sustainability in a different way. Buying something that you are going to love and care for is important – something you can hand down. For me, that is better than buying something that can be recycled.

'I have been working with marble for the last six or seven years. I like that it comes as a big block from the earth. In South Africa, it is generally cut into slabs of 20mm or 30mm material. This puts a certain limit on what is possible, and I like to challenge myself within those limitations. A big part of this work is to showcase how good South African craftsmen are. They deserve our support. I think the debate between what is and is not art always becomes a pretentious one. I think it is relatively simple. Does the piece move you? Did you feel something when you saw it? Did it ask a question? Did it surprise you? That is art for me. Forget what the academics and critics say. That is generally designed to make you spend more money.

'With CUSP, it was great to have a platform where you can design with very few boundaries. For this type of exhibition, you can be a bit selfish and design something you really want to make and the commercial aspects can be ignored. I find this pushes creativity and I keep coming back to this when designing new pieces.

'It was great collaborating with Fanie van Zyl, who is technically skilled and taught me a fortune during the process. Having a manufacturer as good as The Dialogue Room, who were also passionate about the project, helped.

lemoncollection.co.za



KEVIN FRANKENTAL

LAURIE WIID VAN HEERDEN & DRIAAN CLAASSEN

WIID DESIGN

‘From a very young age, I have been collecting objects, art and natural curiosities; beautiful objects not only make me happy, but motivate and inspire me to create something new. Function has always been central to my thinking; I love creating pieces that have a purpose and meaning – creating products people can collect and use in their everyday lives. Functional design is extremely complex; it takes a good designer to truly understand materials, process, proportion, form and execution.

‘Back in 2010, my studio started experimenting with cork. A versatile material, cork adds a great value to our work; this motivates my team to keep on creating pieces that portray a message of luxury and sustainability.

‘Wiid Design was established in Cape Town in 2013. We often work collaboratively with other artists and across various materials. Our product range spans furniture, lighting, tableware, and collectable furniture and objects.

‘With design, it is all about the proportions, how one portrays the materials and combines all the above into a truly functional, practical and comfortable piece. It must always be original, and we prefer not to follow trends.

‘Generally, when we have a concept in mind, we start with a material selection and drawings. We design and render at least 10 to 15 concepts, and once the final concept and material selection has been concluded, we refine the product even more.

‘We aim to create pieces that elicit an emotional response as much as they invite you to think – to create products that are original, desirable and have a sustainable impact on the environment. As a designer, I feel we have a responsibility to find smarter and more sustainable ways to produce and consume.

‘Essentially, design is *everything* – we all have a responsibility to design smart products that change the perception of the current and future consumer. The work presented for CUSP was more on the collectable one-off side, where we focused on traditional handcrafting in combination with avant-garde techniques.

‘We exhibited new and existing pieces at CUSP. The latter included our beautifully hand-carved occasional chair in light cork and carved maple, including our hand-carved walnut tortoise shell. The new pieces were three-metre benches carved from ancient Nordic pine, which were collaborative pieces with fellow designer and artist Driaan Claassen.’ wiiddesign.co.za



FROM LEFT FRANCES V.H MOHAIR ‘FOLDED ROCK FORMS’ MOHAIR RUG/WALL HANGING, LEMON COLLECTION ‘BARBOURE’ MARBLE SHELVING UNIT, JAN ERNST ‘WOMB TABLE LAMP 03’ STONEWARE LAMP IN WHITE



DRIAAN CLAASSEN AND LAURIE WIID VAN HEERDEN



BRETT RUBIN

IO MAKANDAL & BRETT RUBIN

INLAND COLLECTIVE

‘Collectable design – and design as a whole, for that matter – requires finessing the finer details, so having an inclination towards that is what first attracted us.

‘We both have backgrounds and careers in art [Io is a multidisciplinary artist and Brett a photographer and visual artist] and have worked with glass as a medium previously in our practices.

‘Inland Collective is a brand we launched in 2020. Our first range was called Cosmos and took its inspiration from outer space. We worked with specific colours and forms in our mirrors and blown-glass bowls that echoed the alchemical makeup of our universe. When we were invited to participate in the CUSP exhibition, we decided to use the opportunity to preview some items from our new range and develop a coffee table that we had been designing for some time.

‘The coffee table – called “Rock Bloom” – takes its inspiration from lichen while the mirror we created – “Igneous” – represents magma and stone. Both the coffee table and mirror are different from how we usually work in that the glass top and patina on the mirror, uniquely made by Io, draw on our disciplines as artists to create. As such, no two “Rock Bloom” tables or “Igneous” mirrors will be the same. Usually, we design products that can be made in large quantities, however, with these, we opted to make something truly unique in their ability to balance form and function.

‘Glass and mirror are our primary material focus, so for the “Rock Bloom” coffee table we were excited by the idea of combining the mottled glass top with solid geometric sandstone bases. The relationship between these materials is fascinating, as glass was once sand, so there is a unified language and relationship in the design. The simple design of the three geometric forms suspended in space, with no joins, further speaks to the material singularity and symbiosis of these natural elements. With the “Igneous” mirror we approached the patina differently, with the bronze patina sitting on the front of the glass and silver mirror behind it, giving a three-dimensional effect. The mirror was then cut into a shape that echoes the flowing form of magma.

‘Seeing an idea go from a sketch to physical piece that enhances people’s lives is really exciting for us and motivates us to create. The world’s obsession with homogenised, cheaply made products with planned obsolescence is the antithesis of our mission; we feel that design should be well made, sustainably and offer pleasure – and functionality – for many generations.

inlandcollective.co.za

FRANCES V.H MOHAIR 'VELD MAPPINGS'
HAND-WOVEN MOHAIR TAPESTRY



FRANCES VAN HASSELT

FRANCES V.H MOHAIR

'Design is a way to capture stories and memories of places and spaces and recreate these moments into objects. For me, hand-made objects that are deeply rooted in the ecology of their origin hold a certain soul, texture and character that a user can feel. It is this inexplicable connection and comfort that hand-made objects embody that connects the user to the materiality of its makeup and the human connection of the maker. To that end, I wanted to work in mohair, one of the most ancient, exclusive and sustainable natural fibres, the production and processing of which is geographically centred in South Africa. Having had the privilege of growing up on a family Angora goat farm in the Karoo, I have a natural affinity for the fibre and a desire to produce a high-end, local product that celebrates mohair's incredible characteristics and its unique South African heritage.'

'Made to order, we work with natural, raw material and never create simply for the sake of making. For us, the process of making starts with rain, the delicate ecosystem of the plant life, the quality of the ground, the role of herdsman and the importance of healthy animals to produce quality mohair. From raw fibre, we move into the process of washing, cleaning, dyeing and spinning until, finally, the yarn ends up on the loom. In many ways, weaving and

finishing are the last steps on an intricate and codependent supply chain. Understanding the connectivity between us and nature and the process needed to get from farm to fabric informs a more selective appreciation of the product. It turns a simple textile into an invaluable homemaker, passed down to the next generation. We believe that it is vital for consumers to recognise that their buying power has a trickle-down impact on a long line of people, the welfare of animals and the preservation of the land.

'Collectable design is usable art. Where you choose to place it and how you use it informs the life of an artwork. If we are who we surround ourselves with, we are also informed by *what* we choose to surround ourselves with. They are visual references of how we wish to express ourselves and share with others. This type of design offers the invisible umbilical cord between art and owner, a connection needed for these works to unfold into their end form.

'For CUSP, we were given the rare opportunity to simply play and capture a little bit of this place, its people, its history. By mixing plant and animal fibre into the works, we hoped to deconstruct the basics of fabrics, showcasing the ingredients from which we have completely disengaged. If you take the time to view a textile panel, you see a canvas, and you will soon see the incredible science, skill, time and creativity and value that these pieces hold. Instead of paint, we have yarn. Each yarn is uniquely constructed by hand, mixing ingredients to achieve a certain composition that is then hand-woven on old looms. The choice of yarn is determined by the hands and emotions of the spinner; at each moment the mohair is fed into the spinning wheel that yarn is never uniform as it holds the mood of the maker. These panels are the homes of souls, the fibre of animals, the droplets of rain darning our reality into nonsensical maps showing how far we have come and how we wish to tread tomorrow.' ■ francesvh.com



FRANCES VAN HASSELT