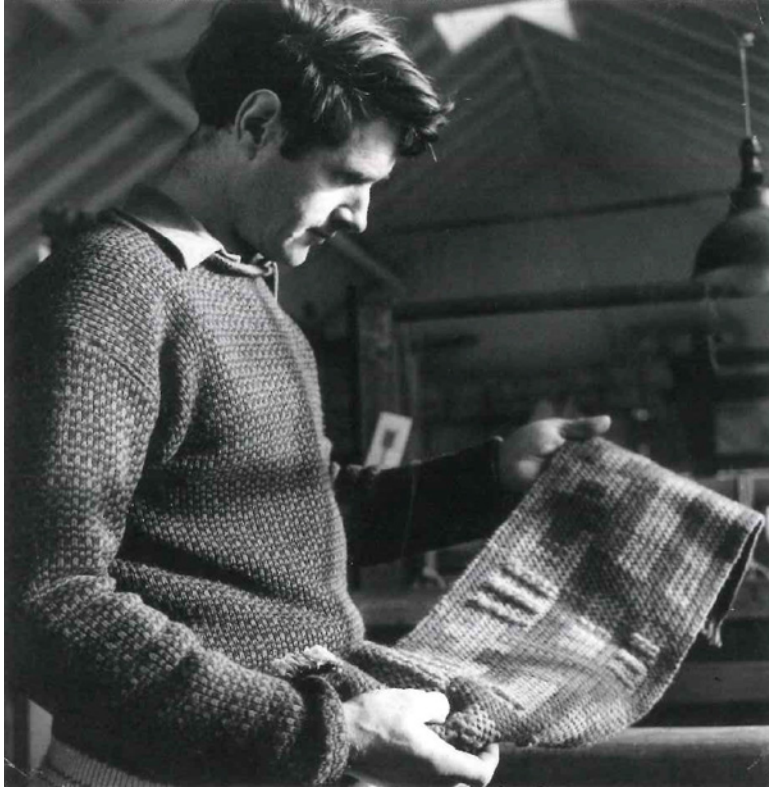


ROSE UNIACKE

PETER COLLINGWOOD



ABOVE: PETER COLLINGWOOD IN HIS WORKSHOP WITH SAMPLE COMMISSIONED FOR THE COUNCIL OF INDUSTRIAL DESIGN. IMAGE COURTESY OF: THE JOURNAL, FOR WEAVERS, SPINNERS AND DYERS.

## PETER COLLINGWOOD (1922 - 2008)

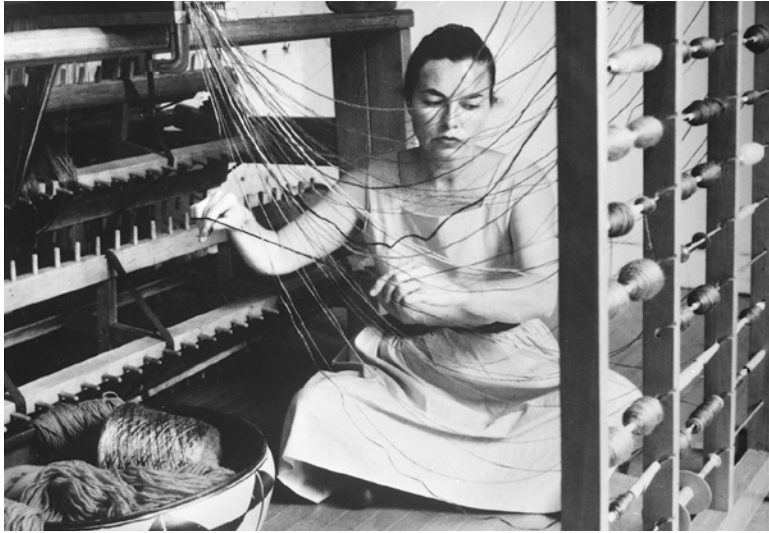
Collingwood's place as 'artist-craftsman' has always been outside the 'art world,' yet to have been - alongside Hans Coper - the first living British artist to exhibit at the Victoria & Albert Museum in 1969, would bring expectations of worldwide renown.

I write, of course, as a commercial gallery, the very same type of operation that John Pope-Hennessy (Director of the Victoria & Albert Museum) mentioned in the forward of the Coper / Collingwood catalogue that accompanied the aforementioned exhibition:

*"It has long been clear that artist-craftsmen in Britain are suffering both from the indifference of commercial galleries to their relatively low-priced wares and from the absence of exhibition facilities in the larger museums..."*

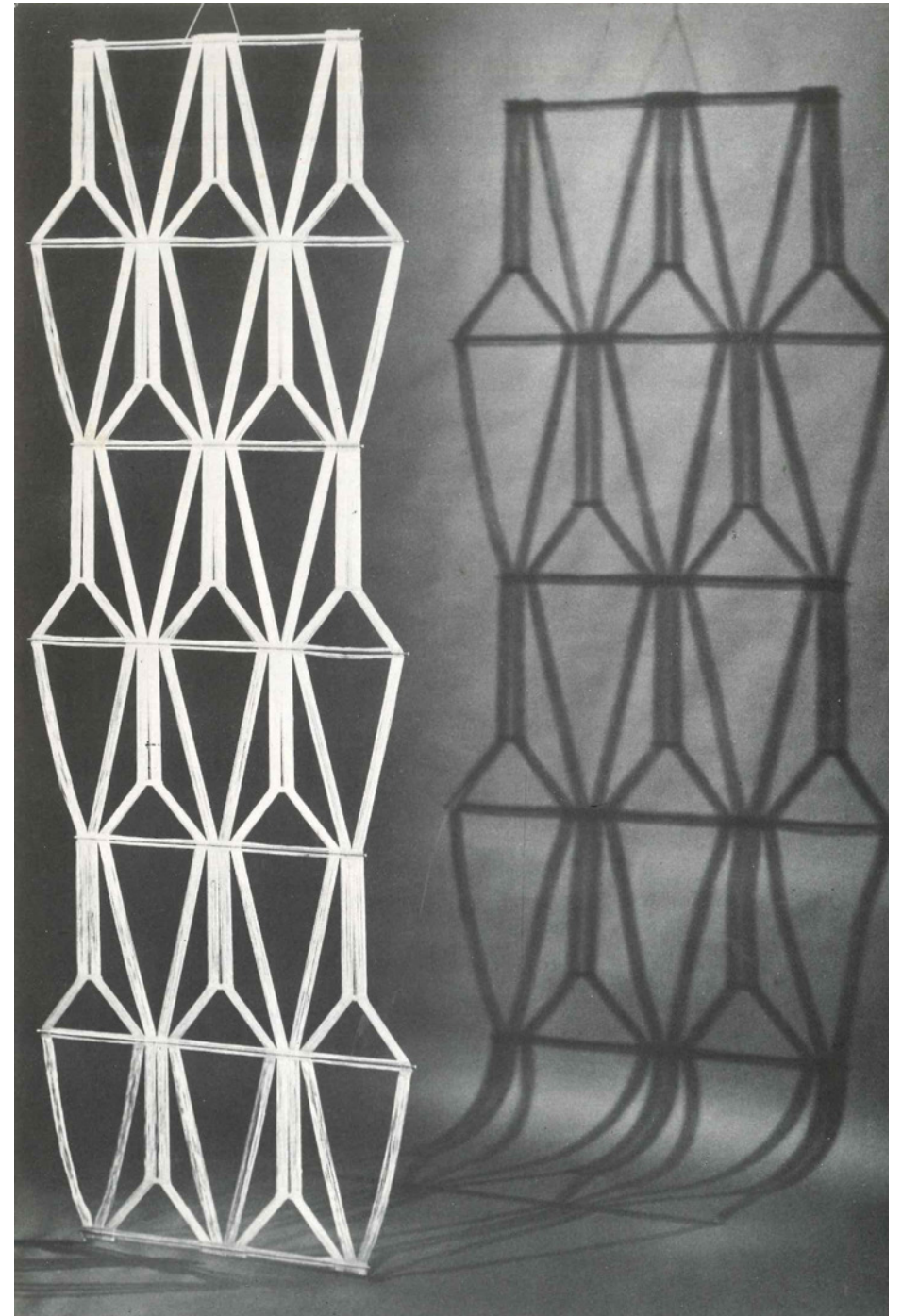
That said Collingwood went on to exhibit widely and internationally. His work is found in museum collections across the world; the Cooper Hewitt, for example, commissioned a monochrome macrogauze in 1973 while the V&A hold a small collection of early samples and a Macrogauze from the eponymous 1969 exhibition.

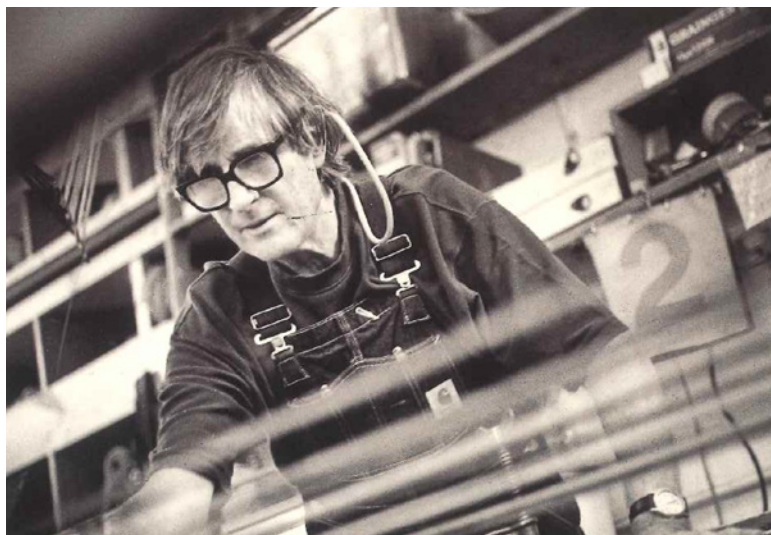




LENORE TAWNEY AT WORK IN  
HER NEW YORK STUDIO, 1958  
IMAGE COURTESY OF CRAFTS COUNCIL

He first travelled to the USA in 1962 / 1963, on a teaching and lecture tour; this continued throughout his career extending both his influence on weaving in the later half of the twentieth century and ensuring financial survival. This first visit was instrumental in the creation of the first Macrogauze weaving. I have been unable to hear Tanya Harrod's interview with Collingwood (1) but her publication for the Yale University Press suggests that his first 3D piece, using the sprang technique, was a result of seeing Lenore Tawney's (1907 - 2007) 'The Flame'. Tawney, an influential American fibre artist, had studied with László Moholy-Nagy and Alexander Archipenko before being associated with a number of Minimalist and Abstract artists in 1950's New York. Collingwood's work was more technically driven, the result of 10 years 'apprenticeship' in commercially driven environments and whilst he never considered himself an artist (2) he clearly had an informed eye.





PETER COLLINGWOOD  
AT WORK ON THE LOOM  
IMAGE COURTESY OF FIRSTSITE

The description in Tanya Harrod's book is slightly at odds with Linda Theophilus' interview (3) a year earlier but a combined reading of the two makes it clear that Collingwood had matured technically and artistically since taking up weaving in earnest under Ethel Mairet in 1950. His understanding of the loom, its perceived limitations and how to circumvent them had developed into the Macrogauche:

*"These were quick to weave and generated an ongoing series, which held the attention because of the tension between the ambiguity of their structure and Collingwood's logical use of mathematical sequences."* Tanya Harrod.

PREVIOUS PAGE (RIGHT)  
PETER COLLINGWOOD MACROGAUCHE 22, 1968  
IMAGE FROM V&A CATALOGUE COLLINGWOOD / COPER

(1) THE CRAFTS IN BRITAIN IN THE 20TH CENTURY; YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1999. INTERVIEW 1ST FEB. 1991 FOR 'SOURCES OF INSPIRATION - CRAFTS'

(2) PETER COLLINGWOOD - MASTER WEAVER: 'DID YOU THINK OF YOURSELF AS AN ARTIST? NO NEVER. I REMEMBER INVITING PEOPLE TO COFFEE - HANS COPER AND KEITH NEW - AND THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT BRATBY, THEY ALL HAD OPINIONS ABOUT HIM. I JUST HAD TO BLUFF...'

(3) PETER COLLINGWOOD - MASTER WEAVER; FIRSTSITE AND CRAFTS COUNCIL, 1997.

## MACROGAUZES, AN EXTRACT FROM LINDA THEOPHILUS IN CONVERSATION WITH PETER COLLINGWOOD, 1997

*"It is the looms precision that I try to use in developing wall-hangings aiming to produce something both controlled and impersonal. This may mean subtracting from the basic structure of the loom in order to give a new facility, as in the Macrogauze technique. That the warp threads run parallel to each other from one end of a textile to the other is part of the definition of weaving, but in Macrogauzes the warp no longer carries this restriction. Strips of warp can therefore move sideways, cross each other, twist, coalesce, separate and even enter and leave the weave in the form of weft. The resulting textile can be close or open, flat or three-dimensional, rectangular or shaped. In all cases the warp is dominant, almost a kind of thread engineering, but this should only be apparent to another weaver."*

**LT:** When you first made Macrogauzes, you worked open sections in solid cloth. Later when you had reduced the weft to a minimum, it seems to me, you were working with space and shadows as well as thread.

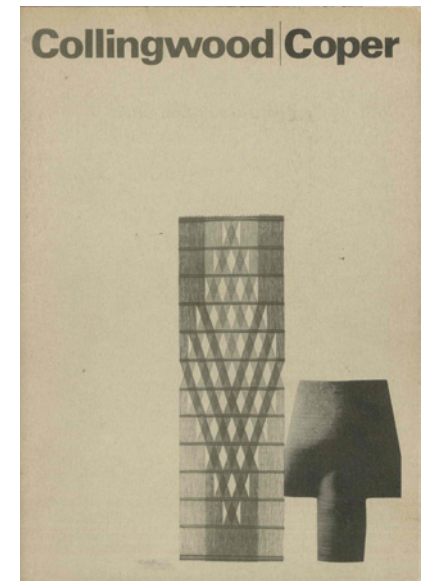
**PC:** I'm not too keen on the shadows - people like to hang them away from the wall, but I like them against the wall, so that they look like drawn lines. Jack Lenor Larsen talked about the masterful use of negative space - I'm not quite sure what he meant.

**LT:** You work a lot in black-and-white.

**PC:** Yes it's because I'm no good with colour - EM told me that you're okay as a weaver, but you're no good at design or colour - but it is also because I like to be able to trace the threads, to see what they are doing, the warp moving about. In the ones I've done in colour you can't see that so clearly. If it was interesting, I might use the technique in a different way, to get different effects. I either do them in all natural or all-black-giving the option. This is also an economic thing - because I have lots of bobbins already wound with black and natural. If someone says, I want that in a red and blue, I would have to wind up 16 bobbins; that would take a lot of time. I have always used linen for macro gauzes because I like the look of linen - by its nature it hangs in a straight line which when the hanging is against the wall gives me the look of the graphic design in black ink, which I like.

**LT:** It's interesting to hear you talk about the very graphic quality...

**PC:** With macrogauzes you were being two completely different people - when you are working out a design on paper, you are using your aesthetic sense, sense of proportion and so on. When you were making it, you're like an engineer - you have to be absolutely sure that the tension is correct - threads moving it more of an angle will be looser when you take them off the loom, see you must put a higher weight on the slanting threads than on the street threads. So after acting as an artist designing the drawing, you become a technician to make it as perfect as possible.



RIGHT: (ABOVE) EXHIBITION CATALOGUE COLLINGWOOD/  
COPER, VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM, 1969

RIGHT: (BELOW) COLLINGWOOD / COPER. VICTORIA &  
ALBERT MUSEUM, JANUARY – MARCH 1969. IMAGE COURTESY  
KEITH SMITH, FLICKR





## EDUCATION

1942-46 St Mary's Hospital Medical School  
1938-42 Epsom College

## AWARDS

1994 Annual Medal, Society of Designer Craftsmen  
1989 Annual medal and Prize, Worshipful  
company of weavers.  
1974 OBE  
1963 Gold Medal, Munich International  
Handicrafts Exhibition

## SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

2009 Peter Collingwood / Hans Coper,  
Galerie Besson, London  
2004 Beyond Tradition, Contemporary  
Ply-Splitting Fiber Sculptures, Portland USA  
2002 Small Works in Fiber, NY, Chicago & Tokyo  
2001 From across the Pond, Browngrotta  
Arts, USA  
1999 UN (Limited), Crafts Council Gallery  
1988 Master Weaver, Retrospective exhibition,  
Colchester, Warwick, Bath, USA, Sweden  
1997 First Choice, Devon, UK  
1995 A Connoisseur's Choice, Glasgow  
1993 Contemporary English Crafts,  
Washington, USA  
1988 Contemporary British Crafts, Kyoto/Tokyo

## COMMISSIONS

1999 Textile used as design on stamp (2nd class)  
1997 Macrogauze triptych, for University Of East  
Anglia, Colchester  
1997 Steelweave, 3D Macrogauze in stainless steel  
yarn. Centre for Performing Arts, Kiryu, Japan  
1993 3D Macrogauze for Wellesley Office Park,  
Mass, USA

## PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

1984 Macrogauze, Mcdonald Art Gallery,  
Christchurch, NZ  
1975 Hangings, Cooper Hewitt Museum, NY, USA  
1975 Rugs & Hangings Copenhagen  
Kunstindustrimuseums, Denmark.  
1975 Rugs & Hangings Oslo  
Kunstindustrimuseums, Norway  
1974 Rug, Philadelphia Museum of Art, USA

## 3D MACROGAUZE WALL HANGING BY PETER COLLINGWOOD

MACROGAUZE - M. 3D NO.6/3

DESIGNED AND WOVEN BY PETER  
COLLINGWOOD (1922 - 2008)

PROVENANCE: COMMISSIONED DIRECTLY  
FROM PETER COLLINGWOOD IN 1989

### DIMENSIONS:

H: 300cm

W: 94cm

£21,000

A slightly later version of Model 3D was sold at Phillips in 2009; this offered version was in a red dyed linen and numbered 6. The original design was conceived in the early Seventies and examples are held in the Reading Museum collection (1973) and the Shipley Art Gallery, Tyne & Wear (1978).

Interestingly the linen used in the offered example, clearly having been hung since its weaving in 1989, has taken on a warmer patination to that in the Shipley Collection (see link):

<http://collectionssearchtwmuseums.org.uk/#details=ecatalogue.287162>





'MACROGAUZE' WALL HANGING BY  
PETER COLLINGWOOD

MACROGAUZE - M184 NO.9

DESIGNED AND WOVEN BY PETER  
COLLINGWOOD (1922 - 2008)

NATURAL LINEN WITH STEEL ROD

PROVENANCE: PRIVATE COLLECTION  
WILTSHIRE, ORIGINALLY PURCHASED FROM  
PRIMAVERA GALLERY, CAMBRIDGE

DIMENSIONS:

H: 107cm

W: 53cm

£14,000



## 'MACROGAUZE' WALL HANGING BY PETER COLLINGWOOD

AN EARLY BLACK AND CREAM LINEN  
MACROGAUZE HANGING, WOVEN THREADS  
AND STEEL RODS, MADE C.1965

### DIMENSIONS:

H: 133.5cm

W: 42cm

£18,000

This macrogauze does not bear the artist's usual steel label but it has been verified by the Collingwood family literature: for a similar example see Collingwood/Coper (London: V&A, 1969), no. 10.

<https://vads.ac.uk/large.php?uid=59356&sos=0>



'MACROGAUZE' WALL HANGING BY  
PETER COLLINGWOOD

MACROGAUZE - M.141, No.11

DESIGNED AND WOVEN BY PETER  
COLLINGWOOD (1922 - 2008)

BLACK AND NATURAL LINEN  
WITH METAL RODS

SIGNED STAMP TO LOWER ROD

DIMENSIONS:

H: 99.5cm

W: 61cm

£10,000





'MACROGAUZE' WALL HANGING BY  
PETER COLLINGWOOD

MACROGAUZE - M84 NO.24. CIRCA 1970 - 1975

CROSSED AND TWISTED WARPS; WARP: BLACK  
AND NATURAL LINEN; WEFT: NATURAL LINEN.  
STEEL ROD

DIMENSIONS:

H: 178cm

W: 22cm

£12,000

The same design, though a metre longer, was exhibited at the Minories Art Gallery, Colchester in 1998 (Fig 26 - 3.19); illustrated on page 46. 'Peter Collingwood - Master Weaver' exhibit list states:

*"This is a very popular design and has been repeated over 230 times."*





'MACROGAUZE' WALL HANGING BY  
PETER COLLINGWOOD

MACROGAUZE - M.216 NO.6

DESIGNED AND WOVEN BY PETER  
COLLINGWOOD (1922 - 2008)

BLACK AND NATURAL LINEN  
WITH METAL RODS

PROVENANCE: PRIVATE COLLECTION  
WILTSHIRE, ORIGINALLY PURCHASED FROM  
PRIMAVERA GALLERY, CAMBRIDGE

DIMENSIONS:

H: 89cm

W: 43.5cm

£14,000



MACROGAUZE WALL HANGING BY  
PETER COLLINGWOOD

MACROGAUZE - M22 NO.6

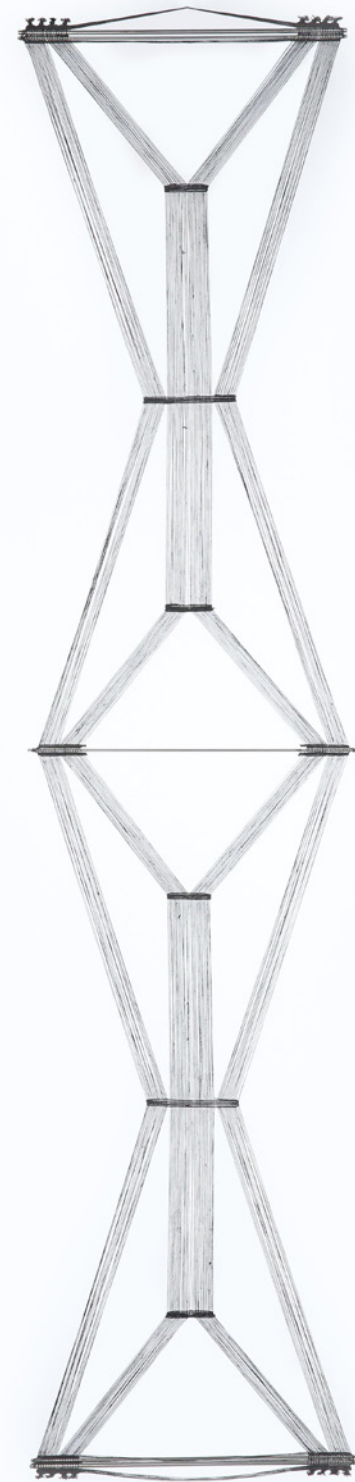
BLACK LINEN WITH STEEL ROD

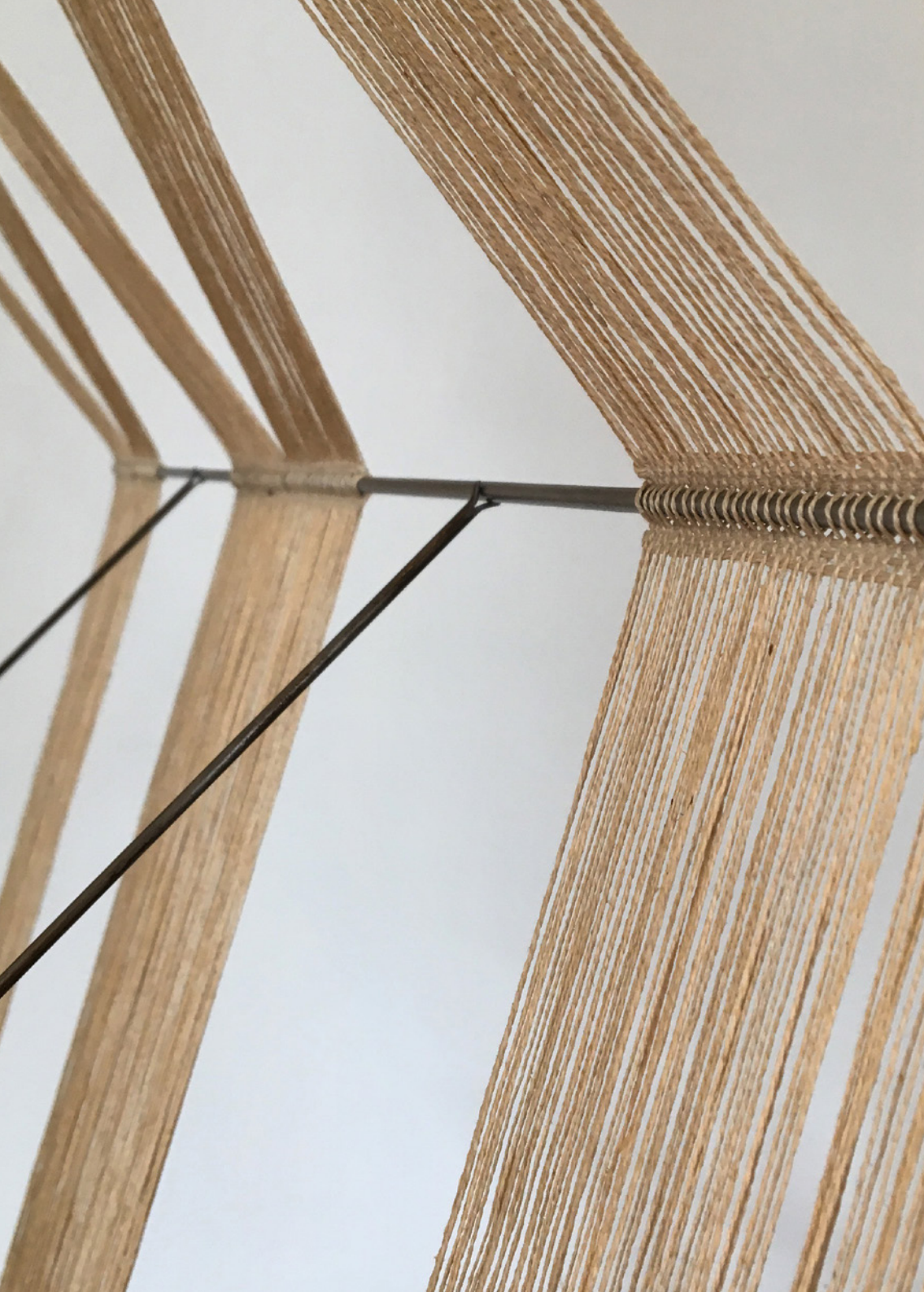
DIMENSIONS:

H: 163cm

W: 37.5cm

£14,000





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