Arturo Alonzo Sandoval

What distinguishes me from other artists working in fiber is my choice to mainly explore and recycle twentieth century industrial materials that have been primarily designed as tapes or films. Incorporating them into woven or interlaced webs provides for me permutations for my design concepts which are personalized into a visual vocabulary of the sky, water, landscape; and more recently, issues related to international and domestic politics, terrorism, the total nuclear threat, the cosmic realms, and personal spiritual beliefs.

My initial experiences with weaving systems came in college studio courses at the graduate level. Technique was the major focus of research and was expressed by the construction of a sampler of patterned fabrics feeling no spiritual contact with the medium until I began pursuing more personal ideas, surfaces and forms. The work that resulted convinced me that weaving would add an element of expression to my ideas and would become very important to my development as a visual artist. Throughout my early efforts to learn more concerning the fiber arts as a new movement in the fine arts, and achieving my M.A. and M.F.A. degrees, I continued to employ the floor loom for construction of art fabrics for my three dimensional forms. Researching biologically related forms and folklore ritual forms I produced sculpture related to that imagery. Some early creations were recycled in an effort to push further the relationship of my ideas as they were being formed. ??Some ideas from my graduate experiences were carried over and developed as I began my career as an educator at the college level. Flamboyant qualities created by using colorful and reflective materials were used in sculptures representing ESCAPE ROUTES composed of ladders ascending into clouds. This desire, to relate the transformations found in the sky, was soon refined an abstracted. A NEA Craftsmen Fellowship funded my first machine-sewn series, SKY GRIDS, from vinyl, polyethylene plastic, millinery veiling, ribbons, braids, threads, and paint. Quilting transparent layers of materials became the dominant technique in which the interior of the quilted fabric units became the major visual aesthetic concern. Strips of photo-screened vinyl were later added and interlacing was now incorporated into the development of my imagery.

In 1974 a major move to the University of Kentucky provided me with a spacious studio, research time and excellent facilities for teaching and developing my artistic expression. As an artist I firmly believe in the philosophy that work produces results. The evolution of my personal style is shaped by my choice of visual elements where growth is enhanced by variation and change. My interest in using recycled and exotic materials as microfilm, Mylar, Lurex, Diffraction Grating and other high tech products, has never swayed and the surfaces created by their layering continues to excite me. My explorations have produced a variety of aesthetic qualities of which reflections emitted from the surface textures of my forms continue to provide a kinetic dimension to my creations. My research in design and content has included pattern in various forms, spatial depth through shape, color and line, monumental scale achieved through modular formats, and by recycling art fabrics which are lightweight, easily installed and transported. Other issues incorporate shape variation from traditional to dynamically more personal forms, combining representation with abstraction, exploring alternative image making processes as collage and photocopy transfers on acetate, paper, and fabric; machine stitching to enhance the design ’s texture, color, or structure. A second NEA Visual Art Fellowship (1992) funded the introduction of kinetic elements using motorized armatures for my art quilts.
Now I look forward to continued years of art making, teaching and sharing my ideas and creations with students, colleagues, other artists and the public.