

PRESS RELEASE

SHEILA HICKS: *Pêcher dans la Rivière*

24 MAY – 29 JUNE 2013

PRIVATE VIEW THURSDAY 23 MAY

"I want the things that I make with this material to receive as much consideration as painting, sculpture, drawing, photography, so I make an effort to enter them into public viewing places... to elevate them further in the eyes of those who look at the art of our time".

Sheila Hicks, 'The Weaving of Art', a film directed by Bernard Monsigny, Paris, 1987

Alison Jacques Gallery is proud to present the first UK solo exhibition of Sheila Hicks. Hicks (born Hastings, Nebraska in 1934) graduated with a BFA and MFA from Yale University and lives and works in Paris.

Hicks describes her work as 'unbiased weaves', a phrase which not only reflects her fascination for language and poetry but her interest in classifications. Crucial components of her language include colour with embedded texture, and structure that employs found objects, artifacts and unexpected materials including stainless steel and porcupine quills. Her sculptural works, often of a monumental scale, betray her fascination with fibre and thread, which she employs as a dynamic medium. Hicks holds the firm belief that material be allowed to express its inherent nature – she avoids armatures, preferring to stack and twist cascading linen, bound ropes, sinuous skeins, wrapped bundles and intertwined filaments of silk.

In the entrance, an explosion of colour emanates from *Cordes Sauvages*, a mass of cords pouring through a metal ring suspended from the ceiling. This sculpture invades architecture, consuming more than the space it inhabits.

In the main gallery, three large new works exemplify the artist's extraordinary use of colour, texture and reading of space. A parade of coloured linen flows down the wall in *Procession Temuco*, employing the vast palette through which painters have depicted sensual human flesh over the centuries. In *Pêcher dans La Rivière* skeins of white and cream linen capture the ebb and flow of a 4-metre rolling, tactile tributary, into which a series of ancient 'Foines' (eel-fishing forks) are inextricably impaled. In contrast, *Compass Arica* is almost sedentary: bricks composed of bound elements of cut linen thread are precariously heaped into a mound, which appears hacked or carved. The spikes of a stonemason's weathered iron compass are embedded within the linen – a sentry measuring time and place.

The side gallery focuses on a sequence of exquisite 'Minimes', small, complex works which Hicks has made throughout her practice. These intimate pieces, which she has always woven on the same hand-held Indian wooden frame, reflect memories of places and moments lived over the last eight decades.

Sheila Hicks is currently featured in 'Brute Material: Fiber into Form' as part of the permanent collection at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. In addition, the Centre Pompidou, Paris, recently acquired *Lianes de Beauvais*, which was exhibited in the São Paulo Biennial curated by Luis Perez-Oramas in 2012. Other museum collections include Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Metropolitan Museum, New York; Philadelphia Museum of Art; and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Hicks was awarded the Smithsonian Archives of American Art Medal in 2010.

A retrospective 'Sheila Hicks: 50 Years', was organised by the Addison Gallery, Andover, Massachusetts, and toured to the Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, and the Mint Museum, Charlotte, North Carolina, in 2012. One hundred 'Minimes' travelled from the U(P)M Museum of Decorative Arts, Prague to Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam in 2012.

ALISON JACQUES GALLERY

16-18 BERNERS STREET LONDON W1T 3LN
TELEPHONE +44 (0)20 7631 4720
FAX +44 (0)20 7631 4750
INFO@ALISONJACQUESGALLERY.COM
WWW.ALISONJACQUESGALLERY.COM

In the autumn of 2013, Alison Jacques Gallery will publish a catalogue documenting this exhibition, with an essay by the art historian and curator Professor Sarah Wilson. A conversation between Wilson and Hicks will be hosted by the Courtauld Institute, London, this October. For more details please visit: www.alisonjacquesgallery.com

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, INTERVIEWS OR IMAGES PLEASE CONTACT
CHARLOTTE.MARRA@ALISONJACQUESGALLERY.COM / T: +44(0)20 7631 4720**