

Olga de Amaral

b. Colombia, 1932

Born in Bogotá, Colombia, Olga de Amaral studied fabric art at the Cranbrook Academy of Art in Michigan. Amaral is a renowned artist whose evolving technique, incorporating fiber, paint, gesso and precious metals transforms two-dimensional textiles into sculptural works that seamlessly integrate art, craft, and design. In their engagement with materials and process her works become essentially unclassifiable and self-reflexively authentic. Amaral is an important figure in the development of post-war Latin American abstraction. Her creation of "off stretcher" works, using non-traditional materials, acquires greater historical resonance with each passing year.

Amaral's work is deeply driven by her exploration of Colombian culture and her own identity. Understanding and being understood is an important part of her work. Architecture, mathematics, landscape, and socio-cultural dichotomies in Colombia are woven together through the use of fiber. Through a complex system based on artisanal technique, she finds answers to inner questions. Her golden surfaces of light thus embody the secrets of her soul.

Her use of gold, inspired by the interwoven histories of Pre-Hispanic and Colonial Art, gives her work a presence at once sensual and otherworldly. In his prologue essay to the book *Olga de Amaral: El Manto de la Memoria* (2000), Edward-Lucie-Smith comments on the transcendent qualities of her art: "A large part of Olga's production has been concerned with gold, but there are in fact no equivalents for what she makes in Pre-Columbian archaeology. Nevertheless one feels that such objects ought in logic to exist—that she has supplied a lack."

Amaral founded and directed the textiles department at the Universidad de los Andes (University of the Andes) in Bogotá in 1965. She was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1973, and in 2005 was named "Artist Visionary" by the Museum of Art and Design in New York. In 2008, she was honorary Co-Chair for the benefit of the Multicultural Audience Development Initiative, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

She currently lives and works in Bogotá, Colombia.

Selected Exhibitions

- 1966 Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1969 *Wall Hangings*, the Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1971 *Deliberate Entanglements*, University of California, Los Angeles
- 1972 Museum of Modern Art, Bogotá, Colombia
- 1973 André Emmerich Gallery, New York
- 1975 Galerie Rivolta, Lausanne, Switzerland
Colombian Art throughout the Centuries, Le Petit Palais, Paris, France
- 1977 Ruth Kaufmann Gallery, New York
Tapestry, National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, Japan
- 1981 Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris, France
Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco
- 1984 Allrich Gallery, San Francisco
- 1986 42nd Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy
- 1987 *Textiles: A Survey*, Nevada State Museum, Reno, Nevada
- 1990 Bellas Artes Gallery, Santa Fe, New Mexico
- 1992 *Modern Design: 1890-1990*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
- 1993 Museum of Modern Art, Bogotá, Colombia
The Saxe Collection, The Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C.
The Art Institute of Chicago
- 1995 *Women Artists of Latin America*, Phoenix Museum of Art, Arizona
- 2001 National Museum of Fine Arts, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 2002 National Museum, Lima, Peru
- 2007 Centro Cultural Casa de Vacas, Madrid, Spain
- 2008 Eretz Israel Museum, Tel Aviv, Israel
One of a Kind, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
- 2009 Museo di Santa Giulia, Brescia, Italy
- 2010 Galerie Dutko, Paris, France
- 2012 Latin American Masters Gallery, Los Angeles
- 2013 Louise Blouin Foundation, London, England
- 2014 *Fiber Sculpture*, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, Mass.
Galerie Agnès Monplaisir, Paris, France
- 2015 Galería La Cometa, Bogotá, Colombia
GOLD, Bass Museum, Miami, Florida
- 2017 Latin American Masters, Los Angeles
- 2019 *Southern Geometries, from Mexico to Patagonia*, Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris

Selected Collections

- Albuquerque Museum of Art and History, Albuquerque, New Mexico
- The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois
- Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, Ohio
- Denver Art Museum, Denver, Colorado
- De Young Museum, San Francisco, California
- Jean Lurçat Contemporary Tapestry Museum, Angers, France
- Kunstindustrimuseum, Trondheim, Norway
- Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, New York
- Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York
- Museum of Modern Art, Bogotá, Colombia
- Museum of Contemporary Art, Lima, Peru
- Museum Bellerive, Zürich, Switzerland
- Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville, Paris, France
- Musée Cantonal des Beaux Arts, Lausanne, Switzerland
- Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas
- National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, Japan
- National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. (Renwick Collection)