

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 14, 2026

Textile Center presents three winter exhibitions to begin the year of *Minnesota Handwork*

A Celebration of Fiber Art in Minnesota during 2026

McKnight Fiber Artist Fellows Exhibitions, January 13 – April 4, 2026:

- *Holding, Patterns*, Christine Novotny
- *Alchemy*, Shannon Lucas Westrum

Unbound, in partnership with Fresh Eye Arts, CHOICE, Inc., and Interact, January 27 – April 4, 2026



MINNESOTA HANDWORK



(Minneapolis, MN – January 14, 2026) – Textile Center is proud to kickoff *Minnesota Handwork*, a year-long series of exhibitions and special events in celebration of fiber art in Minnesota.

Now on view in Textile Center's Joan Mondale and Mary Giles Galleries is the *2025 McKnight Fiber Artist Fellowship Exhibition*, with basketry and woven works by 2025 McKnight Fiber Artist fellows Shannon Lucas Westrum and Christine Novotny. The fellows' exhibitions, *Holding, Patterns*, Christine Novotny, and *Alchemy*, Shannon Lucas Westrum, run through April 4, 2026.

Coming soon to Textile Center's Community Gallery is *Unbound*, a group exhibition in partnership with Fresh Eye Arts, CHOICE, Inc., and Interact, from January 27 – April 4, 2026.

A reception for the 2025 McKnight Fellows and the artists participating in *Unbound* will be held at Textile Center on Thursday, March 19, 2026, at 5 pm, with Art Speaks presentations by the Fellows from 6 to 7 pm.

Our galleries are free and open to the public, Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 am – 4 pm, and Thursday evenings until 7 pm.



From left: *I Know, Baby (For Yves)*, Christine Novotny; *Insight*, Shannon Lucas Westrum

Christine Novotny is a weaver whose work explores the intimacy of labor, materiality, the interplay of color, and design guided by the processes of weaving. Her practice investigates how colors interact, shift, and form unexpected chromatic kinships in woven form. Using bundled yarns, knotting and other techniques on her floor loom, she approaches weaving with a painterly sensibility--integrating bold shapes, sensitivity and movement, and atmospheric color blending.

Shannon Lucas Westrum is a basketry artist whose work fuses locally gathered and harvested materials with rattan, to explore a blend of modern and traditional techniques. Her work has evolved to embody dialogue between dualities—tradition and innovation, nature and craft, family and community—and are reflective of her life in the north woods, each piece deeply rooted in place, material, and story.

“The dynamic pairing of these two artists in our galleries has manifest in an exciting installation of flow — and calm — much needed at this moment in our community. Their work together combines texture, color, form, and material explorations that celebrate their dedicated studio practices during the fellowship period. It’s an exhibit not to be missed,” says Tracy Krumm, Textile Center’s Director for Artistic Advancement.

Designed to identify and support outstanding mid-career Minnesota artists, the McKnight Fellowships for Fiber Artists provide recipients with a \$25,000 unrestricted cash award. In addition, the fellows receive public recognition, studio visits with mentors, critics, and curators, an exhibition at Textile Center, participation in a public presentation, professional development support, an artist residency opportunity in partnership with the McKnight Foundation and the Artist Communities Alliance, and access to Textile Center’s resources, including a library of more than 35,000 books and periodicals and a state-of-the-art dye lab. The fellowships are funded by the McKnight Foundation and administered by Textile Center.

MORE ABOUT THE 2025 FELLOWS



Christine Novotny holds a BFA in Painting from Indiana University and completed a two-year residency at North House Folk School, where she explored weaving and honed her craft. She has been awarded grants from the Minnesota State Arts Board and the Arrowhead Regional Arts Council, and an Artist Fellowship at the American Scandinavian Foundation in New York. Her work has been exhibited widely across Minnesota, including a recent solo exhibition in the Artist Studio at the American Swedish Institute in Minneapolis. She lives and works in Grand Marais.

christinenovotny.com

Photo by Wolfskull Creative



Shannon Lucas Westrum has received two Creative Individuals Grants from the Minnesota State Arts Board (2021, 2023), two Arts Education Grants (2024, 2025), and a Region 2 Arts Council Fellowship (2018). Her work has been featured in group exhibitions across Minnesota, including the Armory Arts & Event Center in Park Rapids and the MacRostie Art Center in Grand Rapids. She also teaches basketry workshops in partnership with regional galleries, guilds, and libraries. When not in her studio in Bemidji, she can be found hunting for grasses, rushes, bark and antlers, or beachcombing nearby in search of rocks and driftwood.

shannonlucaswestrum.com

ABOUT THE MCKNIGHT ARTIST & CULTURE BEARER FELLOWSHIPS

Founded on the belief that Minnesota thrives when its artists thrive, the McKnight Foundation's arts program is one of the oldest and largest of its kind in the country. Support for individual working Minnesota artists has been a cornerstone of the program since it began in 1982. The McKnight Artist & Culture Bearer Fellowships Program provides annual, unrestricted cash awards to outstanding mid-career Minnesota artists in 15 different creative disciplines. Program partner organizations administer the fellowships and structure them to respond to the unique challenges of different disciplines. Currently the foundation contributes about \$2.8 million per year to its statewide fellowships. For more information, visit mcknight.org/artistfellowships



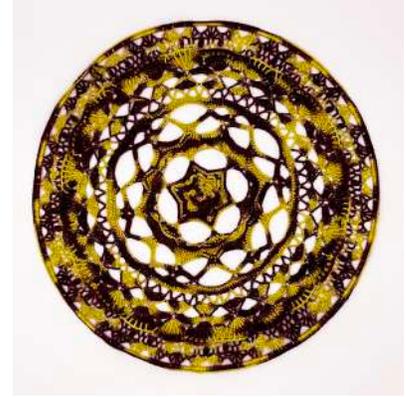
ABOUT THE MCKNIGHT FOUNDATION

The McKnight Foundation, a Minnesota-based family foundation, advances a more just, creative, and abundant future where people and planet thrive. Established in 1953, the McKnight Foundation is deeply committed to advancing climate solutions in the Midwest; building an equitable and inclusive Minnesota; and supporting the arts in Minnesota, neuroscience, and international crop research. mcknight.org



MCKNIGHT
FOUNDATION

ALSO ON EXHIBIT:



From left: *Cockatoo*, Joah Bingert (Interact); *Untitled III*, Kelly Pals (Fresh Eye Arts); *Majesty*, Filias Fae (CHOICE, Inc.)

Unbound

Community Gallery

January 27 – April 4, 2026

Artist Reception Thursday, March 19, 5 – 6 pm

This group exhibition, curated in partnership with CHOICE, Inc., Interact, and Fresh Eye Arts, showcases fiber artists with disability identities who challenge artistic conventions through non-traditional learning modalities. The fiber art works selected are profoundly innovative and meaningful as visual autobiographies through their chosen materials, techniques, and imagery.



This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a Minnesota State Arts Board FY2026 Arts Experiences grant, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

TEXTILE CENTER – A NATIONAL CENTER FOR FIBER ART

Textile Center is unique as a national center for fiber art, with a mission to honor textile traditions, promote excellence and innovation, nurture appreciation, and inspire widespread participation in fiber arts. The Center's resources include exceptional fiber art exhibitions, an artisan shop, the region's only accessible professional-grade dye lab, a natural dye plant garden, and one of the nation's largest circulating textile libraries open to the public. Textile Center produces more than 200 classes a year for all ages and skill levels through its youth, adult, older adult, and outreach programs. A dynamic hub of fiber activity for more than 30 years, Textile Center brings people together in community to learn, create, share, and be inspired by fiber art. For more information, visit: textilecentermn.org.

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