

wexner center for the arts

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***EXTREME TEXTILES* SHOWCASES BEAUTY, STRENGTH, AND VERSATILITY OF HIGH-TECH FABRICS**

"A thrilling show, quick to stoke imagination and amazement."—*The New Yorker*

This spring, the Wexner Center presents the nationally acclaimed ***Extreme Textiles: Designing for High Performance***, an exhibition devoted to technical textiles—highly engineered materials designed for ultimate performance in extreme conditions. This visually seductive exhibition features a striking installation design created specifically for the Wexner Center's distinctive galleries. It will be on view **April 7–August 13, 2006**.

Extreme Textiles includes textile applications from the areas of aeronautics, medicine, apparel, sports, agriculture, transportation, and civil engineering. Featuring more than 200 pieces in a wide variety of textures and colors, *Extreme Textiles* explores how age-old techniques such as weaving and knitting, in combination with advances in science and engineering, have contributed to the production of textiles that are more dynamic and versatile than ever before. From a model of a woven and braided carbon fiber high-rise to a piece of fabric that cradles a human heart, *Extreme Textiles* examines the intrinsic beauty and extraordinary flexibility of these modern textile marvels that are revolutionizing contemporary design. "Many of the creations are surprisingly beautiful...breathtaking in their strength and vitality," wrote *The New York Sun*.

The **Wexner Center's installation** of *Extreme Textiles* is designed by noted architect **Kivi Sotamaa**, assistant professor in The Ohio State University's Knowlton School of Architecture, and takes full advantage of the center's expansive, light-filled galleries. Sotamaa's dramatic design resonates with Wexner Center architect Peter Eisenman's bold architecture, with objects displayed in illuminated columns, mannequins suspended from above, a reproduction of a wing from the Wright Brothers' 1902 glider hovering over the galleries, and other highlights.

"*Extreme Textiles*, with its merging of traditional textile techniques, contemporary design, and science and technology, is a perfect fit for the cross-disciplinary Wexner Center and its commitment to innovation," says Claudine Isé, associate curator of



Rotor blisk for turbine engine
Polar and triaxially woven carbon
fiber
Courtesy of Foster-Miller Inc.

exhibitions at the Wexner Center. "We are pleased to be the first venue to present this outside of New York, and to bring it to a university and city with a rich track record in both design and scientific research."

Extreme Textiles: Designing for High Performance was organized by the Smithsonian Institution's Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum in New York.

STRONGER, SMARTER, SAFER, FASTER, and LIGHTER

Today's most sophisticated and functional industrial materials, from Kevlar to Teflon, are changing not just how we make textiles but what we can do with them. *Extreme Textiles* examines the artfulness of objects that are typically behind walls, inside tires or even under the skin. In this brave new world of revolutionary materials, the key players are said to be stronger, smarter, safer, faster, and lighter.

A few highlights of the exhibition:

- Superline, a mass of 36.5 million polyester filaments with a breaking strength of 4.4 million pounds, described as the strongest rope in existence
- Delicate, machine-embroidered polyester implants used by surgeons as scaffolding for attaching tissue during reconstructive shoulder surgery (pictured at right)
- Alban Geissler's Skyray, an attachable wing system with a rigid composite of Kevlar and carbon fiber that allows humans to soar like birds at speeds up to 250 mph
- Reproduction of a wing section of the Wright Brothers' 1902 glider, plus an original fragment from the 1903 Wright flyer, both made of cotton muslin
- Apollo Liquid Cooling Garment (1968) that utilizes a system of PVC tubes carrying cool water to maintain an astronaut's body temperature while walking on the moon
- Maggie Orth's "Fuzzy Light Wall" of sensors made from electroconductive yarns that are embedded in embroidery, pom-poms, or fake fur and can be used to control lights or other home electronic devices (also available in Wexner Center Store)
- Turbine rotor blisk with blades of triaxially braided carbon fiber developed for the U.S. Air Force (pictured on page 1)
- A prosthetic foot made of woven carbon fiber designed by Van Phillips



Bioimplantable device for reconstructive shoulder surgery / photo by Matt Flynn

An accompanying exhibition catalogue, *Extreme Textiles: Designing for High Performance*, published by Princeton Architectural Press, New York, is available for purchase at the Wexner Center Store for \$45.

OPENING PARTY AND LECTURE SERIES

A public **opening celebration** for *Extreme Textiles* and the other spring exhibitions will be held Thursday, **April 6** from 5 to 8 pm. Wexner Center Director Sherri Geldin will give opening remarks at 5:30 pm at the entrance to the galleries, and *Extreme Textiles* curator Matilda McQuaid of Cooper-Hewitt will conduct a gallery tour at 5:45 pm. Admission is free.

A series of **lectures**, featuring designers and architects from around the country as well as faculty members from Ohio State, will be held in conjunction with this exhibition. Unless otherwise noted, all lectures take place in the Film/Video Theater; admission is free.

- **Sheila Kennedy: *After Effects***

Thursday, April 27 / 5:30 pm (Wexner Center Performance Space)

A founding partner of Kennedy & Violich Architecture in Boston, Kennedy discusses the ways contemporary digital technologies and materials intertwine across the fields of electronics, architecture, and material design. Kennedy's Zip Wall is featured in *Extreme Textiles*.

- **DEEDEE AND HERB GLIMCHER LECTURE**

Petra Blaisse

Tuesday, May 2 / 7 pm

Renowned Dutch designer Petra Blaisse is the featured speaker in the third annual Glimcher Lecture highlighting leaders in the fields of art and architecture. Blaisse specializes in both interior and exterior design, interweaving architecture, decoration, and landscape into dramatic environments for theater, retail, and more. Her signature touches include the Netherlands Dance Theatre's embossed "liquid gold" drapes and the knitted curtain walls that adorn Prada's flagship store in New York, designed by Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas.

- **Maggie Orth: *The Art and Technology of Electronic Textiles***

Thursday, May 11 / 4:30 pm

Founder of International Fashion Machines, Inc., in Seattle, Orth discusses her art and design work in electronic textiles and the relationship between computation, material making, and traditional artistic and design practices. Her Fuzzy Light Wall and Leaping Lines Electric Plaid panel are on view in *Extreme Textiles*.

- **Kathryn Jakes: *Extreme Textiles in Our Ordinary Lives***

Thursday, May 18 / 4:30 pm

Jakes, an Ohio State Professor of Textile and Fiber Science in the Department of Consumer Sciences, will talk about how the textiles we use today include many of the high-performance materials originally created for

special applications such as the space program. Many items will be on display for the audience to see and touch.

- **Peter Testa and Devyn Weiser: *Future Work***

Thursday, May 25 / 4:30 pm

Testa and Weiser, design principals with TESTA Architecture/Design in Los Angeles, discuss the application of high-tech, fiber-based composites—materials that will replace steel in the coming decades—in architecture and construction. Their Carbon Tower Prototype, the first all-composite high-rise, and developed with the engineering firm ARUP, is featured in *Extreme Textiles*.

EXHIBITION SUPPORT

Extreme Textiles: Designing for High Performance was organized by Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution. The exhibition was made possible by Target. Generous support was provided by Maharam. Additional funding was provided by The Coby Foundation, Ltd., Stephen McKay, Inc., Furthermore: a program of the J. M. Kaplan Fund, Elise Jaffe + Jeffrey Brown, and Foster-Miller, Inc.

Major support for *Extreme Textiles* and related programs at the Wexner Center is generously provided by T. W. Ruff, Honda of America Manufacturing, Inc., Cityspace, and Infiniti of Columbus.

Additional support is provided by The Ohio State University College of Engineering, Corporate Annual Fund of the Wexner Center Foundation, and Wexner Center members.

Preferred accommodations are provided by The Blackwell Inn.

The preferred airline for this exhibition is American Airlines/American Eagle.

VISITOR INFORMATION:

THE EXHIBITION: *Extreme Textiles* features high-tech textiles used in the areas of medicine, athletics, transportation, aerospace, the environment, and more. On view at the Wexner Center.

DATES: April 7–August 13, 2006 (opening party April 6, 5-8 pm). Also on view: *Diptych: Jockum Nordström and Mindy Shapero* and *William Kentridge: 7 Fragments for Georges Méliès*

LOCATION: Wexner Center for the Arts (Galleries B and C), 1871 North High Street at The Ohio State University.

GALLERY HOURS: Tuesday–Wednesday and Sunday 11 am–6 pm; Thursday–Saturday 11 am–8 pm. The galleries are closed on Monday.

ADMISSION: Free.

PARKING: Ohio Union Parking Garage, just south of the Wexner Center.

WALK-IN TOURS: Sundays at 1 pm and Thursdays at 6 pm.

GROUP TOURS: Group tours available by calling 614 292-6493.

PUBLIC INFORMATION: wexarts.org or 614 292-3535.

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