

AUDE FRANJOU

Aude Franjou is a sculptor. Her medium is linen and hemp. With it she creates strange organic formations that look as though they can continue growing without her. Franjou attributes her attraction to twisting, tree-like structures to a childhood spent close to a forest.

Having trained in tapestry at Duperré in Paris, Aude Franjou soon realised her true vocation lay in sculpture. "Gradually the need to create in large volume became necessary to me as breathing," she explains. "From tapestry-making I retained only the medium – thread – and most importantly the gesture."

Franjou pushed this gesture to extremes, creating large pieces by entwining coarse hemp and linen fibres with linen thread. She sealed her reputation with *Les pétales du désert*, a monumental labyrinth made of 21 giant linen and hemp rose petals for the Chaumont Garden Festival in 2002. "These are sculptures to touch," Franjou adds. "You have to feel them, sense the knots, the crevices and the veins."

She has also worked on architectural projects. Her recent installation *Brises soleil*, in collaboration with Maltese architect AP, is a series of tree-like outdoor structures, helping to link a contemporary kitchen extension to a traditional Maltese house and garden. "The idea was for the sculptures to take possession of the metal framework like climbing plants."



Above: *Les pétales du désert*, 21 giant linen and hemp rose petals for the Chaumont Garden Festival, Aude Franjou, 2002

ARZU FIRUZ

In an aspirational universe of handmade vegetable-dyed carpets, a mass-produced vinyl mat sounds fairly unimpressive. Yet the floor coverings of young Paris-based Arzu Firuz have an elegance and wit that turn notions of traditional artisanship and mass production on their heads. Her laser-cut range of *Tapis Vinyl*, manufactured by French floorcovering company Polystyl and available in a variety of patterns, sizes and shapes, was inspired by Moroccan *zelliges* (patterned tiles) and antique carpets. "I wanted to reinterpret the traditional carpet and my aim was to create a carpet that was radically different," she explains.

Firuz's approach reflects her multicultural childhood in Istanbul, the child of a Turkish father and a Panamanian mother. "My main influence is oriental artisanship. Being far from my native country allows me to appreciate its culture from a novel point of view. It's a bit like finding my roots". She adds, "I take as my departure historical and traditional references which I marry with modern and ordinary materials. My materials aren't generally noble materials but I breathe new life into them."

Although she only graduated in 2006, Firuz has rapidly gained recognition. At the January 2007 'Maison et Objet' she was selected as one of six up-and-coming designers to watch. Her wide range of work displays the same quirky blend of traditional and high-tech. www.arzu-firuz.com

Above: *Rosace* carpets from the *Tapis Vinyl* Collection, in various sizes and designs, Arzu Firuz

