

Museum of Wisconsin Art

[Wence and Sandra Martinez: Woven Together](#)
[Traditional Textiles Meet Modern Design](#)



August 6 - November 6, 2016
August 6, Saturday Opening Reception 2-5pm
West Bend, WI

Born in Teotitlán del Valle, Oaxaca, Mexico, a village famous for its woven rugs and tapestries, Wence Martinez learned the family textile trade as a young boy. He started weaving at the age of nine and four years later attended the Taller Nacional de Tapiz (National School of Tapestry) in Mexico City on a full scholarship. In 1988, Wisconsin artist Sandra Hackbarth serendipitously commissioned Wence to transform one of her paintings into a tapestry. Thus began a personal and artist relationship that has endured to this day.

Working both individually and collaboratively, like the threads of Wence's tapestries, they seamlessly weave in and out of each other's artistic process. In his own pieces, Wence tends toward geometric abstraction with mid-century and Bauhaus influences. Sandra's paintings, done in acrylic paint and sumi ink on paper, feature graphic, primitive designs that represent or suggest simplified human, plant, and shelter forms. For their joint works, Wence translates his wife's images into objects that marry the decorative and the functional.

Wence considers himself a steward to his village's legacy. Part of that legacy is the importance that he places on the hand-spun wool he collects from spinners in the mountains of Oaxaca. Wence often leaves the fiber undyed, but when color is needed he creates his own vegetal dyes from lichen, cochineal, indigo and goldenrod.

Wence and Sandra are nationally recognized artists who recently received the Silver Award for overall excellence in the 2016 Smithsonian Craft Show, which is widely regarded as the most esteemed juried exhibition and sale of American fine craft.

MOWA will showcase a collection of Wence's rugs alongside Sandra's artwork in the State Gallery.

Opening Party

Saturday, August 6 | 2:00–5:00

The Woven Together Opening Party will be held in conjunction with an [Art on Tap](#) Beer Tasting. Experience Wence and Sandra's work, sample unique Wisconsin craft beer, and enjoy live music. Openings are always free to MOWA members. For information on tasting tickets visit wisconsinart.org/artontaptastings.

Meet the Artists

Thursday, October 20 | 6:30

Join Wence and Sandra as they discuss their partnership, process and expansion with the Legacy Project.

