

Pat Hickman’s *Openings: Knotted Netting* Workshop at LACIS Museum, January 2017.

By Barbara Shapiro

When I heard that my former teacher and old friend Pat Hickman was going to offer a workshop at LACIS Museum in Berkeley, I signed up right away. Several other BABM members also attended. I studied with Pat decades ago at SFSU and her approach to primary structures and textiles of the past as sources of inspiration for today’s fiber artists had a profound influence on me. Many years later, when I was asked to run for the Board of the Textile Society of America I said yes in part because Pat was on the Board and I would get the chance to spend more time with this inspiring artist and friend who had moved to NY State after many years in Hawaii.

We worked on the technique of knotted netting, which forms the basis of some of Pat’s most interesting work, including the monumental entrance gates she designed for the Maui Arts and Cultural Center, *Nets of Makali’i*, 1994.

The technique can be adapted to a shape with volume when the gut is cast over a form and allowed to dry.

Pat is an excellent teacher and all 11 of us completed several samples of this primary single-element textile structure. We worked in a large scale that was easy to understand. Several of the students had projects in mind for the future.

Pat’s first slide lectures taught the history of the technique from fishnets to fine filet lace. She first came across knotted netting while living in Turkey where she watched the fishermen repairing their nets. A second slide lecture showed the work of many contemporary artist who use knotted netting or whose work has a netted feel to it. We also saw more of Pat’s work.

Bringing us back to the elegance of the past, LACIS owner Jules Klot treated us to a private showing of some of the museum’s collection of historic pieces with incredibly fine and elegant motifs.



It was a delightful day with a great teacher at LACIS Museum of Lace and Textiles which is a Bay Area treasure.

You can read an article on TextileArtist.org called, “Barbara Shapiro: Art That Inspires” to learn more about Pat Hickman and others who have inspired Barbara.
<http://www.textileartist.org/barbara-shapiro-artists-that-inspire/>

Knotted netting requires only a long thread, a shuttle and a gauge. Working often in a nontraditional material of animal membrane (sausage casings or hog gut), Pat also uses the knotted netting technique to create light and airy vessel forms as in *Separate Worlds, Joined*, 12" x 12" x 16.5" pictured below.



Historic pieces of Lace at LACIS.