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# THE

## MISHA KAHN'S COLORFUL





# CRAFT

TAPESTRY LOOMS LARGE.

Maria Kahn's *Switching Space Time*; photo courtesy of Friedman Benda and Maria Kahn.





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WHEN MISHA’S WORK IS ON A LOOM.”**

**– TINA WEAVIND**



Misha Kahn's creative vision is nothing if not eclectic. The designer, known for his boundary-pushing works across a variety of mediums, not only translates his artistic language but incorporates the languages of craftsmen and makers who inspire him.

For Design Miami 2025, Kahn and New York-based gallery Friedman Benda are showcasing that collaborative spirit, bringing one of Kahn's most ambitious pieces to the fair. *Swatching Space Time* takes up almost a 10-foot-by-13-foot footprint, bringing together ideas and techniques that range from traditional weaving by South Africa's Stephens Tapestry Studio to digital brushstrokes, crumpled paper and even a scanned piece of gum. "What really makes working with weaving so different for me is that every inch of it has to receive such attention — there's really no part that's less considered," says Kahn.

But it all begins in a much more futuristic manner; the Minnesota-born Kahn sculpts the yarn and textile scraps in virtual reality. That final sculpture is then translated into a two-dimensional drawing, which directs the process of hand-dyeing mohair to match each color. The tapestry is then handwoven by Stephens artisans over the course of months, bringing together a range of touchpoints, including digital, manual, collaborative and individual — not to mention a geographical journey that takes the piece from Brooklyn, New York, to the town of Midrand, South Africa. "It is a magical experience translating Misha's highly digitized designs into handmade woven artworks that are entirely unlike anything done before," says Tina Weavind, the studio's director and daughter of founder Mags Stephens. "Misha has a deep insight into the weaving technique which makes him a pleasure to collaborate with."

The collaboration runs deep. Though Stephens has three looms at its studio, Kahn's designs often require the full concentration of 11 weavers and four assistants to complete the work. Weavind spends months creating a template for the weavers to follow, and the shading required to mimic a three-dimensional design can require a methodical attention to detail. "We use up to 20 threads of mohair at a time, changing the color of perhaps three threads at each pass," says Weavind.

Like many of Kahn's collaborators, the connection with Stephens Tapestry is built on appreciation of craft. ("Tina and Mags have this kind of unwavering vision and determination to make each piece as spectacular as it could ever be," says Kahn.) Mags Stephens herself has been hand-weaving since 1962, working with artists to translate their vision into physical form, and the studio employs generations of weavers from the same family, a bond that Weavind says extends to Kahn via his artistry. "There is an almost tangible energy that permeates the studio when Misha's work is on a loom," she says. "The place fills with color and concentration, as well as a marvelous camaraderie. We have to hold each other's hands to produce his work."