



San Jose Museum of Quilts and Textiles welcomes groundbreaking Queer Threads exhibition, on view May 12-August 20, 2023

For Immediate Release

Contact: Chris Salinas,
chris@sjquiltmuseum.org

April 17, 2023 (SAN JOSE, CA)— The San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles opens its highly anticipated *Queer Threads* exhibition to the public on Friday, May 12, 2023; gallery hours are from 11am-5pm, with a free public reception from 5:30-7pm.

The traveling exhibition is among the first to spotlight how contemporary artists are remixing fiber and textile traditions to explore LGBTQIA+ identities and experiences. For its latest iteration at the San Jose Museum of Quilts and Textiles, guest curator John Chaich has assembled an intergenerational, intersectional range of works from 37 emerging and established artists who are working in or rooted in the American West, Northwest, and Southwest, as well as work from the museum's collection.

Exhibited artists include: **AIDS Memorial Quilt, Indira Allegra, April Bey, Tammie Brown, Diedrick Brackens, Chiachio & Giannone, Craig Calderwood, Amanda Curreri, Greg Climer, Lola Corona, Ben Cuevas, Rakeem Cunningham, T.J. Dedeaux-Norris, Jovencio de la Paz, Erika Diamond, Ricki Dwyer, Andrés Payán Estrada, James Gobel, Harmony Hammond, Angela Hennessy, Alexander Hernández, Kang Seung Lee, Aubrey Longley-Cook, dani lopez, Richard Johnathan Nelson, Jasmine Nyende, Ramekon O'Arwisters, Joel Otterson, Maria E. Piñeres, Robb Putnam, RoCoCo, Erik Scollon, Sunny Smith, Molly Vaughan, Nathan Vincent, Angie Wilson, and Mikki Yamashiro.**

Queer Threads transforms the Museum's four galleries and activates the ceiling, floor, and beyond, through works that are intimate (such as Ben Cuevas' knit sacral chakra), immersive (such as Nathan Vincent's life-sized, crocheted and knitted men's locker room), and expansive (such as April Bey's 20-foot-wide woven work) in scale.



April Bey / *Guess Jeans: I Just Want to Have My Titties Out*, 2022

Digitally woven blanket with hand-sewn fabric and glitter / 80 x 240 inches / Courtesy of the artist

Featuring more than three dozen works created as early as 1973 and as recent as 2023, the exhibition spans five decades. Many pieces are fully executed through thread-based processes such as embroidery, knitting, quilting, and weaving, while others interact with animation, clay, light, metal, and photography and expand traditional mediums like painting and sculpture.



AIDS Memorial Quilt
Block 1172
Cloth, thread
120x120 inches
Courtesy of the National AIDS Memorial



dani lopez
Tryin' to hold it together, 2022
Handwoven cotton, novelty yarn, and
metallic tinsel foil fringe
73 in x 50 inches
Courtesy of the artist



Ramekon O'Arwisters
Cheesecake #14, 2019
Fabric, ceramics from CSULB ceramic
program, beads, pins
29 x 20 x 18 inches
Courtesy of the artist and
Patricia Sweetow Gallery, Los Angeles

"I have long admired and learned from so many of the artists that are a part of *Queer Threads*," notes Oakland-based dani lopez. "It is inspiring to see how queer artists experiment with fiber and textile techniques to pose such distinct yet connected questions."

"Shown together for the first time, the works in *Queer Threads* create a conversation as textured as the materials they utilize," notes Chaich. Personal and universal, the works explore notions of belonging, futurity, healing, labor, materiality, physicality, spirituality, and sensuality. The exhibition captures nuances unique to nonheteronormative experiences, as well as larger social influences including Black Lives Matter, colonialism, the Pulse nightclub massacre, HIV/AIDS, anti-trans violence, and global feminist movements.

Queer Threads debuted at the Leslie-Lohman Museum of Art in NYC in 2014 and has traveled to the Maryland Institute College of Art and the Boston Center for the Arts.


"*Queer Threads* affirms our museum's commitment to sharing the power of quilts and textiles in engaging communities and connecting their histories," notes Andrea Temkin, Interim Museum Director.

Notably, the exhibition serves as an early kick-off for Pride month in June. Opening weekend activities also include a free public reception from 5:30-7, and an artist panel on Saturday, May 13, from 11:30-1pm, with Angela Hennessy (Oakland), Alexander Hernandez (San Francisco), Molly Vaughan (Seattle), and Angie Wilson (Oakland), moderated by Chaich -- see page 3. Additional artist-led panels and workshops are planned in June and July. The exhibition closes on the cusp of Silicon Valley Pride in San Jose in August.

Queer Threads is generously funded by Applied Materials Foundation, California Humanities, and many generous individual donors.

Admission to *Queer Threads* is free to SJMQT members and \$10/adult for non-members.

About San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles: The San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles' mission is to preserve, celebrate, and promote knowledge about quilts and textiles, their creation, beauty, and their relationship to human culture and expression. During its nearly 46-year history, the San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles has touched the lives of more than 100,000 visitors, demonstrated fabrics' innate power to connect people of varied backgrounds, provided opportunities for cultural art engagement, and built civic connections. www.sjqiltmuseum.org and @sjmqt on Instagram

Queer Threads Opening Weekend	
Friday, May 12	
10-11am	Members Preview & Curator's Talk. Interested media, RSVP to chris@sjquiltmuseum.org
11am-5pm	Gallery Hours. Open to Public. \$10 adult/non-Members
5:30-7pm	Opening Reception. Free and Open to Public. Artists expected in attendance: Amanda Curreri (Albuquerque), Aubrey Longley-Cook (Los Angeles), dani lopez (Oakland), Robb Putnam (Oakland), Molly Vaughan (Seattle), Nathan Vincent (Los Angeles), and more
Saturday, May 13	
11:30am-1pm	Artists Panel. Free with museum admission. Featuring:
	Artist Angela Hennessy (Oakland) is an artist and Associate Professor at California College of the Arts where she teaches courses on visual and cultural narratives of death in contemporary art. Through writing, studio work, and performance, her practice questions assumptions about Death and the Dead themselves. She uses a spectrum of color and other phenomena of light to expose mythologies of identity. Ephemeral and celestial forms are constructed by everyday gestures of domestic labor—washing, wrapping, stitching, weaving, brushing, and braiding. Her work has been featured in <i>Sculpture Magazine</i> , <i>The New Yorker</i> , <i>Nat Brut</i> , <i>Surface Design Journal</i> , <i>Textile: The Journal of Cloth and Culture</i> and recently in exhibitions at The Museum of the African Diaspora, Pt. 2 Gallery, and Southern Exposure. She has received awards from Artadia, Svane Family Foundation, Aninstantia Foundation and Joan Mitchell Foundation. www.angelahennessy.com
	Artist Alexander Hernández (San Francisco) is a mixed-media artist, also working as a social worker finding housing for displaced LGBTQ youth in San Francisco. Born in Huajuapán de León, Oaxaca, Mexico, and raised in Grand Junction, CO, he received an MFA in Studio Art from California College of the Arts. He creates soft forms and layers, quilted collages of textiles to represent stories of resilient individuals dealing with the experience of being othered, isolated, and excluded because of their identities. Hernandez often repurposes found materials and other textiles with motifs and colors that speak to the recombination of cultures and frames of reference that shape our complex modern lives. He Hernández has participated in art residencies at MASS MoCA in North Adams, MA; San Jose Museum of Quilts and Textiles, San Jose, CA; Root Division in San Francisco, CA; Elsewhere Museum in Greensboro, NC; Mark Rothko Art Center in Latvia; and the Vermont Studio Center in Johnson, VT, among others. www.hernalex.com
	Artist Molly Jae Vaughan (Seattle) holds a Master of Fine Arts from the University of South Florida in Tampa, FL. Her collaborative, multi-year series, <i>Project 42</i> , memorializes murdered trans women and gender non-conforming individuals through garments and textiles. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally in solo and group exhibitions at Bainbridge Island Museum of Art, Seattle Art Museum, The Block Museum of Fine Art, and the University of the Minnesota Museum of American Art, and is in several museum collections. Vaughan was the recipient of the 2017 Betty Bowen Award, and has received grants from Art Matters Foundation, 4 Culture, Visual Artists Network, and the Hillsborough Arts Council. Her work has been featured in <i>The Advocate</i> , <i>Surface Design Journal</i> , and <i>New American Paintings</i> , and she has published in <i>Transgender Studies Quarterly</i> . She is currently a Senior Associate Professor of Fine Art at Bellevue College in Bellevue, Washington. www.vaughanfineart.com
	Artist Angie Wilson (Oakland) is an interdisciplinary visual artist working in textile-based sculpture, installation, social practice, and design. Her work investigates the relationships between art and social movements, interiority and the cosmos, as well as the metaphors of string and fabric to describe the universe. She received her BA in Russian from Reed College in 2003 and MFA from San Francisco State University in 2011. Her work has been exhibited at the de Young Museum, Oakland Museum of California, San Jose Museum of Quilts and Textiles, Headlands Center for the Arts, San Francisco Arts Commission Gallery, Djerassi Resident Artists Program, and the National Institute of Art and Disabilities. www.angiewilson.org .
	Moderator John Chaich (New York) is an independent curator and designer interested in otherness, materiality, and communication. He has curated a range of solo and group exhibitions including <i>Shaun Leonardo: The Breath of Empty Space</i> , <i>Catalina Schliebener: Growing Sideways</i> , and <i>Queering the BilbiObject</i> that have garnered reviews in <i>The New York Times</i> , <i>The Journal of Modern Craft</i> , <i>The Boston Globe</i> , <i>The Brooklyn Rail</i> , <i>The LA Times</i> , and more. Chaich received an MFA in Communications Design from Pratt Institute, NY, where he is a visiting instructor. @queerthreads on instagram.