

Abbey Muza
Portfolio 2026



Maidenhair, Spore, 2026
silk, cotton, dye, welded steel
42 x 27 inches



Ore, 2026
silk, cotton, dye, welded steel
42 x 27 inches



Rebirth, Judgement Boundary, 2026
silk, cotton, dye, welded steel
42 x 27 inches



Babylon, 2026
silk, cotton, dye, welded steel
32 x 26 inches



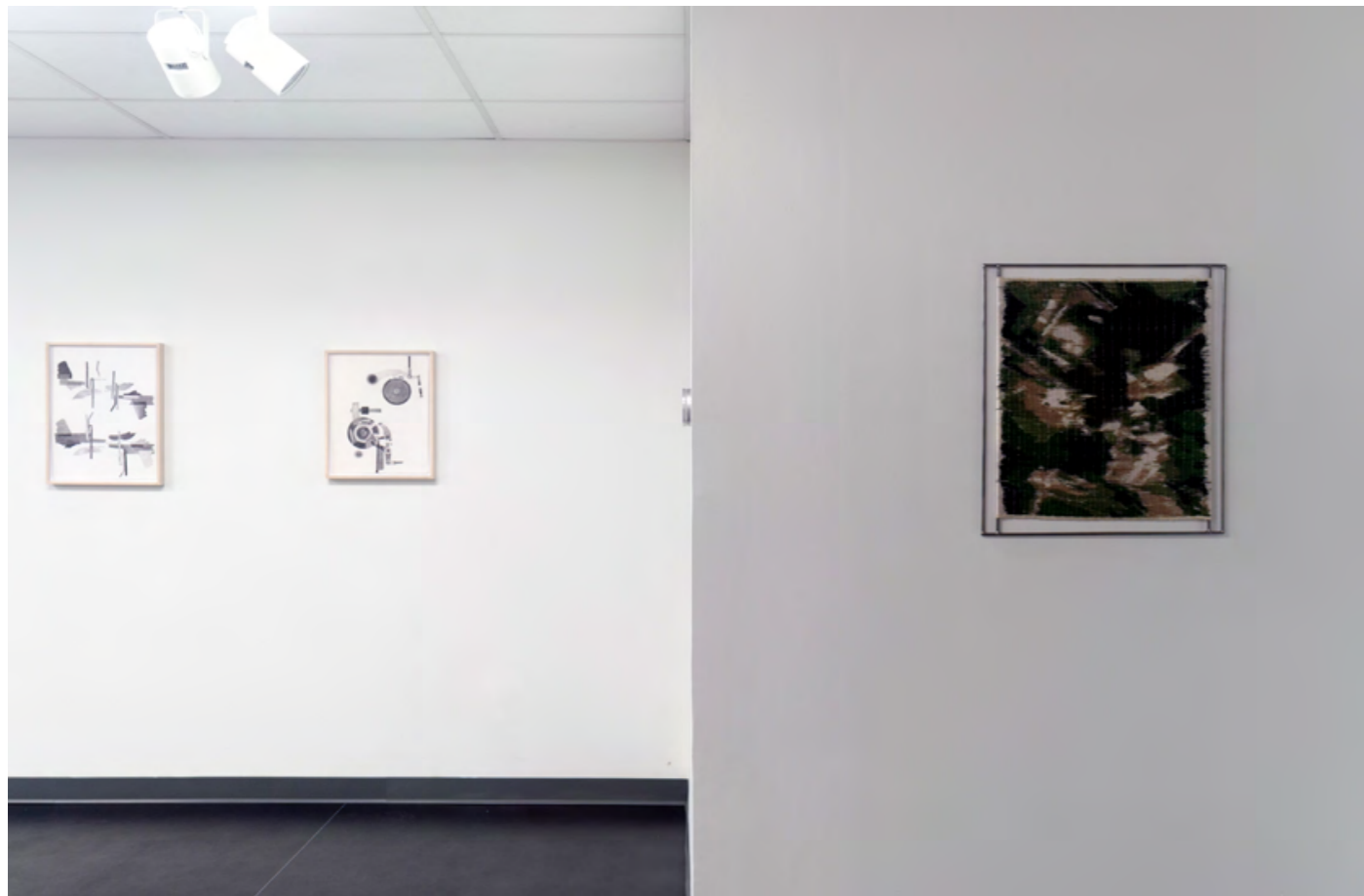
Knurled Ribber Arm, 2025
silk, cotton, sewing thread, dye, welded steel
23 x 20 inches



Electric Stop Motion, 2025
silk, cotton, sewing thread, dye, welded steel
23 x 19.5 inches



(left) *Tension Wheel*, 2025
machined aluminum
4 x 4 inches



Apprentice, 2025
exhibition image
Penn State Berks Freyberger Gallery

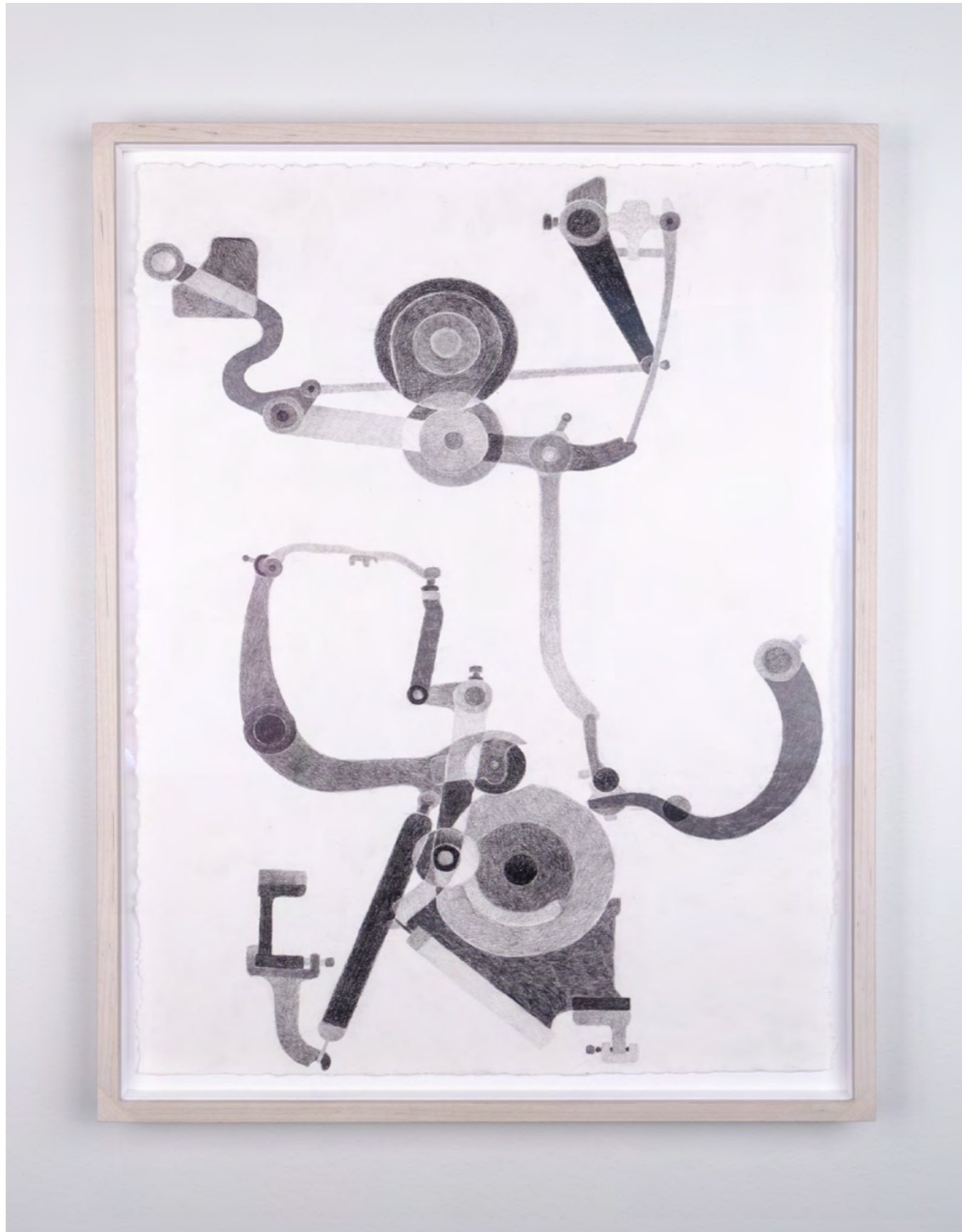
Apprentice is the sum of both knowing and doing, of practice and theory. It is tested and proved in Abbey Muza's woven and drafted overtures to the machines that once were the *raison d'être* for an entire model of education and community building. Soft, subtractive, graphite drawings, each approximating their namesake component—Sinkers, Catchbar Linkage, and the almost too good to be true Eccentric Stud Segment, to name a few—are suspended on a paper-white ground. Strips of metal seem to curl languidly as if they were ribbons of rayon fresh off the line. Recalling the oblique draft work of Francis Picabia, there is a clear disposition towards function, but they are estranged from the possibility by virtue of an erudite whimsy inflected by the artist's hand and our own alienation from even the vestiges of productive processes.

Likewise, Muza's textiles operate within a similar register, but on the opposite end of the productive spectrum. Whereas drafting the components of the machinery employed in the manufacture of textiles is a prelude to the endeavor of production, Muza's textile works are arbiters both of the hand and tool. The warp and weft blur the images they are tasked with distributing in much the same way as the final product mystifies the devices that made it. Footer, Legger, a depiction of the hosiery that sustained so many educations and families, pushes towards a spectral kind of abstraction, where the image, just barely there, shimmers between threads of silk and cotton. Like each of its cohort, Muza endows this object with the same tentative fragility of an image on the brink of erasure. Images like the eponymous bit in *Pivoting Tension*, *Coiler*, seem to hover as if they were holograms over their delicate and breezy support.

Muza's process is one of patient study and intuitive relations to their chosen materials. In the run-up for this exhibition, they found themselves immersed in the remaining archives of the Wyoming Polytechnic Institute, combing through drawers of anonymized parts and manuals. Muza's careful attention to craft does not subject itself to the Cartesian polarity of mind and body, which can be just as easily interpellated as the divide between manual and cognitive labor. Instead, each well-planned maneuver, at the drafting table, on the loom, or in the archive, sees the artist as an apprentice, as a grasper, as a learner, as an indelibly chimeric figure elegantly poised between the two.

I write this after youtubing "How to Sew a Button on Male Dress Pants : Buttons & Sewing Tips," for a brief moment, I myself was an apprentice.

text by Gareth Kaye



Catchbar Linkage, 2025
graphite on paper
21.5 x 15.5 inches



Narrowing Shaft, 2025
graphite on paper
21.5 x 15.5 inches



Apprentice, 2025
exhibition image
Penn State Berks Freyberger Gallery



La langue, les lèvres, two waves, enclosure, 2025
silk, wool, cotton, dye, sewing thread, linen, colored pencil
42 x 25 inches



Le cou, la gorge, s-curve, interior view, 2025
silk, wool, cotton, dye, sewing thread, linen, colored pencil
41 x 25 inches



L: *The collarbones, the jaw*; R: *The freckles, the knuckles*, 2024
exhibition image, Murmur
Fondation des Etats-Unis, Paris

Réciter le corps de l'autre, 2023
wool and cotton handwoven jacquard, linen, acrylic
51.5 x 37 inches

I am a spider's web of nerves exactly resembling the drawings of the anatomy texts. You say m/y beloved that you can see right through m/e ... I am touched in m/y brachial nerves m/y circumflexes m/y ulnars m/y radials m/y terminal branches. –Monique Wittig, Le Corps Lesbien

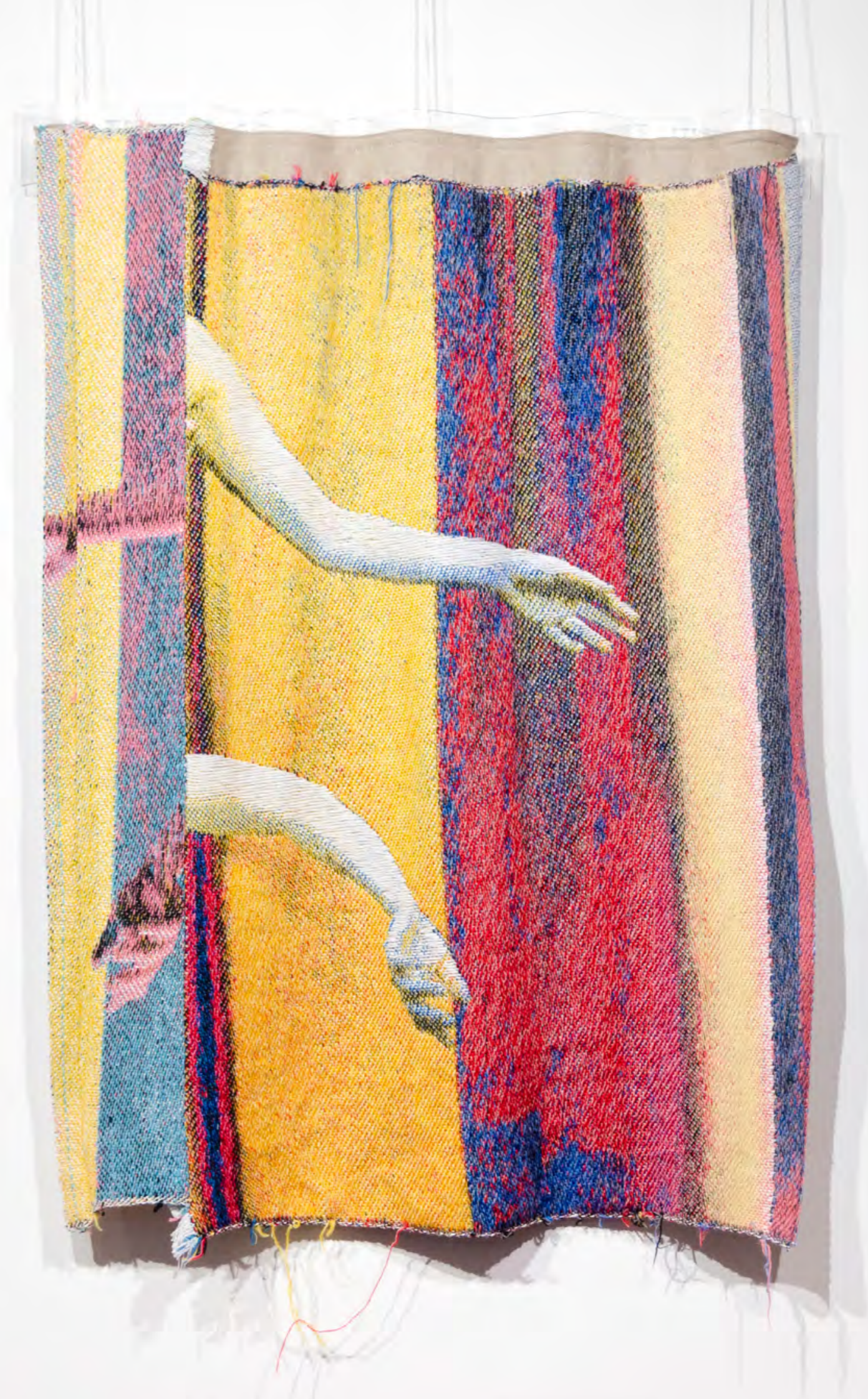
Abbey Muza's weavings and intimately scaled text drawings are both rigorously researched inquiries into queer archives and language, as well as deft and intricate compositions where material, image, and concept shift and collapse together. In Muza's woven textiles, which hang like curtains drawn across unseen thresholds, fragmented images of the artist's body insert themselves and interrupt the structure of the weave. Pointillist in essence, relying on density of color to give shape to image and pattern, these weavings exist in a state of permanent tension, examining what it means to order and assemble parts (i.e., thread into thread into thread) which are subsumed, instantly, into the larger whole (the woven surface). As Muza builds with thread, they also dismantle a sense of order and a hierarchy of looking, disrupting expectations of legibility in favor of an expansive visual language, unfolding through abstraction.

As a touchstone and companion to Muza's work, the experimental novel "Le Corps Lesbien" (1973) by French feminist theorist Monique Wittig, demonstrates a fragmented and nonlinear approach to language which Muza cites both directly and in essence, through their own work. Wittig's text hovers between form: a lyrical address to a lover; a manifesto of body and pleasure; an undoing of masculine language, fracturing and reimagining written subjecthood. There is a deliberate incoherence throughout the text that explores language's ability to break apart and transform ideological structures, embracing fluidity and a sense of productive disorder.

The pink flowers of the heather are visible in the spaces between your bones and all around you. I see the sun shining between your ribs. The sky of an intense blue is also visible in certain intervals of their arrangement.

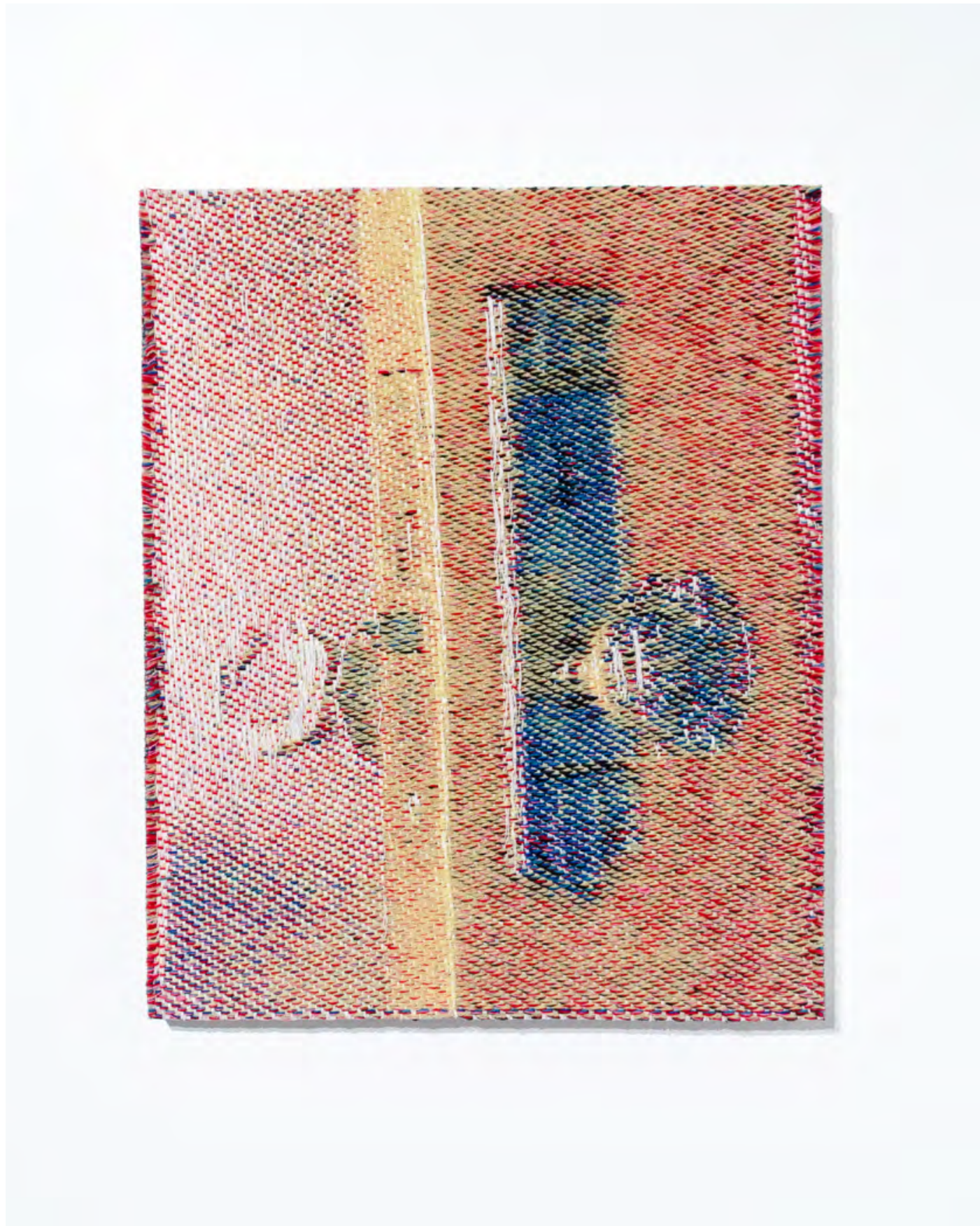
The narrator of Wittig's text paints scenes of queer bodies and their desires, in terms both tender and violent. Their lover's body is dismantled, strewn apart, reassembled. The text speaks to the body's insides, its bones and arteries, tendons and cavities, laid bare, unspooling like thread. It hovers between form, embracing the pleasures of queerness, ungovernable bodies, treating language as with a similar freedom—and forceful insistence on reimagining how it might operate on and for us; and it is here in which we might, similarly, locate Muza's practice. Their attention to language, archive, and history of craft, merges with an abiding belief in haptic, sensual exploration of both material and content. Words are explored like soft and tangible matter. This materiality of language—letters woven together like threads—in conversation with Muza's woven textiles, builds a complex view of bodies and words, aligned with each other as forever coming into being; mutable and expansive, and intensely real.

text by Elizabeth Lalley, curator, Slow Dance, Chicago

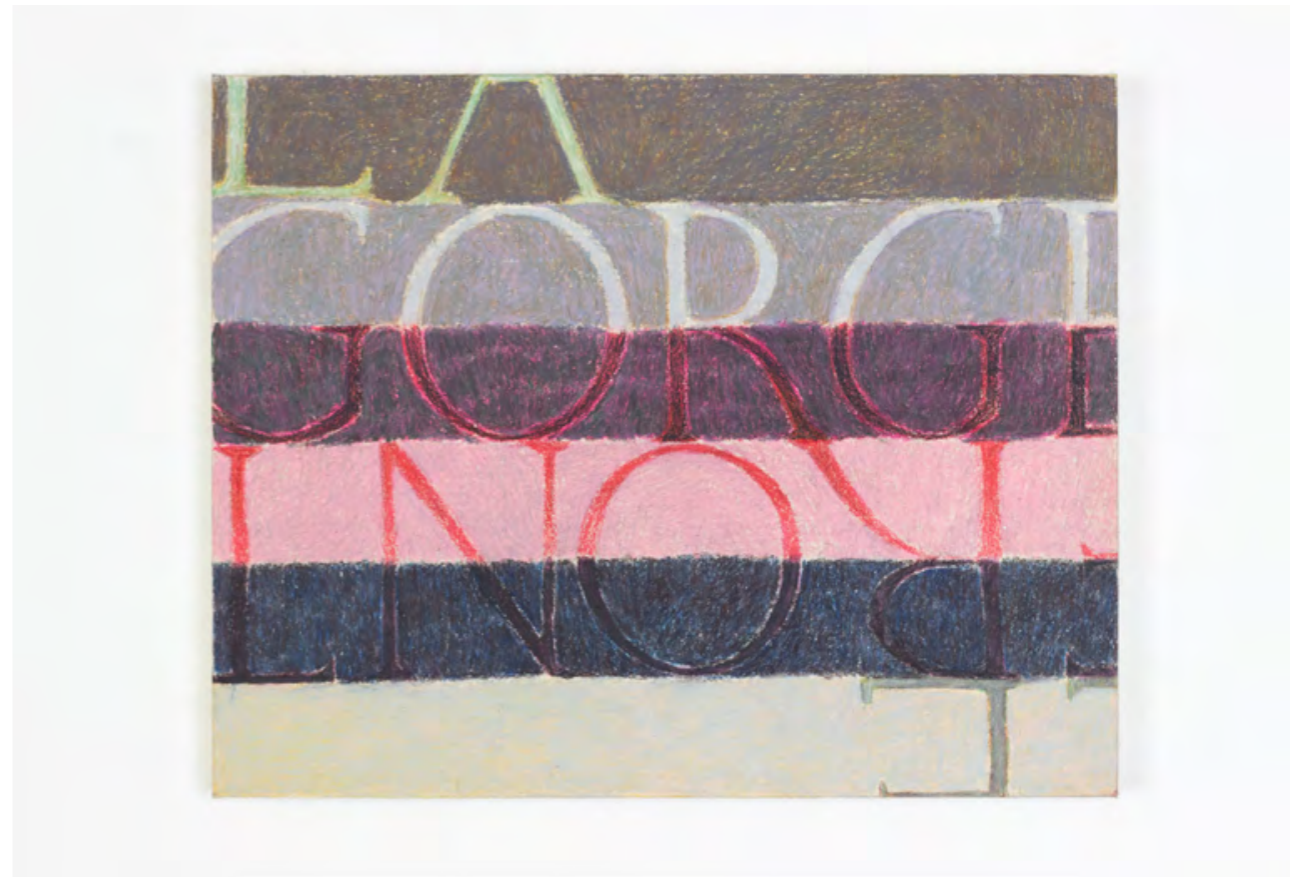




Réciter son corps, 2023
exhibition image
Slow Dance, Chicago



Two minds [doublecherry], 2023
wool and cotton handwoven jacquard, organza, gesso on panel
20 x 15.75 inches



La gorge le front, 2023
colored pencil on paper on panel
8 x 10 inches



Le sang les globules, 2023
colored pencil on paper on panel
8 x 10 inches



The fluid the fluxes the foam, 2023
colored pencil on paper on panel
11 x 14 inches



Réciter son corps, 2023
exhibition image
Slow Dance, Chicago



Le corps à corps, 2023
colored pencil on paper on panel
11 x 14 inches



Les paumes les yeux, 2023
colored pencil on paper on panel
11 x 14 inches



Silver aftertime, 2023
silk, dye, organza, ink
25 x 18 inches

Passive Potential is a two person exhibition of textile-based work by Abbey Muza and Maria Szakats at Tusk in Chicago, Illinois. In this show, the artists bring together two series of woven, knotted, and embroidered textiles. In *Passive Potential*, the two question what it means for a textile to act as an "object," considering its relationship to production, function, image, space and form. Influenced by Kathrin Busch's essay "P - Passivität," Muza and Szakats gave in to this approach : a collaborative work born out of what seems like inaction, passivity, or pure receptivity, which enabled inspiration. The method does not condemn inactivity, but, as a passion or inspiration, animates all activity and is also the expression of a radical sensibility that makes it impossible for the subject to remain untouched. Inspiration means that something alien enters one's own self: "otherness-in-the-self."

Reflecting Heidegger's term of Thrownness ("Geworfenheit"), Muza and Szakats accept the arbitrariness of "being thrown into the process." Woven works by Muza are hung from armatures, mimicking the forms textiles take in space - a cloth draped from a hook, a towel bunched over a drying rack, a curtain, the way clothes fall over limbs and on the body. Images of light flares cover the textile's surfaces, brief flickers of time recorded by the camera and reprinted and distorted into the assembled textiles. Knotted and embroidered pieces by Szakats function between painting and textile - their brushed mohair surfaces depicting seemingly random and ghost-like images of space satellite images, fauna, and flora, blurred and superficially in motion from the movement of the fibers across their threaded surfaces.

Passive Potential, 2023
exhibition image
Tusk, Chicago, Illinois



Downrushing, 2023
dye, silk, organza, cotton
36 x 33 inches



Cloth, dripping, 2023
silk, dye, organza, ink
36 x 33 inches



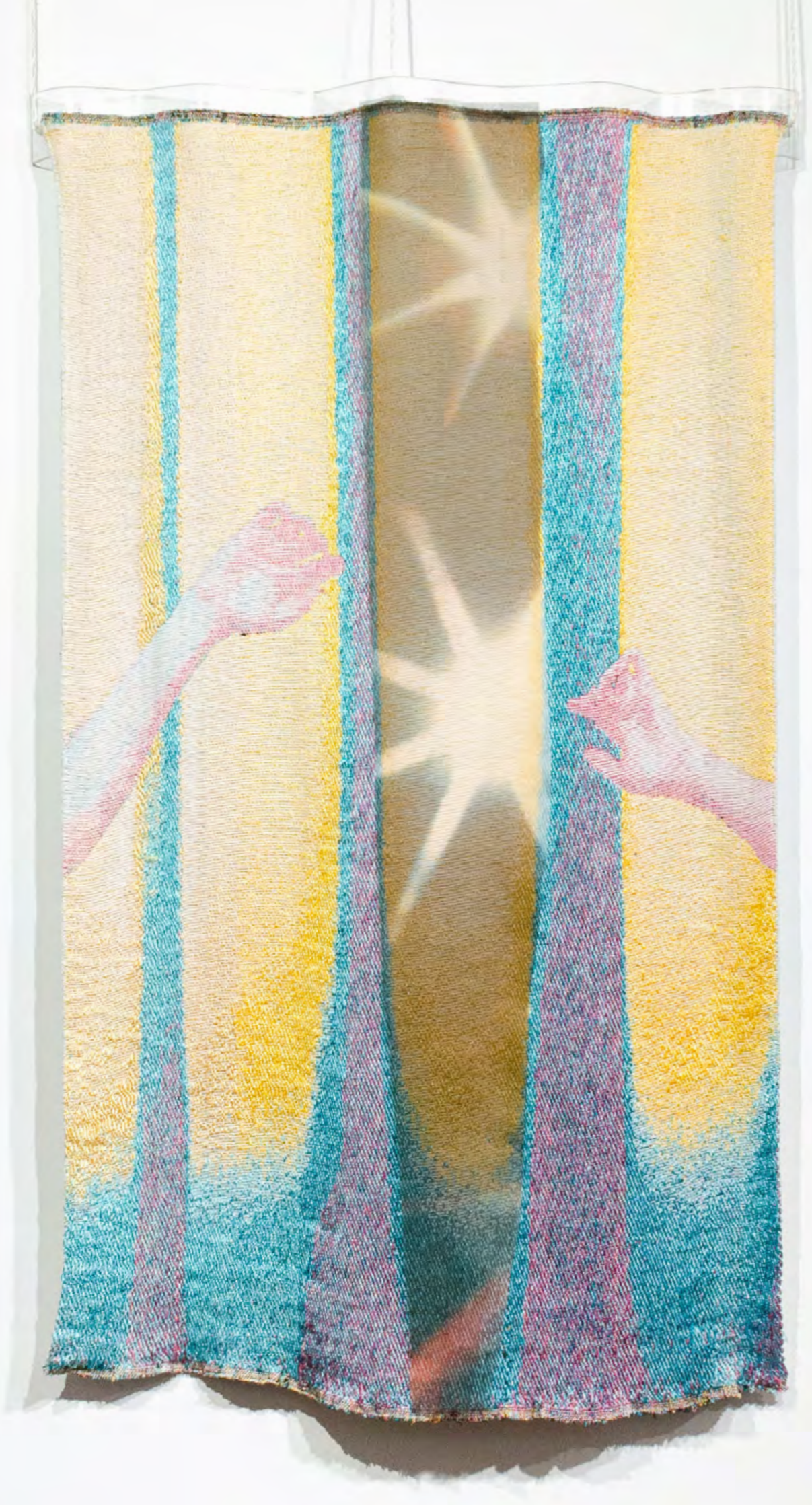
Flare/egg/eye, 2023
silk, dye, organza, ink
16.5 x 25 inches

Fragments presents an ongoing search marked by simultaneous encounter and isolation, as Muza charts a sequence of nodes between 1920s queer Paris and now. Compelled by inclination and desire, they map their own experience onto the historical through the recuperation and re-presentation of archival material. If the archive qua history intends to locate, place, and position, then Muza acknowledges this fragmented perspective as an inherent abstraction. Weaving offers a structural framework for cohering what seem to be apparent dislocations—in fact, time and space compound as a subtle yet consistent mechanism in the unfolding of their work. Muza pulls freely from their own archive in the same gesture as they draw from the historical milieu, particularly from the artist and writer Claude Cahun. In so doing, they reify and relay that lineage in their own work and to the present moment. In collating these fragments, the limits and extensions of identification are rendered as images held in tension to parts of a whole.

“Nothing is sacrosanct,”
the Vitrine descends,
time unspools (a spool of golden
thread)
threads the eye (an inverting lens)
a needlepoint aperture
hand into matter
concatenations
wound into capture

text and poem by Ren Mahon, artist

Réciter son corps, 2023
viscose, wool, and cotton handwoven jacquard, linen, acrylic
55.5 x 31.5 inches





Fragments, 2023
exhibition image
Fondation des Etats-Unis, Paris



A blush, a flush, a fever, a command, 2022
exhibition image
Temple Contemporary, Philadelphia



L: *Divine and Darling*; R: *Inversions devient Urania, 2022*
silk, wool, cotton, organza, enamel, wood
L: 67 x 26 inches; R: 82 x 26 inches