



CROSS SECTIONS

MONUMENTAL, DARK PAINTINGS HANG ON THE WALLS OF THE STUDIO IN LIDKÖPING. IN THE NEXT ROOM, LOOMS WITH SAMPLES LEADING DOWN A NEW PATH. WE MEET THE ARTIST ANDREAS ERIKSSON AND STUDIO MANAGER SARA ERIKSSON FOR A CONVERSATION ABOUT ART, TEXTILE, AND THE TIES THAT BIND THEM.

– I’ve always been close to textile-making and textile materials. My mother and grandmothers knit and wove. And I knit myself when I was young. So it’s a natural material for me to work with.

The starting point for his first weavings was linen. Andreas Eriksson was approached by the weaving studio Märta Måås-Fjetterström in Båstad. When he visited, he found handspun linen in different shades and with different characteristics.

– We didn’t end up collaborating, but seeing how the process unfolded and why the yarns are so different – that it depends on where and how the flax grew, how they are processed – really got me going. I joined a group online and learned about linen, and we collected handspun linen yarns. We ended up with more than fifty kilos of handspun linen to work with. I had been very interested in the canvas I paint on, I tested different grains of canvas and painted thinly so that the woven structure shone through. Why not weave the work directly? In linen!

The result was a number of large weavings in linen. The titles come from the place each piece was woven: Djurgården, Lidköping, Weissensee, Skärhamn. They were woven by several art weavers, based on Andreas Eriksson’s intentions and paintings. They were shown at a number of exhibitions: Bonniers Art Gallery in Stockholm, the Watercolor Museum in Skärhamn, The Museum of Sketches for Public Art in Lund, neugerriem-schneider in Berlin, to name a few. Sometimes by themselves, sometimes alongside painting and sculpture.

– One might think the textiles are a separate branch of my art, but they aren’t. For me, it’s about visualizing something. A yarn, a material can get me going.

His work moves between the private and

the public, that which is under and over, in front of or behind. Creates cross sections, glimpses of surfaces between what we see, and what we don’t see. This is true whether it’s painting, sculpture, graphic art, or textile.

Andreas Eriksson collaborates with talented craftspeople to create the graphic art, sculptures, and textiles.

– That textile art ends up in a context, both as a medium and in its creation, and has a place in the international art world through Andreas, is something that both textile art and craft practitioners benefit from, says Sara.

Textile art doesn’t have the same status as painting or sculpture in certain art contexts, why do you think that is?

– Maybe it has something to do with self-confidence in the textile world, Andreas adds. That it keeps happening is surely part of the patriarchal attitudes in the art world. But we see that things are happening, it’s going to change!

His latest commission in textiles is an antependium and chasuble for the Lund Cathedral, and he’s continued to work with unbleached linen. The tones in the weaving suit the stonework of the church interior. There is gold in both pieces, accenting the linen and echoing the altarpiece and many other parts of the church. This was a directive from the church leadership. The antependium features woven figures from bible stories: an opening, fish, grain, footsteps. The opening can be interpreted as a cave, with a finely drawn cross in black, a bit wobbly.

– It was hard to get the cross right; I fumbled my way along, drawing with my left hand, which was what worked.

The commission for the Lund Cathedral, a

historically and ceremonially important building from the twelfth century, was Andreas Eriksson’s first liturgical textiles. What is his view on faith?

– I think art is built on a strong sense of faith. It’s very much about faith. That was a natural aspect of our work with the church.

The textiles are white, which in the liturgical calendar are used for celebrations. At the inauguration, at Easter, Lena Sjöstrand danced on the church hill wearing the chasuble. The wool damask woven by Hans Thomsson flowed with her movement, the golden “grid” shape that symbolizes the Lund Cathedral and Episcopate glittered in the sun.

A number of craftspeople were involved in this commission. The antependium was woven in Andreas Eriksson’s studio in Lidköping by the art weavers Sara Eriksson and Maria Andersson. The chasuble and stoles were woven by Hans Thomsson and embroidered by the Society for Ecclesiastical Art, and sewn into garments by Ingeborg Skaar.

An new antependium for the Medieval church in his native place, Kinnekulle, is still in the digital sketching phase. It’s visually similar to his antependium for Lund Cathedral, but this one is more intimate, with rya knots creating a bit of mystique. There is more black, woven here in silk. An opening. A tactually drawn cross, like in Lund, but in gold. If it’s woven, it will be a gift. His grandparents on his father’s side are buried next to the Kinnekulle church.

At the time of our visit, the exhibition *Andreas Eriksson—Roots* is open at the Lidköping Art Museum. Painting, textile, graphic art, and sculpture. We’re invited into a world where

Page 26: Andreas Eriksson in his studio in Lidköping.
 Below: New liturgical textiles for Lund Cathedral. The church interior inspired the antependium. The pattern on the chasuble in the form of a grid symbolizes St. Lawrence, the patron saint of the Cathedral.

Right: Kumiko Hasaka, Andreas Eriksson and Sara Eriksson discuss yarns for the new "black" wool pieces.
 Below: A twenty-meter-long weaving modeled after Andreas Eriksson's red studio wall in Medelplana, woven by Hans Thomsson.

Andreas Eriksson

Royal Institute of Art, Stockholm 1993-1998

Artist working in painting, photography, sculpture, film, graphic art and textile.

He lives and works in Kinnekulle, Västergötland. He represented Sweden (with Fia Backström) at the Venice Biennale in 2011 and the São Paulo Biennale in 2012.

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nature strikes a chord, his homeland. He describes the processes, the time it takes, the thoughts behind the work. We're traversing the landscape of one of the leading artists of our time, and it's a generous one.

There are woven samples for something new hanging on the walls and in progress on the looms. The monumental linen weavings, with the material as the starting point creating landscapes and stories, were built on a clear, unique concept. The palette was predetermined. This is something different. Using wool, the textiles will begin to converge on painting. Sara Eriksson has been involved in the linen pieces from the start, and now a new material enters the picture.

– After five years of linen, and real challenges when it comes to weaving and installation, wool seems easy—it just sinks in, like butter.

– The challenge here is to express the unique qualities of wool, says Andreas Eriksson and shows us two sample weavings. 'What do we do to get this result,' he says, showing us a sample that sings, 'and not this one,' pointing to a similar sample that feels less interesting. The weaving process continues in conversation with the weavers, in this case Sara Eriksson, Kumiko Hasaka, Hans Thomsson, and Johanna Krantz. Whether they will become large, like those in linen, similar in size to the paintings in the adjacent studio, isn't clear. 'The magnitude isn't found in the format,' Andreas declares.





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