

The cover of the magazine 'textile forum' features a vibrant, abstract artwork. The top half shows several layers of thin, translucent fabric draped and suspended from above, creating a sense of depth and movement. The colors of these fabrics range from light blues and purples to greens and yellows. Below this, the bottom half of the cover is dominated by a large, colorful pattern of concentric circles and rings. These circles are filled with various colors like red, yellow, blue, and green, and are set against a background of fine, textured lines. The overall effect is one of dynamic, multi-layered textile design.

textile^{EN}forum

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Spacious Textiles
Raumgreifende Textilien

'TAKING IMAGINATION SERIOUSLY'

JANET ECHELMAN TAKES OFF



Top: "Trying to Hide with Your Tail in the Air", 1998, 910 x 370 x 370 cm, Vilnius
Above: "Wide Hips", 1997; 25,3 x 15,9 x 15,9 m; Mahaballipuram, India



"Target Swooping II", 2000; 42,7 x 39,6 x 25,9 m; hand knotted nylon net
Venue: Fundacion de Caja De Burgos, Spain Photos page 32: Studio Echelman



Janet Echelman, 2009 Photo: Christopher Michel

At the Surface Design Association conference held in Texas in June 2013, Janet Echelman gave a not entirely new talk entitled "Taking Imagination Seriously". In TF 1/2013 (p. 10), we published our most recent report featuring her presentation in Amsterdam in January of this year. Rather than presenting more art on a huge scale, her intention is the following: "...by combining meaning with physical form, it strives to create a visceral experience in diverse city environments, accessible to all. These sculpture environments embody local identity and invite residents to form a personal and dynamic relationship with the art and place." (<http://www.echelman.com>).

This kind of language also explains her association with "TED – Ideas worth spreading", a US organisation taken over by Chris Anderson in 2001. TED stands for Technology, Entertainment and Design and offers events all around the world. TED lectures are an Anglo-American spectacle and cultural marketing instrument run by Anderson, who was born in Pakistan, educated in India and the UK and is now a resident of the USA. TED claims "to provide a platform for the world's smartests thinkers, greatest visionaries and most inspiring teachers."

In 2011 Janet Echelman was one of the visionaries allowed to speak at a TED conference. Her talk, "Taking Imagination Seriously" was communicated to over one million people via the internet and translated into 33 languages. For the 30th anniversary of TED, scheduled in Vancouver, Canada, in 2014, she has been asked to install a monumental air sculpture between a thirty-storey high-rise building and the Vancouver Convention Center, the conference venue; the installation will then travel to other cities. According to Chris Anderson, the organisers intend to "create a new type of theater space."

To add to the accolades, Janet Echelman was named 2012 Architectural Digest Innovator, selected as one of the eight global design leaders challenging received wisdom and conjuring a bold new world.

As Jean Lurçat warned his contemporaries in the early 1960s: "Méfiez-vous de ces petites filles qui tricotent..." (Don't trust those little knitting girls).

Beatrijs Sterk ■



"Her Secret is Patience", 2009, 6 x 3 x 18 m; Phoenix, Arizona/USA, polyester net with colored light program Photo © Christina O'Haver



Top: sculpture "1.26" for the "Biennial of the Americas" in Denver/USA, 2010; 70 x 19,2 x 9,1 m Spectra® Fiber, polyester Photo: Peter Vanderwarker

Above: "Water Sky Garden", 2009, Vancouver/CDN, PTFE fibre net Photo: Christina Lazar Schuler

Left: "Her Secret is Patience", 2009, detail Photo: Karie Porter

