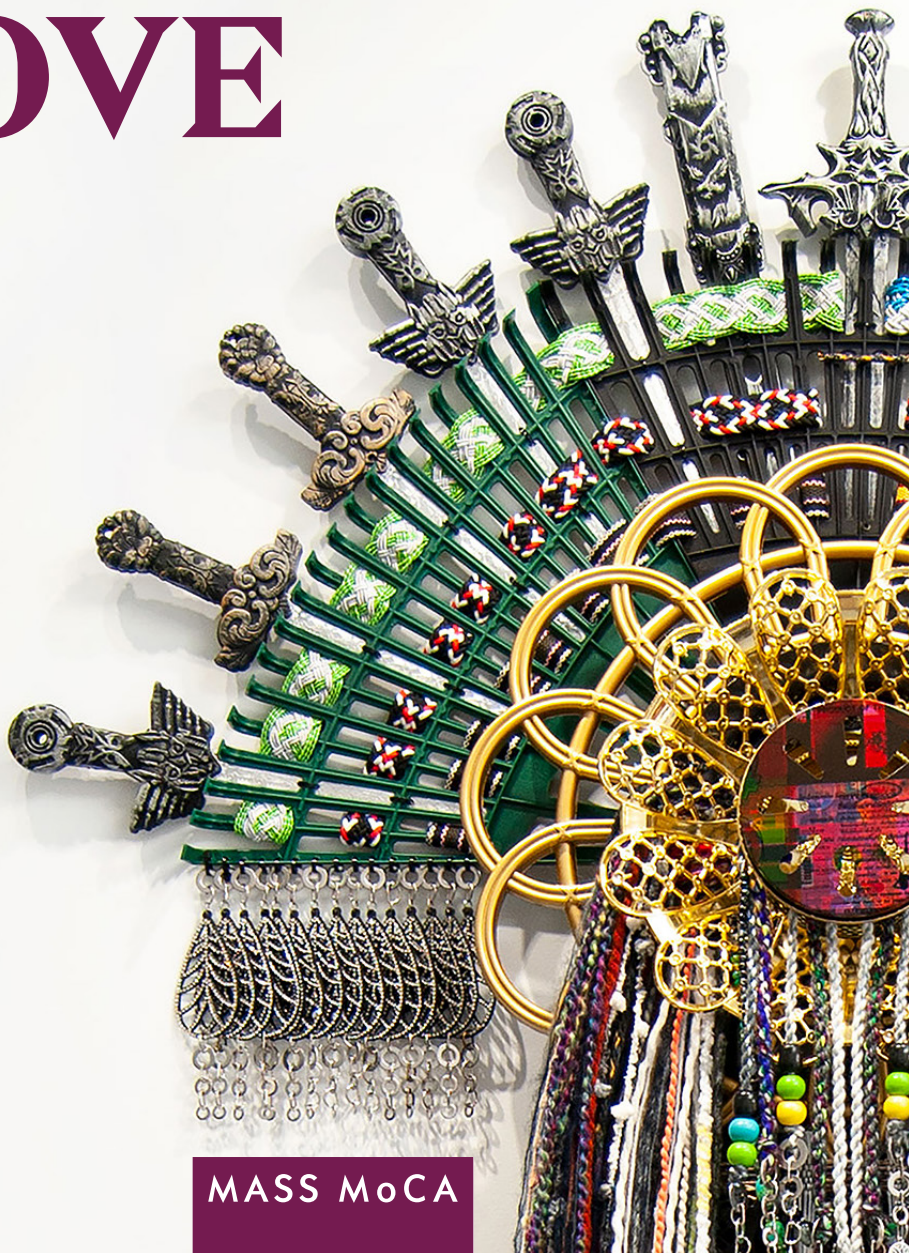


ANNE SAMAT LOVE



MASS MoCA

Overview

“To truly love we must learn to mix various ingredients—care, affection, recognition, respect, commitment, and trust, as well as honest and open communication.”

—bell hooks

Anne Samat’s weavings come from her personal experiences—with family and strangers alike—concerning love and gratitude. Utilizing traditional Southeast Asian techniques called Pua Kumbu, from her native Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Samat weaves together humble household goods from 99 cent stores and thrift shops to create large-scale shrine-like works. All of the pieces on view here, which are brightly colored, heavily adorned, and detailed, also serve as avatars of specific family members or friends in Samat’s life. For the artist, this homage is a way of manifesting her feelings of love towards those she holds dear.

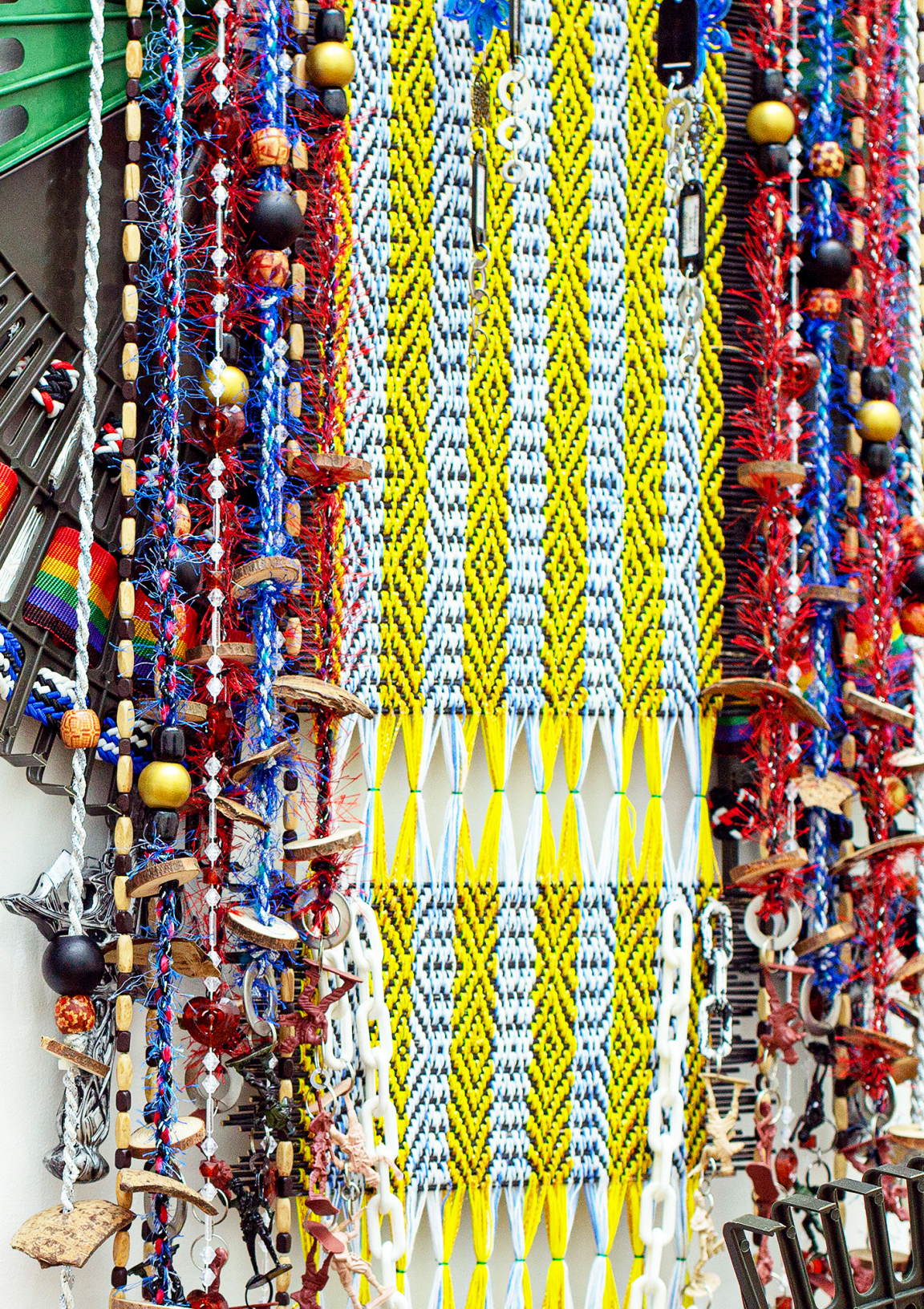
The traditional art of Pua Kumbu was developed over many generations by the Iban, the indigenous peoples of Borneo in Southeast Asia, an area that is politically divided among three countries: Malaysia and Brunei in the north, and Indonesia in the south. Pua Kumbu is a patterned multicolored ceremonial cotton cloth, which is woven using dyed cotton fiber on a portable backstrap loom. Key to this technique is that patterns are not planned out in advance; rather, sacred dreams tell the weavers which motifs, colors, and symbols to materialize. Samat has been trained in this tradition, and the messages she receives are expressions of love.

With this exhibition, and the labor that goes into the weaving process, Samat reminds us that love takes labor; she asks us to consider what it feels like to be loved, how we express these feelings towards others and ourselves.

Anne Samat, *No Place for Beginners or Sensitive Heart #1 (detail)*, 2021. Rattan sticks, kitchen and garden utensils, beads, ceramic, metal and plastic ornaments. Courtesy of the Artist and MARC STRAUS, New York





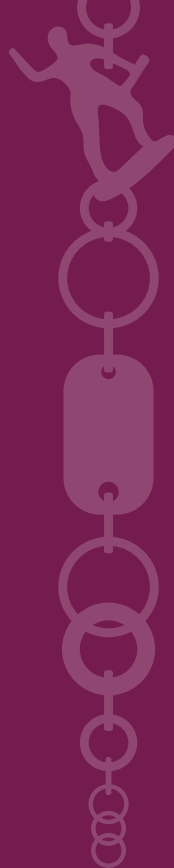


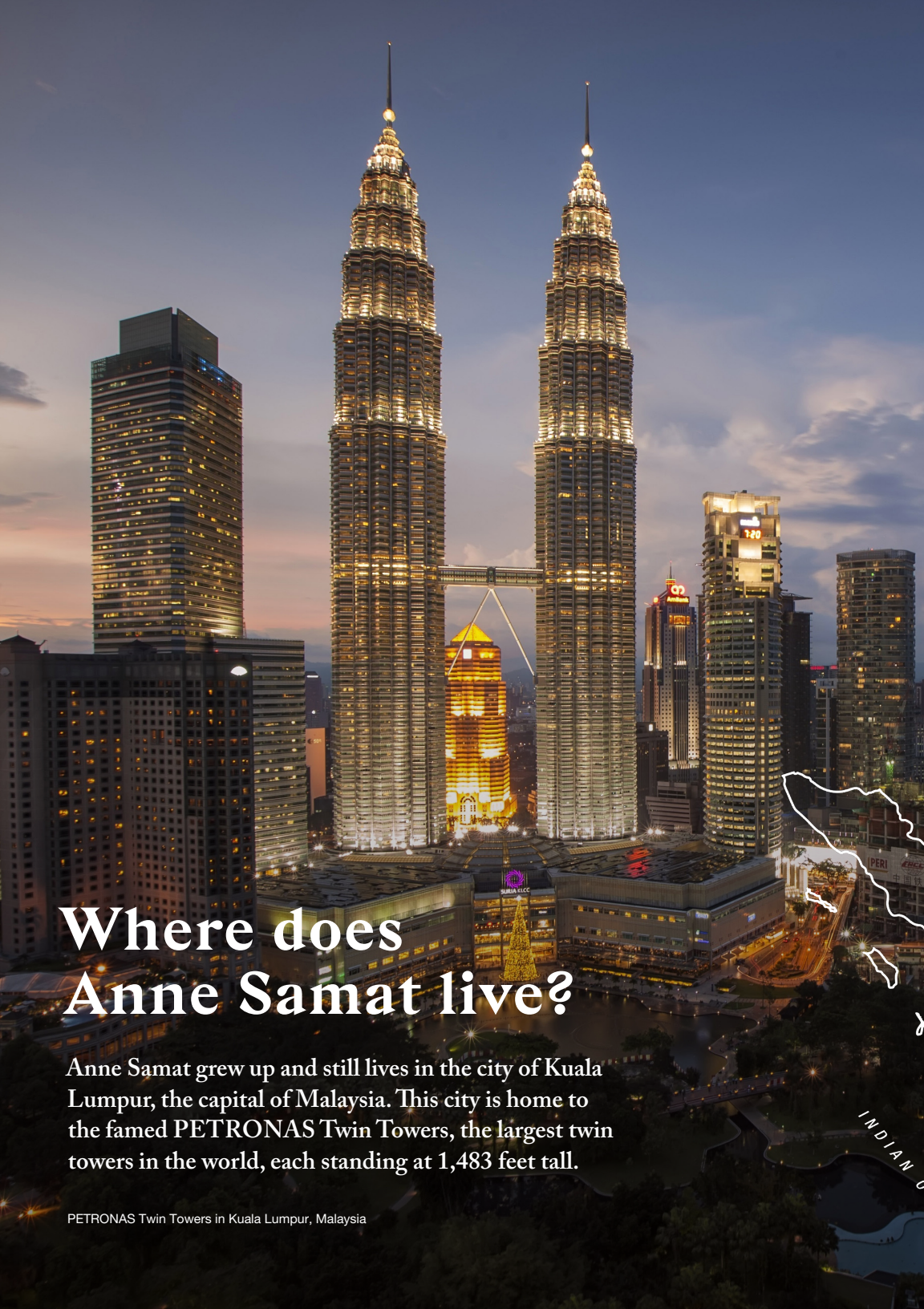
Who is Anne Samat?

Anne Samat (b. 1973, Malaysia) graduated from the Mara Institute of Technology in Malaysia with a bachelor's degree in textile design, with an emphasis on weaving and a minor in "resist print" technique. She has shown extensively in Southeast Asia, most recently in *In Our Veins Flow Ink and Fire*, Kochi-Muziris Biennale, Kerala, India; an exhibition entitled *Stories We Tell To Scare Ourselves With* at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Taiwan (2019), Elevation Laos, Vientiane, Laos, and the Yokohama Triennale in Japan (2017). In 2018 she had an exhibition at Vestfossen Kunslaboratorium in Norway, and in 2019 a residency and museum show at Hudson Valley MOCA in New York. Her work was featured in a major installation at the 2020 Asia Society Triennial in New York City. Samat currently has solo shows in university museums at the University of Wyoming and at Virginia Tech.

LEFT: Anne Samat, *No Place for Beginners or Sensitive Heart #1* (detail), 2021. Rattan sticks, kitchen and garden utensils, beads, ceramic, metal and plastic ornaments. Courtesy of the Artist and MARC STRAUS, New York

BELOW: Anne Samat in her studio. Photo by Maksim Akelin





Where does Anne Samat live?

Anne Samat grew up and still lives in the city of Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Malaysia. This city is home to the famed PETRONAS Twin Towers, the largest twin towers in the world, each standing at 1,483 feet tall.

PETRONAS Twin Towers in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

INDIAN O

Where does the art of Pua Kumbu come from?

The traditional art of Pua Kumbu has been developed over many generations of Iban, the indigenous people of the island of Borneo in Southeast Asia. The island is politically divided among three countries: Malaysia and Brunei in the north, and Indonesia in the south.



What is Pua Kumbu?

Generations of Iban people have developed the craft of Pua Kumbu, which is a patterned multicolored ceremonial cotton cloth. This traditional weaving involves dyeing the cotton fiber to then weave on a portable backstrap loom. The patterns are not planned out in advance; rather, it is believed that the weaver has a sacred dream that tells them the motifs, colors, and symbols to materialize. Anne Samat has been trained in the traditional Pua Kumbu weaving practice. The messages that she receives through the process of weaving are expressions of love.

BELOW: An Iban woman weaving pua kumbu. Photo by Getty Images

RIGHT: Photo by heartpatrick & Richard Koh Fine Art, Kuala Lumpur



A woman with long dark hair, wearing a green top with a circular beaded necklace, is focused on weaving on a wooden loom. The background is filled with colorful threads and fabrics, creating a vibrant and busy atmosphere. The text is overlaid on the lower half of the image.

Why does Anne Samat incorporate modern materials into her woven sculptures?

According to Samat, “It’s beyond the concept of recycled and upcycled. I personally breathe new life into those mundane household items by giving new meanings, form, and function beyond their original purposes.”



No Place for Beginners or Sensitive Heart #2



Inspirational Quote

“How do I love thee? Let me count the ways”

— Elizabeth Barrett Browning



Close-Looking Challenge

Count the different materials included in this sculpture.
Turn to your grown-up or friend and tell them the same number
of ways that you love them.



Mother (weave through eternity) #2



Inspirational Quote

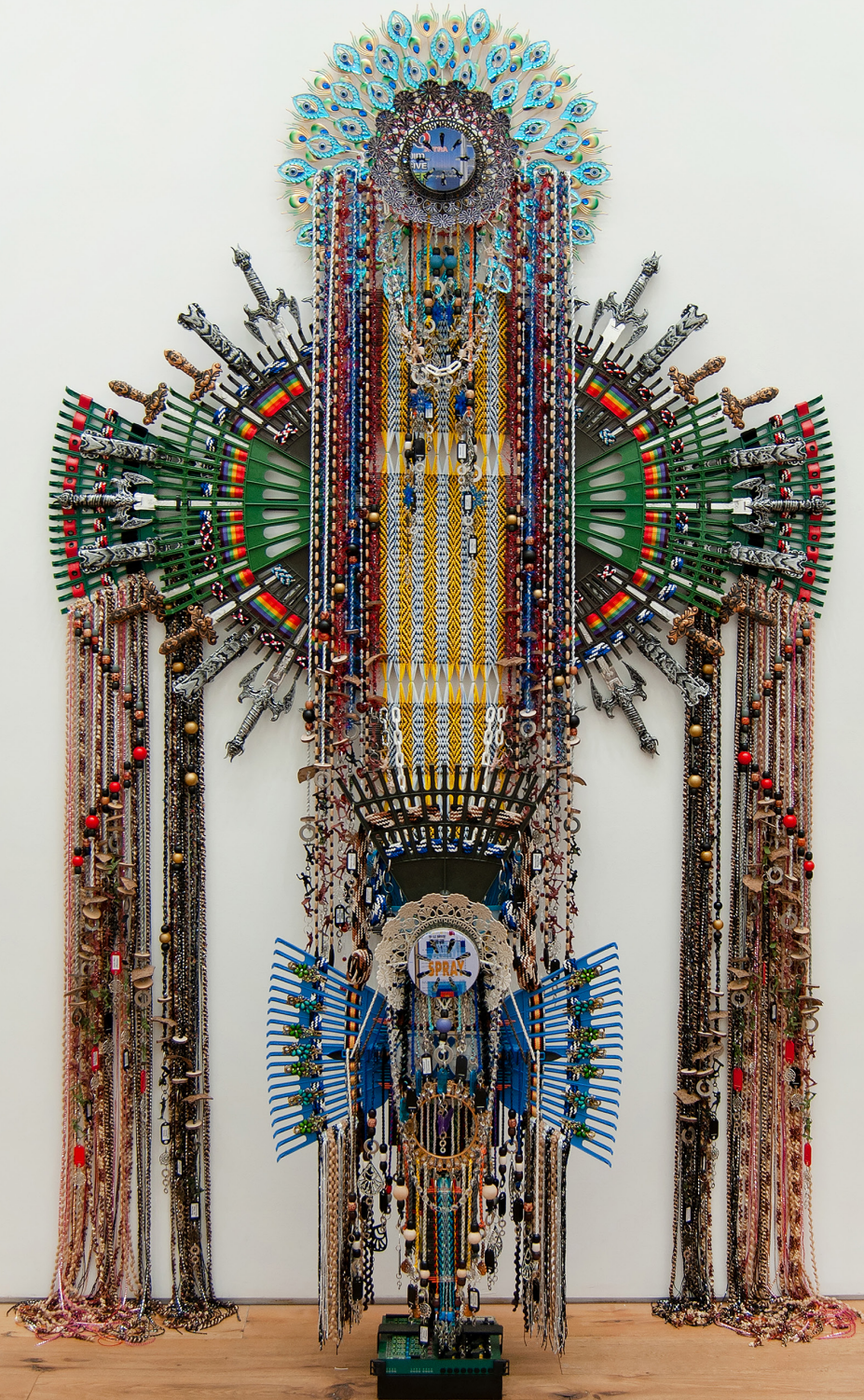
“Everyone longs to be loved. And the greatest thing we can do is to let people know that they are loved and capable of loving.”

— Mister Rogers



Question

This sculpture is Anne Samat’s way of showing that her mother was loved and capable of loving. What objects might you use to represent your appreciation for a friend, pet, grown-up, or yourself?



No Place for Beginners or Sensitive Heart #1



Inspirational Quote

“The more you are motivated by love,
the more fearless and free your action will be.”

— His Holiness, the 14th Dalai Lama



Express Your Love

Face your grown-up or friend with arms outstretched like this sculpture.
Express your love without words and only with caring actions.

Kidspace at MASS MoCA is a free community-centered art gallery and art-making studio presenting exhibitions focused on timely social justice themes. Artists are selected for the educational and artistic merit of their work and their ability to connect to children and adults. Exhibitions have featured renowned artists from around the world, including Wendy Red Star, Wes Bruce, Portia Munson, Willie Birch, Federico Uribe, Tim Rollins and K.O.S., Roger Shimomura, Ran Hwang, Genevieve Gaignard, and Nick Cave. While an emphasis is placed on our partnership with local schools, children, and families, Kidspace is for everyone. Our motto is: Kidspace, it's not just for kids; adults welcome too!

Anne Samat: Love

June 24, 2023–December 2023

Curated by Laura Dickstein Thompson, EdD, Director of Education & Curator of Kidspace, MASS MoCA

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Programming at MASS MoCA is made possible in part by the Barr Foundation, Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, and the Mass Cultural Council.

Front & Back Cover: Anne Samat, *Mother (weave through eternity) #2 (detail)*, 2022. Rattan sticks, kitchen and garden utensils, beads, ceramic, metal and plastic ornaments. 77 × 42 × 5 inches. Courtesy of the Artist and MARC STRAUS, New York

