

The Mint Museum's new four-story window installation *Foragers* offers a transcendent experience while celebrating the female workers and makers that helped shape NC

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September 10, 2020, Charlotte, NC — Unlike anything ever seen at The Mint Museum before, Brooklyn-based artist Summer Wheat's *Foragers* is a monumental piece of public artwork spanning four stories and 3,720 square feet at Mint Museum Uptown's Robert Haywood Morrison Atrium. A myriad of vibrant panels giving the illusion of stained glass fill the atrium's 96 windows and weave a story of the people and workforce that have made Charlotte a thriving metropolis.

"In so many ways, *Foragers* is a monumental tribute to all those anonymous female makers and laborers who have made North Carolina the place that it is today: the Catawba clay workers, the Cherokee basket makers, the enslaved and freed African-American fishers and farmers, the countless woodworkers, weavers, and quilters," says Jen Sudul Edwards, PhD, the Mint's chief curator and curator of contemporary art.

Foragers will be on view when The Mint Museum re-opens to the public Sept. 25 and will remain on view through Sept. 6, 2022. *Foragers* is part of a larger exhibition, *In Vivid Color*, opening Oct. 16, which brings together four innovative contemporary artists—Wheat, Gisela Colon, Spencer Finch, and Jennifer Steinkamp—who create works celebrating the power of color and its ability to permeate the space around us. Their work is juxtaposed with a selection of paintings and works on paper, drawn primarily from The Mint Museum's permanent collection, which showcase artists' more traditional exploration of color.

The magnitude and brilliance of *Foragers* turns the typical museum experience on its head and creates a transcendent space of contemplation and beauty at a time when a weary public craves an escape—and a spacious, social-distancing-friendly one at that. While standard admission rates apply to the museum's Level 3 and Level 4 galleries, access to Mint Museum Uptown's atrium and the *Foragers* installation is free.

"This gorgeous work will transform Mint Museum Uptown's atrium space with color and light, making it a must-see destination in Charlotte," says Todd A. Herman, Ph.D., President and CEO of The Mint Museum.

Summer Wheat's installation was commissioned by The Mint Museum. The installation and purchase of *Foragers* was funded by the Wells Fargo Foundation Women Artists Fund, which aims to address and rebalance gender representation in museum collections.

"The Wells Fargo Foundation Women Artists Fund is designed to address and help reconcile the imbalance of female representation in museum collections," says Jay Everette, Wells Fargo's senior vice president of philanthropy and corporate social responsibility. "Just 11 percent of all acquisitions and 14 percent of exhibitions at 26 prominent American museums over the past decade were of work by female artists. According to a joint investigation by *In Other Words* and *artnet News*, a total of 260,470 works have entered museums' permanent collections since 2008. Only 29,247 were by women."

Foragers celebrates North Carolina's creativity and industry—those named and anonymous.

"*Foragers* presents a tradition in which women were the original hunters, technologists, and artists," says Wheat. "This array of women connected by geometric patterns echoes the psychological space of women supporting each other. They are marching together connecting to creatures from land and water, demonstrating their inherent link to natural elements and to the intricate depths of the unconscious."

Mint Museum Uptown
at Levine Center for the Arts
500 South Tryon Street
Charlotte, NC 28202

Mint Museum Randolph
2730 Randolph Road
Charlotte, NC 28207

704.337.2000
mintmuseum.org



IMAGE: Summer Wheat. *Foragers* (rendering), 2020, colored Mylar film, clear polyester film, black block-out film. Digital visualization courtesy Summer Wheat Studio. Commissioned for The Mint Museum and generously presented by Wells Fargo Foundation Women Artists Fund.



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The Mint Museum

Established in 1936 as North Carolina's first art museum, [The Mint Museum](#) is a leading, innovative cultural institution and museum of international art and design. With two locations—Mint Museum Randolph in the heart of Eastover and Mint Museum Uptown at Levine Center for the Arts on South Tryon Street—the Mint boasts one of the largest collections in the Southeast and is committed to engaging and inspiring members of the global community.

Summer Wheat

Contemporary artist Summer Wheat (b. 1977, Oklahoma City, Okla.) lives and works in Brooklyn, New York City. She received a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Central Oklahoma and a Master of Fine Arts from Savannah College of Art and Design. She is known for being an innovator, constantly blurring boundaries between traditional art forms and mediums. Consider the way she pushes acrylic paint through fine wire mesh to create large-scale paintings, like her *With Side, With Shoulder*, part of the Mint's permanent collection and on view in the Mint's new exhibition [New Days, New Works](#).

Wheat has had solo exhibitions with lauded institutions, galleries and museums across the nation, including the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art in Kansas City (2020); KMAC Museum, Louisville (2019); Shulamit Nazarian, Los Angeles (2018); Smack Mellon, New York (2018); Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington, Seattle (2017); and Oklahoma Contemporary, Oklahoma City (2016).

Wheat will also have her first solo exhibition with SOCO Gallery in Charlotte—entitled *Lather, Rinse, Repeat*—September 16 through November 6, 2020. The exhibition will feature five large-scale paintings and two “pebble seats” focusing on the theme of bathing and grooming. The theme, drawn on throughout art history, frequently depicts idyllic figures and scenery, but in Wheat's work, the women portrayed are imperfect and defy traditional notions of beauty. Wheat will have a solo exhibition with Shulamit Nazarian, Los Angeles in 2021.

Additional museum exhibitions include Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (2013–14); deCordova Museum and Sculpture Park (2013); and Torrance Art Museum (2013). Wheat received the 2016 New York NADA Artadia Award and the 2019 Northern Trust Purchase Prize at EXPO Chicago. Wheat's work is in the permanent collections of the Dallas Museum of Art, Texas; de Young Museum, San Francisco, CA; Pérez Art Museum Miami; The Henry Art Gallery at the University of Washington, Seattle; The Mint Museum, Charlotte, NC and the Speed Art Museum in Louisville, Kentucky.

Contact: Michele Huggins, Communications and Media Relations Project Manager
michele.huggins@mintmuseum.org, 704-564-0826

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