

# form & concept

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## LISA KLAKULAK: SINCE TAOS

February 22 - April 20, 2019

**Preview Artist Talk:** Friday, February 22, 4-5 pm

**Opening Reception:** Friday, February 22, 5-7 pm

**Workshop:** Feb. 23-24, registration-only

**Who/What:** Lisa Klakulak presents *Since Taos: Contraction of Mass, Concision of Thought*. The solo exhibition of 13 felt-based sculptures was created over a period of nearly two decades, since the freewheeling artist moved away from Taos, New Mexico in 2001. The collection simultaneously acts as a vivid portrait of Klakulak's emotional journey and manifestation of her unique way of processing the world through fiber creations. "Like any piece of art you make, you are releasing an idea into the object," Klakulak says. "It's a completion of a certain cycle, and it's interesting when someone on the other side spins it into their own emotive universe." Klakulak's work voices ideas about growth, human connection, mental stability, and the formation of personhood, as well as social commentary on issues of gender, income inequality, and culture.

**When:** Klakulak will appear at a preview artist talk of *Since Taos: Contraction of Mass, Concision of Thought* on Friday, February 22 from 4 to 5 pm. The opening reception directly follows, from 5 to 7 pm. Klakulak will present a registration-only felting workshop on February 23 and 24, 2019. Additional details are below.

**Where:** form & concept, 435 S. Guadalupe St. Santa Fe, NM 87501

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## ACROSS 17 YEARS AND FAR-FLUNG JOURNEYS, ARTIST PROCESSES LIFE THROUGH WOOL AND FELT

*Santa Fe, NM*— "The works are really segmented into these different chapters of my life," Lisa Klakulak says. Her new solo exhibition, *Since Taos: Contraction of Mass, Concision of Thought*, is an autobiography rolled into felt and shaped into 13 affecting sculptures. The collection reflects the artist's life starting in 2001, when she left Taos, NM, to work as a studio assistant for the fiber concentration course at the Penland School of Crafts in Penland, NC, and ending in the present day. "I was so into fiber, because of its comforting and protective qualities, but at the same time it is a medium associated with struggle and women's work," she says. "Then I got into the whole concept of felt, because it's incredibly strong but it presents in this soft,

vulnerable way.” The artist’s mastery of the medium and her emotional language-building express the deeply personal in a way that holds broader relevance to humanity, voicing ideas about growth, human connection and personhood. *Since Taos* opens on Friday, February 22 from 5 to 7 pm and runs through April 20, 2019.

Klakulak thinks of her life since leaving Taos in phases. “They’re all related to these leaps of faith that I have taken.” *Since Taos* represents years of Klakulak’s personal reactions to the world more than it does a commercial enterprise. “I didn’t make this kind of work for sale,” she says. “I didn’t make it often enough to have a large body of work at once to try and show it. It was much more making just for the processing of experiences.”

The series tracks Klakulak’s life and travels, from her time as a studio assistant in North Carolina and an artist-in-residence at the Appalachian Centre for Crafts in Smithville, TN, to her year in Nashville, TN, where she conceived of her wearable artwork label STRONGFELT. The company’s success helped launch Klakulak’s career teaching felting workshops across the US and, eventually, the world. The artist has kayaked among Patagonian glaciers and hiked Hawaiian lava fields, inspiring a series of wearable artworks that appear in the form & concept shop under the STRONGFELT label. Conversely, the sculptural work in *Since Taos* originates from internal journeys.

“I want to think about, or articulate what I’m thinking about, in a manner that I can translate into a physical form,” Klakulak says. Her sculptural work speaks an emotional language that is at once personal and broadly relatable. In *Need to Nurture* (2002), three bird’s nests protruding from a wall mount express both Klakulak’s desire to nurture her growing interest with the wool medium and humanity’s need to strive toward a more equitable distribution of wealth. The birds cry for food even as they are surrounded by a bright nest stained red by insect-sourced cochineal dye.

In *Foundation* (2012), a neatly curving felt spine, Klakulak questions perceptions of strength and vulnerability. “Really, the most thin and seemingly delicate felt is actually the strongest, when well felted or fulled because it started out with the most airspace, so it had more room to shrink and integrate.” The arc of Klakulak’s life also traces an elegant but curving path, which most recently landed her in Nova Scotia to complete a Master of Fine Arts Degree focusing on sculpture at the Nova Scotia College of Art & Design. She’s headed back to New Mexico for her opening and artist talk, and to teach a registration-only felting workshop among the artworks of *Since Taos*.

From the dye to the wool, Klakulak imbues her materials with symbolic meaning. “I’ve never considered myself multimedia, because I’m not really manipulating the other media. It’s more found object inclusion,” she says. “As I realized the conceptual relevance of working with wool, I started to pull in different materials because of their conceptual relevance, whether that was door screen, or seeds and husks, or soap cages.”

## **Workshop**

*Felt Form: Sculpting by way of Shrinkage*

February 23-24, 2019

Workshop Hours: 9 am - 4 pm, with a one-hour lunch break

10 participants maximum

\$300 workshop fee / \$15 material fee

In conjunction with the exhibition *Since Taos*, featuring a collection of felt-based work created between 2001 and the present day, Lisa Klakulak will offer a 2-day course focusing on wet felting techniques to develop three-dimensional forms. Participants will explore the use of resists to build hollow forms while the placement of different weights of wool within the layout preparation determine the concave and convex areas of the form, a method Klakulak terms “extreme differential shrinkage.” Working with a limited palette of wool, the emphasis will be on exploring a plethora of small-scale forms, the relationship of pressure and directional agitation to the felting process, and—of course—enjoying the feel of this humble material.

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