



COURTESY CHRISTOPHER EDWARDS

Above, Hawaii Craftsmen's Statewide Exhibition opens this week in the main gallery of the Honolulu Museum of Art School. Below, Emily Zaiden, director and curator of the Craft in America Center in Los Angeles, served as this year's juror.

inventiveness," she said.

MANY OF the Hawai'i Craftsmen are women – talented and accomplished women. One is Chenta Laury, originally from Oahu, but now a Maui-based artist and educator.

Laury's work, the abstract, portrait-sized "Patchwork #1," was chosen for the curated portion of the exhibition.

Her pieces employ traditional fibers such as wool, silk and kapa (bark cloth), and explore themes of place, identity, and transitions and cycles in life.

"Patchwork is the stitching together of fabric from a variety of sources to create a larger, cohesive whole," Laury said in her artist's statement. "This piece explores the concept of patchwork — metaphorically and literally — and serves as a means for me to explore the relationship between my own identity and Hawai'i — its people, traditions, values, and ecology — which has so deeply shaped me."

Laury said her interest in kapa goes back to her childhood.

"I grew up with several large pieces of kapa hanging on the walls of our home as a child. Years later, upon returning to Hawai'i as an adult, I met with a kapa kumu

from O'ahu, Verna Takashima. Verna welcomed me into her kapa hui and I was hooked," Laury said.

"Like Takashima, I too hope to help perpetuate that traditional knowledge, while also exploring the range of possibilities that the material offers."

Zaiden describes "Patchwork #1" as "a really fresh reinvention of kapa as material for symbolism through pattern, geometry and texture."

Laury explained, "I used sections from at least three different pieces of kapa that I processed at different times and in slightly different ways, including a small section which I beat silk into."

"I wanted variety in texture and color. I used thread to stitch the various pieces together, in some cases, leaving the stitching visible as an aesthetic choice."

"Additional patterns are created by brushing on kukui hili, made from boiling down kukui tree root bark, and alae'a, the red, brown and grey mud from Hawai'i's iron oxide-rich soil."

Laury's work is part of a selection of works by artists representing each of the Hawaiian islands, curated by Zaiden. The artists are: Vince Cabanilla, Lanai; Patricia Gorelangton, Oahu; Terry Klerlein, Molokai; David Kuraoka, Kauai;

Laury; Marques Hanalei Marzan, Oahu; Gregory Paul, Hawai'i Island; and Jonathan Swanz, Oahu.

AS LONGTIME art collectors, Nancy and Herb Conley are eagerly awaiting this year's exhibition. Herb Conley, a retired real estate broker, is a trustee for the Honolulu Museum of Art; the Conleys are well-known for their support for art and



artists in Hawai'i. "This show truly has something for everyone: ceramics, wood, yarn, feathers, and glass," Nancy Conley said.

"The high quality and variety of works make it a treasure hunt for us."

"The excitement for us as art collectors is discovering new emerging artists and seeing creative ideas from established artists."

"We don't go to this exhibition looking for a particular type of work. We wander through the gallery and see what speaks to us, grabs our attention, and makes us say, 'Wow! I love this!'"

Another popular component of the exhibition will be four panel discussions, organized by Carol Khewhok and scheduled on Sept. 8, 15, 22 and 29 at the Honolulu Museum of Art School. Topics will include the state of fine art and craft in Hawai'i today, strengthening an arts infrastructure and what the future holds.

Multiple workshops are open to the community, including "Hands on Raku," 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sept. 8 at the art school (there is a \$15 materials fee), and "Hands on Magic Islands," a free, family-oriented creative activity on Sept. 15, held in conjunction with Family Sunday at the Honolulu Museum.

PHOTO COURTESY MADISON METRO



COURTESY BRAD STARKS

"Laury's Patchwork #1" by Chenta Laury, made from alae'a, silk and thread on kapa. Below, "Oort Cloud" by Michelle Conley-Harada, a woven, coiled textile sculpture.

GETTING THE UPPER HAND

The statewide exhibit celebrates craftsmen's talents and creativity

By MaryAnne Long
Special to the Star-Advertiser

"As a juror, I expected to see outstanding work," Emily Zaiden said. "But what impressed me even more was the Hawai'i Craftsmen organization itself — an amazingly talented concentration of dedicated artists from across the islands."

"The Visible Hand," Hawai'i Craftsmen's statewide exhibition, presents the work of emerging and established artists from across the state. In addition to 119 incredibly well-crafted items that survived an intense jurying process, the exhibition also includes a series of free presentations, workshops, and panel discussions.

The exhibition opens Friday, and continues through Oct. 4 at the Honolulu Museum of Art School.

Christopher Edwards, exhibition chair, explains the "Visible Hand" as "a celebration of the presence of the skilled maker's hand in the things they produce." It could also refer to the tradition of craft, he said, "rooted in the production of utilitarian objects made to be held in the hand."

This year's juror for the exhibition is Zaiden, director and curator of the Graft in America Center in Los Angeles. She selected the works by 94 artists from across Hawai'i:



COURTESY NANCY CONLEY

56 from Oahu; 13 each from Hawai'i island and Maui; six from Kauai, five from Molokai and one from Lanai.

Zaiden described the pieces she blind-juried as "exceptional works of the highest caliber."

"They exhibited strong technical skills, well-thought-out concepts, originality, and

ART EXHIBITION
"The Visible Hand:
Hawai'i Craftsmen
Statewide Exhibition"

WHERE:
Honolulu Museum of Art
School, 1111 Victoria St.

WHEN:
Opens Friday, continues
10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tues-
day-Sunday through
Oct. 4; opening recep-
tion and awards, 6:30-
8:30 p.m. Saturday

COST:
Free

INFO:
hawaiicraftsmen.org,
521-3282