

hooked
wall
pieces



and
art
for
the
neck

Maine
Fiberarts

October 15-December 31, 2015

Musings on the Hooked Wall Pieces After Master Painters

at Maine Fiberarts, October 15 – December 31, 2015 • Research and Writing by Elizabeth Berkana



#1

The Bride, 1918

65" x 75"

Gustav Klimt, 1862-1918

Hooked Wall Piece by Elizabeth Stoyko

Byzantine-inspired mosaic decorations surround the faces and bodies of the groom and bride in this lush painting. Notoriously known for their sensuality and eroticism, Klimt's figures and designs are often described as allegorical. This work, like many others, places him prominently within the Art Nouveau, Modern period (a style of decorative art, architecture, and design prominent in western Europe and the US from about 1890 until World War I and characterized by intricate linear designs and flowing curves based on natural forms).

Who are all the extra women's faces?

Klimt was known to have had many women in his life, reportedly fathering 3 children by 2 women while in relationship with Emily Flöge. Hmmm. All those women in the same bed...

The painting was unfinished at the time of Klimt's death. It is privately owned but on loan to the Austrian Gallery at the Belvedere Palace in Vienna.



#2

Senecio, 1922

1.5' x 1.5'

Paul Klee, 1879-1940

Hooked Work by Chris Antonak

Swiss born Paul Klee was not known for any specific style of painting. His works show influences in expressionism, cubism and surrealism—process and experimentation were his muse. A contemporary and admirer of Wassily Kandinsky, Klee also taught at Bauhaus in Germany for 11 years. Senecio is composed of simple, ambiguous shapes and forms using large color blocks, expressed with humor and mimicking a child's drawing. This painting by Klee has also been called "Head of Man Going Senile."



#3

Guernica, 1937

11.5' x 25.25'

Pablo Picasso, 1881-1973

"Guernica at MOMA" hooked by Roslyn Logsdon

The 1937 mural created by Picasso in grey, black and white is both a statement against war and for hope and peace.

During the Spanish Civil War, Guernica—a small, quiet Basque village—was bombed relentlessly by the Nationalists, led by General Francisco Franco. Many of the town's men were away fighting on behalf of the Republicans (Communist, Socialist, Anarchists, etc.), leaving innocent and defenseless women and children as victims of the attack.

Picasso's response to this horror was to make a painting to admonish against all wars, and to inspire and honor those who died and those who support peace. It was initially shown in 1937 at the Paris International Exposition in the Spanish Pavilion.

Guernica can be seen at the Sofia Museum in Madrid.



#6 and 8

Birth of Venus, 1484-1486

5'8" x 9'2"

Sandro Botticelli, 1445-1510

Hooked Work by Elizabeth Stoyko

This breathtaking piece (hanging on the walls of the Uffizzi in Florence, Italy) speaks to the birth of love and spirituality, of "beauty" as the driving force of life. Botticelli was most likely influenced by Ovid's "Metamorphoses" and the mythological "Stanzas," a poem by Angelo Poliziano, a Neoplatonic poet who was also part of the Medici Court.

Birth of Venus is the first example in Tuscany of a painting on canvas.

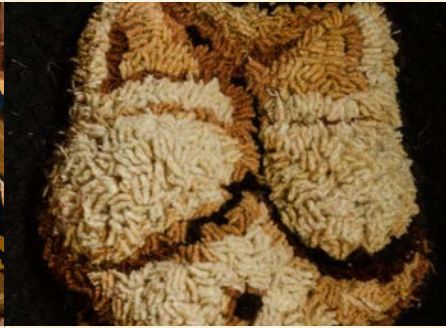


#9
Tahitian Women on the Beach, 1891
 2' x 3'

Paul Gauguin, 1848-1903

Hooked Work by Janet Conner

Hoping to escape the confines of Europe, The French born painter Paul Gauguin traveled to Tahiti looking for a place to "live in ecstasy, calm and art" notes the Musee d'Orsay in Paris where the original version of this painting can be seen. Gauguin was so pleased with the work that he created a second version called "Parau api" ("Two Women of Tahiti") in 1892. In the first painting the woman on the right is wearing "sensible mission clothing." In the second, and the one referenced here, she is wrapped in traditional island fabric.



#10
Venus of Willendorf or Woman of Willendorf, 28,000 – 25,000 BCE
 4½", limestone, red ochre

Hooked Work by Janet Conner

Considered to be one of the earliest images of the body, the tiny sculpture was discovered in 1908 on the banks of the Danube River in Willendorf, Austria. The figure most likely served as a cultural and religious function. Given that the time period is the Ice Age, fatness and fertility would have been highly desirable.

Red was believed to be a sacred color at this time and only remnants of the ochre remain, probably due to overly vigorous cleaning. She now resides in the Museum of Natural History in Vienna, Austria.



#11
Picasso's Owl
Hooked Work by Patricia Ringston

The owl was a favorite subject of Pablo Picasso (born in Spain, 1881- died in France, 1973). He once adopted a small, injured owl that he kept in his studio.

Owls appear in every medium Picasso touched: drawings, paintings, prints, embellished plates, pots and vases. He created ceramics in many forms including his own "owl" shapes.

In May of 2015 a 13½" painted glazed ceramic owl created by Picasso in 1952 sold for almost 2 million dollars. Thinking about what owls often symbolize... wisdom, imagination and mortality, it seems a fitting muse for this master.



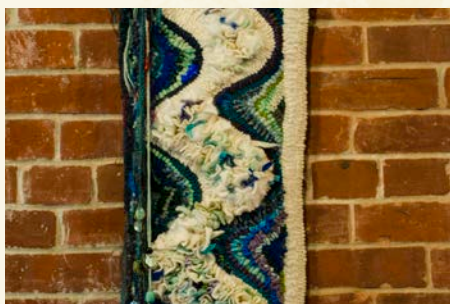
#12
Lascaux Cave Horse
Hooked Work by Janet Conner

Over 2,000 images of large animals, human figures and abstract designs were discovered in 1940 by 18-year-old Marcel Ravidat in South Western France near Montignac. The Paleolithic cave paintings are over 17,300 years old and equines make up over 350 images.

Theories about the images include: star maps, spiritual visions, myth illustrations, and documentation of hunting successes or rituals to improve hunting results.

The caves were opened to the public in 1948 but exposure from carbon dioxide, heat and humidity damaged the paintings and created lichen on the walls. The caves were closed in 1963, the paintings were restored but in 1998 were found to be beset by fungus. 2008 revealed black mold.

The French Ministry of Culture held a symposium with 74 international specialists in 2009 and published their findings in 2011: "Lascaux & Preservation Issues in Subterranean Environments." One person, once a week for 20 minutes enters the caves to monitor conditions. Problems continue to be addressed by scientists and preservationists.



#13

Riff on Matisse: The Wave, 1952
20" x 62", gouache on paper, cut
and pasted

Henri Matisse (French, 1869-1954)

Hooked Work by Sue Perless

In the final years of his life, Matisse traded scissors and paper for canvas and brushes and began cutting painted sheets into amazingly varied forms and shapes—mostly abstracted and simplified versions of vegetation and figures.

This simple wave form is unique among the brilliant jumble of colors and forms often seen in his cut-outs. The original contains a stark white wave on a bright blue background, extending over 5 feet in length, a simple but powerful form. No end; no beginning.



#14

Starry, Starry Night, 1889
2' 5" x 3'

Vincent van Gogh (Dutch, 1853-1890)

Hooked Work by Rachel Conner, and

#16

Cypresses, 1889
36 3/4" x 29"

Vincent van Gogh (Dutch, 1853-1890)

Hooked Wall Piece by Janet Conner

Both of these paintings by van Gogh were made during his yearlong stay at the asylum Saint-Remy-de-Provence. He painted mostly looking out of his window and on the grounds of the asylum, although later ventured a bit farther afield.

Along with fellow Post-impressionists Paul Gauguin, Pablo Picasso (his early years), Paul Cezanne, and Henri Rousseau (to name just a few), van Gogh sought to bring more emotionally—and intellectually—based ways of creating visual imagery. With an emphasis on abstract and symbolic content, he used vivid colors, lots of paint, and real life subjects. He also emphasized geometric forms and often chose distorted or unnatural, arbitrary colors.

Much has been written about Vincent van Gogh—his life, his art, his sanity, his death. The work survives and stands spectacularly worthy of our admiration.

Starry, Starry Night is owned by Museum of Modern Art, New York; **Cypress**, by the Metropolitan Museum, New York.



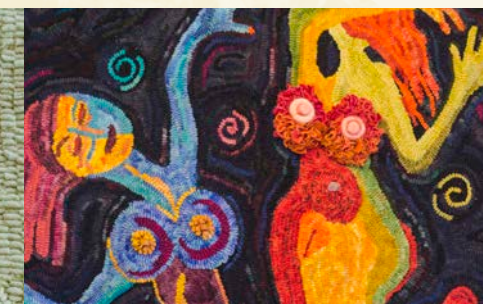
#18

Hands with Flowers, 1958
22 5/8" x 15 1/8", watercolor;
color lithograph

Pablo Picasso, 1881-1973

Hooked Work by Sue Kuendig

Created for a peace demonstration in Stockholm, Sweden, this simple drawing of two chubby, soft hands grasping bright green stems of four multi-colored daisy-like flowers has been reproduced many times in posters and prints since it was first created in 1958. While the initial work was in watercolor, Picasso later created a color lithograph. Its title has had many variations on "peace," "hands," and "flowers."



#42

Dancing After Picasso...

Hooked Work by Patricia Ringston

Picasso created many drawings, paintings, serigraphs, and ceramics to capture the forms and movement of dancers. Fine lines and thick strokes animated these whirling figures. There are photos showing Picasso dancing alone in his studio and with his wife Jacqueline Roque.