



ANNETTE CORDS

TAPESTRIES



ANNETTE CORDS

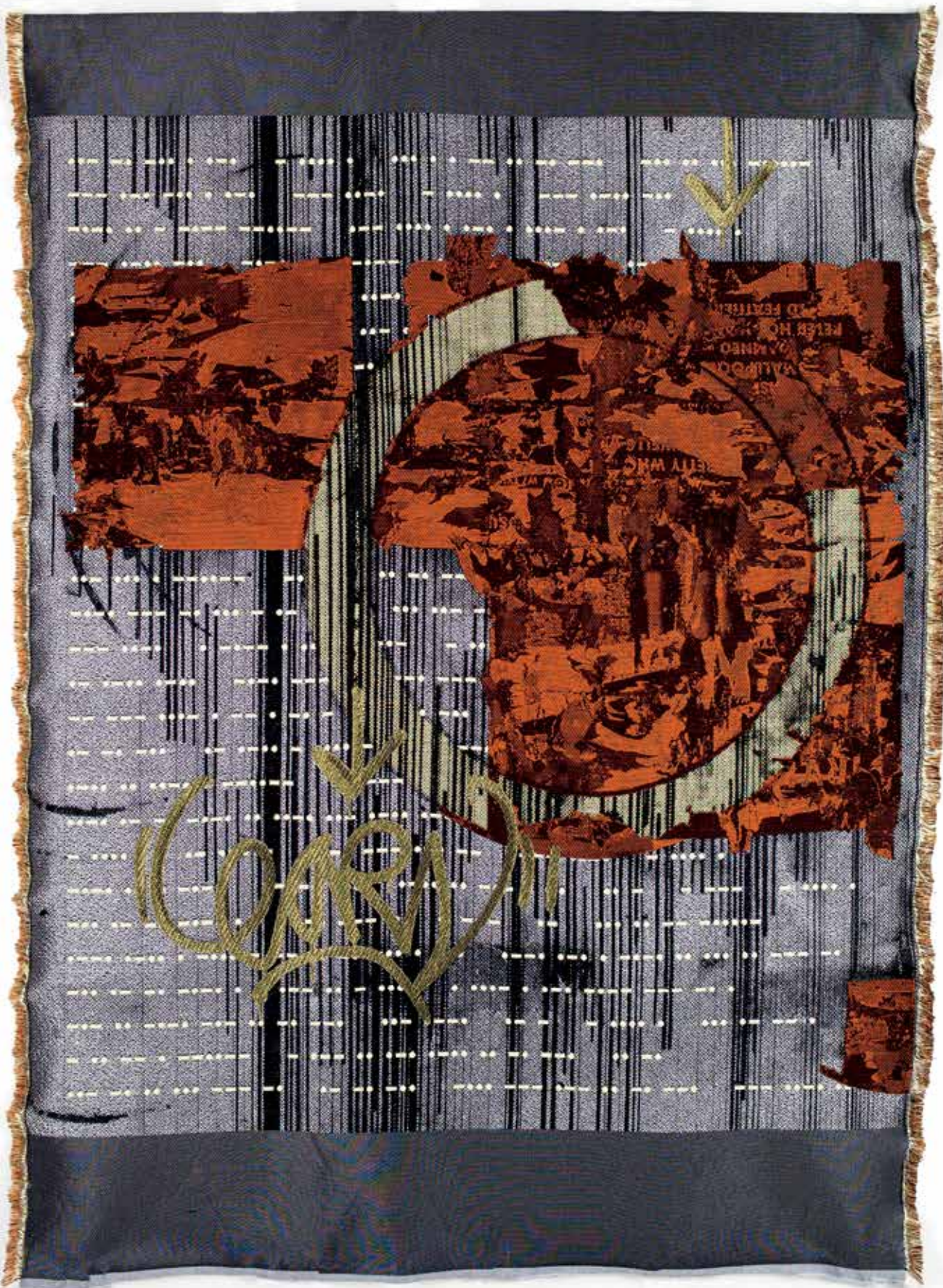
TAPESTRIES

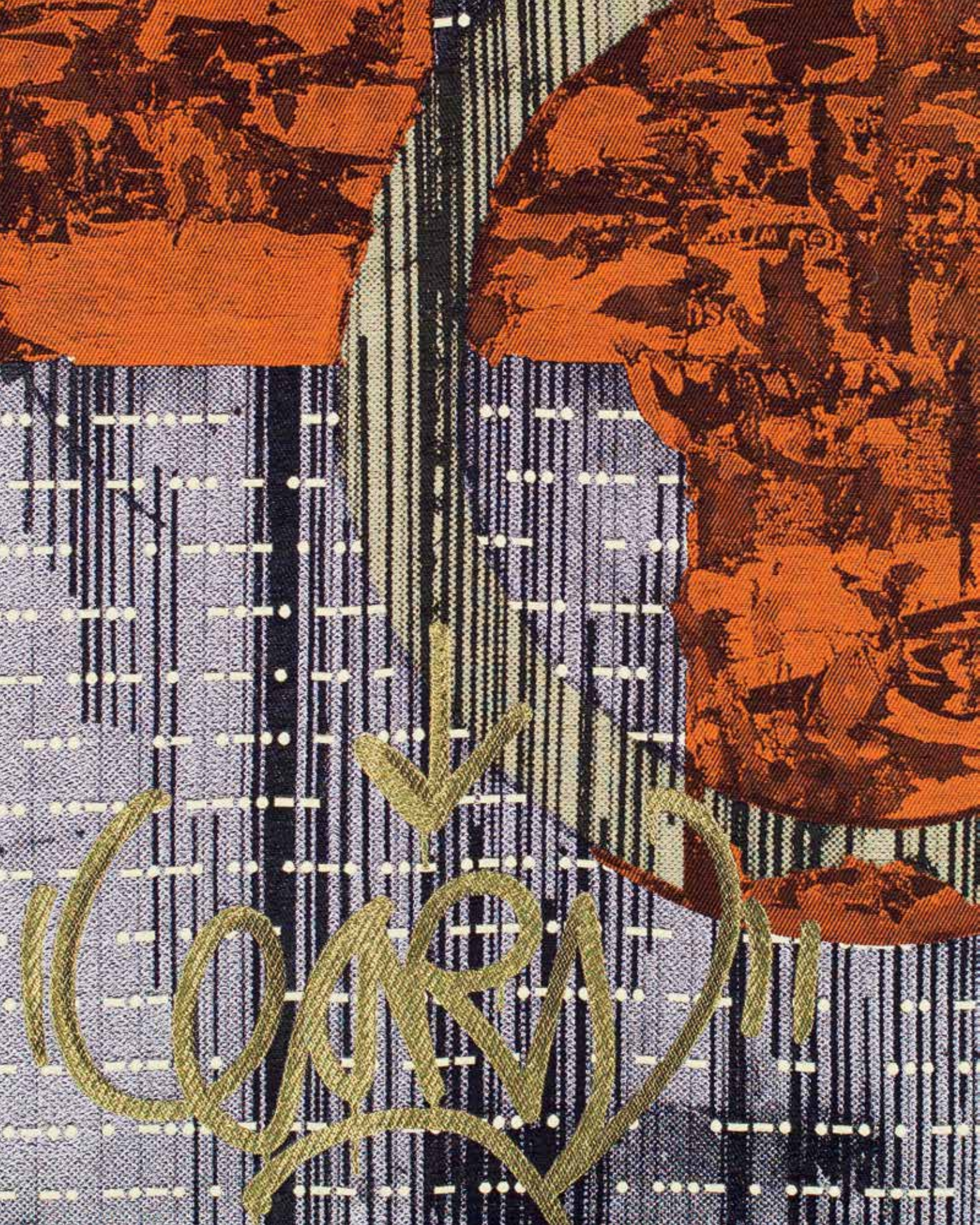
Soft Codes 2

Jacquard tapestry, cotton, wool & viscose, 2015
92.5 x 66 inches, 235 x 167.5 cm

Soft Codes 2 (following page)

Detail





URBAN TAPESTRIES

URBAN KNOWLEDGE

The interconnected life of the city is brought into focus in Annette Cords' Jacquard tapestries, which offer a vision of the urban landscape and its random, varied, and collectively compelling visual experiences. Cords, a German-American artist who lives in New York City, transforms, juxtaposes, and overlaps drawings, images, and text. Working with industry software to translate visual structures into weave structures, she reinterprets both weaving and the warp and woof of urban life. Her tapestries function as metaphors, a kind of parlance about visible events of the street and their ability to be read as a series of signs that convey the complexity of shared spaces and experiences. Weaving, of course, is a very old arts practice, rife with history. Yet Cords is presenting something new: a reading of the fabric of the city, with its random signs, detritus, and urban mark-making, which, if perceived in a certain way, celebrates the self-organization of the street that exists in New York and other metropolises.

The street functions as a common and often contested space, where many voices meet and seek to be heard. These voices leave their mark via ads, corporate logos, bill posting, graffiti, new construction and trash. Change is frequently the only constant. Within Cords' tapestries the unsystematic, personal beauty of the street is presented in an esteemed medium with a long tradition. Voices that otherwise would be lost in rapid urban transformation are recorded and reinterpreted. To create a contemporary view of city life by means of a venerable process is interesting in and of itself. But it is also a way of slowing down the way we see, read and interact with our visual environment. This means that the images Cords produces reinvest the artistic process with an integrity outside the cycles of quick consumption. Employing a time-honored technique to do so is extraordinary.

The consequences of urban change are transformed into a palimpsest of imagery in the tapestries themselves. What was an unplanned event on the street is reinterpreted and reconfigured in a beautifully arranged composition. *Eastern Sun* (2014), a hand-woven Jacquard tapestry, displays lyric abstraction in the form of curvilinear graffiti on a piece of woven fabric that hangs from the top of an open metal frame. The lines are graceful artifacts from a city wall that demand to be read but remain illegible. The tapestry also incorporates the dots and dashes of Morse code, citing a passage from the journalist and activist Jane Jacobs' *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*; this provides an encrypted exposition of the urban mark-making.

In the context of downtown New York's Drawing Center, where the work was recently shown, the billowing, curving lines take on an elegant ambience. Much of contemporary art depends upon its context, and having Cords' weaving placed in a space devoted to leading-edge work enables the imagery to be seen as a conversation about mark-making, readability and the interaction of visual and textual information. In *Eastern Sun*, vernacular from the street is taken from the outside and quite literally thrust indoors. A metamorphosis takes place, and suddenly, graffiti lines become aligned with the gestural abstraction of the New York School.

In *Post Planet* (2015), the fabric displays the words "Post Planet Peace" and "Post Planet Pride," three striped and crosshatched arrows enter into the composition from the edges, and four circles and a vertical line of white graffiti overlap the background. These elements are not necessarily symbols, and the phrases don't commit to an easily understood meaning. The complex interaction of items casually found on buildings and streets makes the tapestry open to interpretation. Addressing the visual diversity and the layers of meaning present in the urban landscape, *Post Planet* offers the viewer an open panorama of experiences that reward with visual stimulation and intellectual connotations.

In *Crosstalk* (2013), the tapestry involves a photograph-like image of the planet Mercury with shallow craters, as well as thin red lines, horizontals with shorter verticals hanging from them that cover the lower three-quarters of the composition. The lines act as hieroglyphs of unknown meaning, like a lot of mark-making in Cords' output. And the craters on Mercury form a sort of idiosyncratic language of their own. This work constitutes a dialogue between one kind of discourse—that of nature—and another kind—that of culture. Often when we cross-talk, we talk in cross purposes, and nature and culture currently do not enjoy a mutually supportive relationship. The imagery refers to the visual existence of language, a major theme in Cords' art. Like most artists, Cords is trying to make sense of the world, whose understanding remains difficult and partial. Her tapestries not only convey the imagistic fabric of the city, they also contest any easy reading of so intricate a cloth as that of cultural life.

—Jonathan Goodman

Jonathan Goodman is an art writer and teacher based in New York City. He publishes articles and reviews for *Sculpture*, *The Brooklyn Rail*, and *On-Verge* in New York; and for *Yishu* (in Vancouver) and *fronterad* (in Madrid). He has taught for 17 years at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn.

POST
PLANET
PEACE

POST
PLANET
PRIDE

POST
PLANET
PRIDE

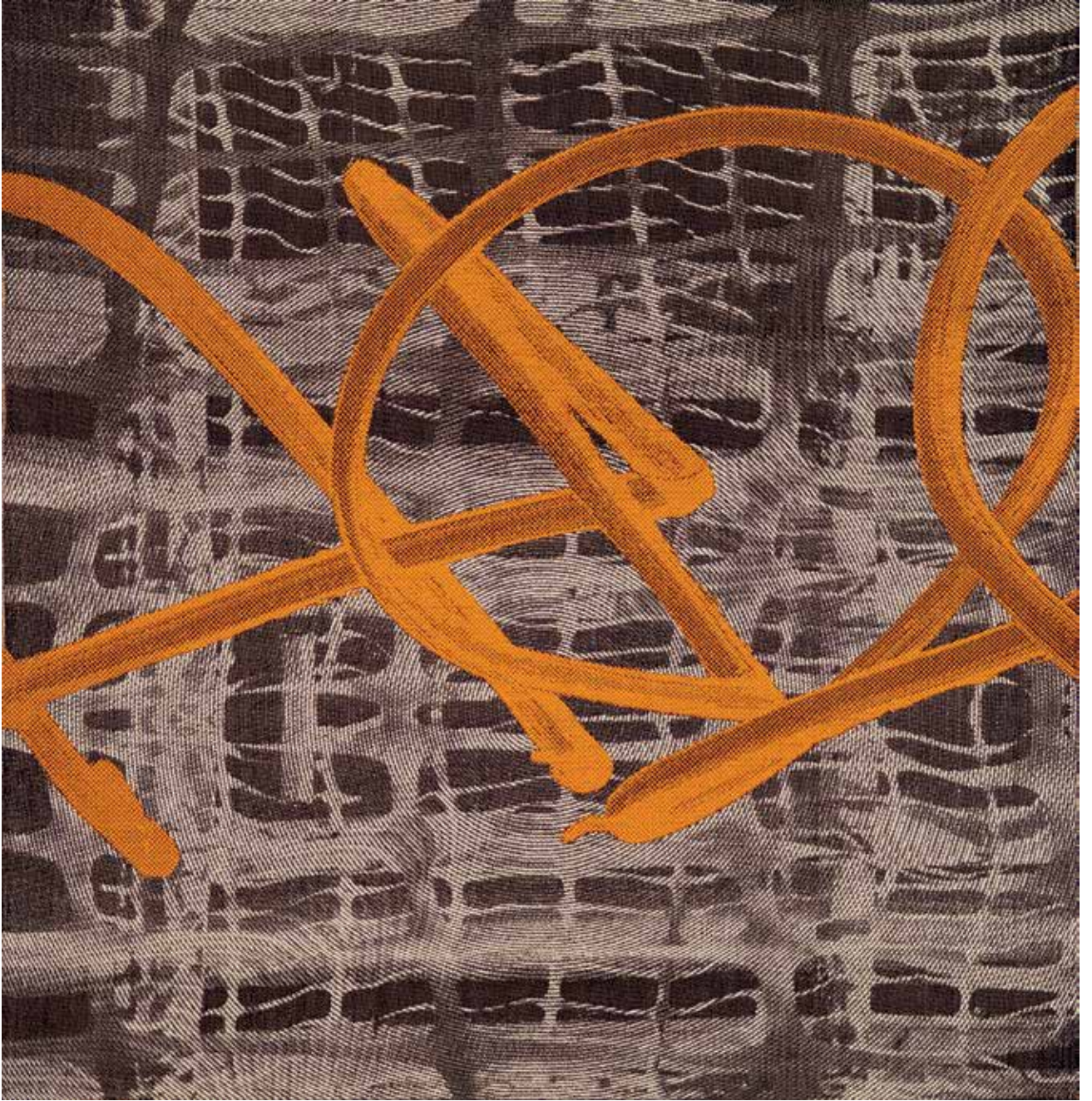


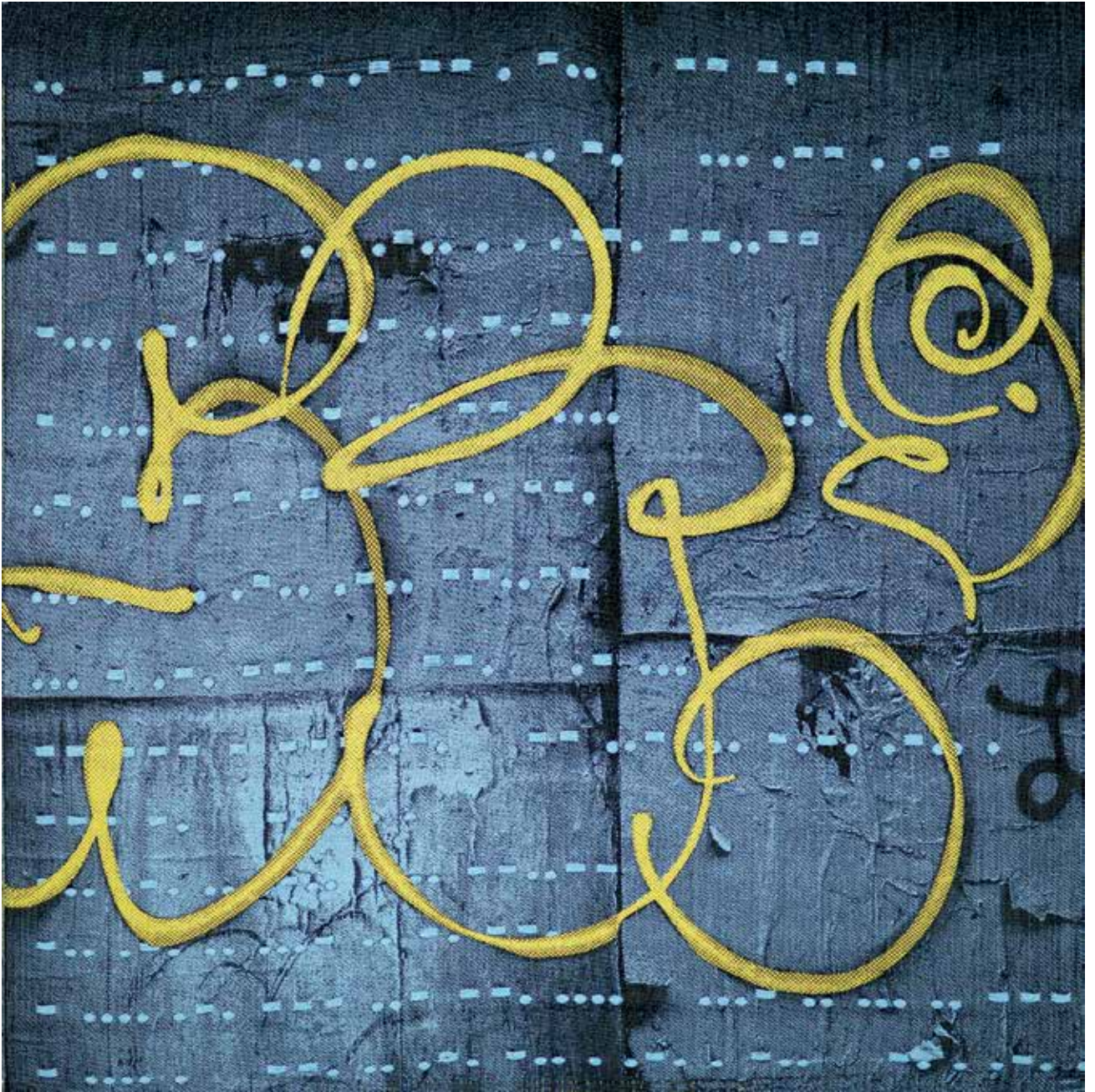
Sine

Hand-woven Jacquard tapestry, cotton, 2013
46.5 x 40 inches, 118 x 101.5 cm

Post Planet (previous page)

Jacquard tapestry, cotton, wool & viscose, 2015
92 x 66 inches, 233.5 x 167.5 cm

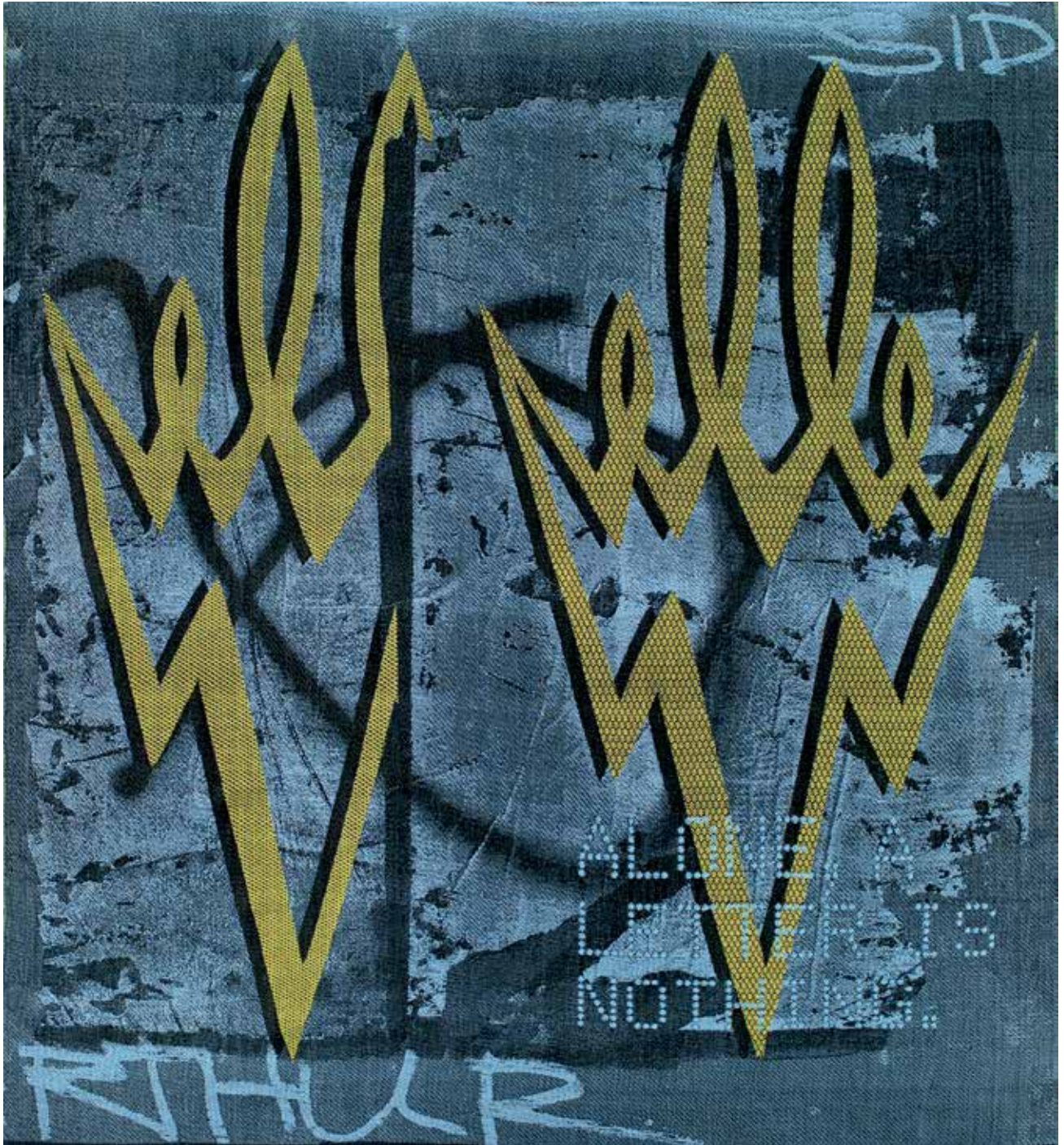




Eastern Sun, Installation View, The Drawing Center, New York

Hand-woven Jacquard tapestry, cotton & metallic thread, 2014
48.5 x 41.5 inches, 123 x 105.5 cm

Eastern Sun, Installation View, The Drawing Center, New York (opposite page)



Alone

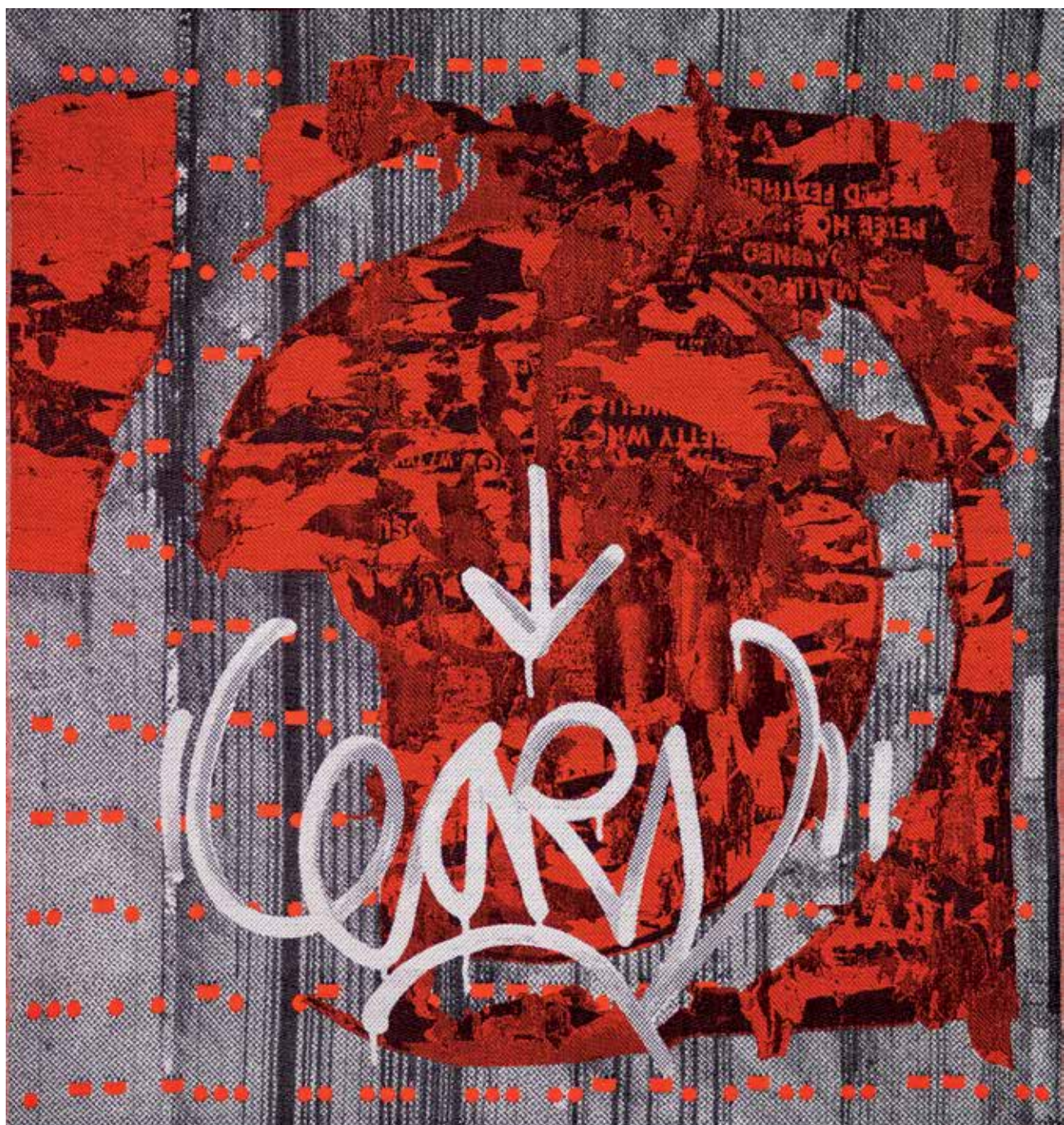
Hand-woven Jacquard tapestry, cotton & metallic thread, 2015
51 x 41 inches, 129.5 x 104 cm



Alone, Installation View, The Drawing Center, New York

Soft Codes

Hand-woven Jacquard tapestry, cotton & wool, 2015
47 x 40 inches, 119.5 x 101.5 cm





Soft Codes, Installation View, The Drawing Center, New York

Hand-woven Jacquard tapestry, cotton & wool, 2015

47 x 40 inches, 119.5 x 101.5 cm



Weave Samples and Shelving, The Drawing Center, New York
Cotton, wool & linen, 2008—10
Variable dimensions

Pairing Rules

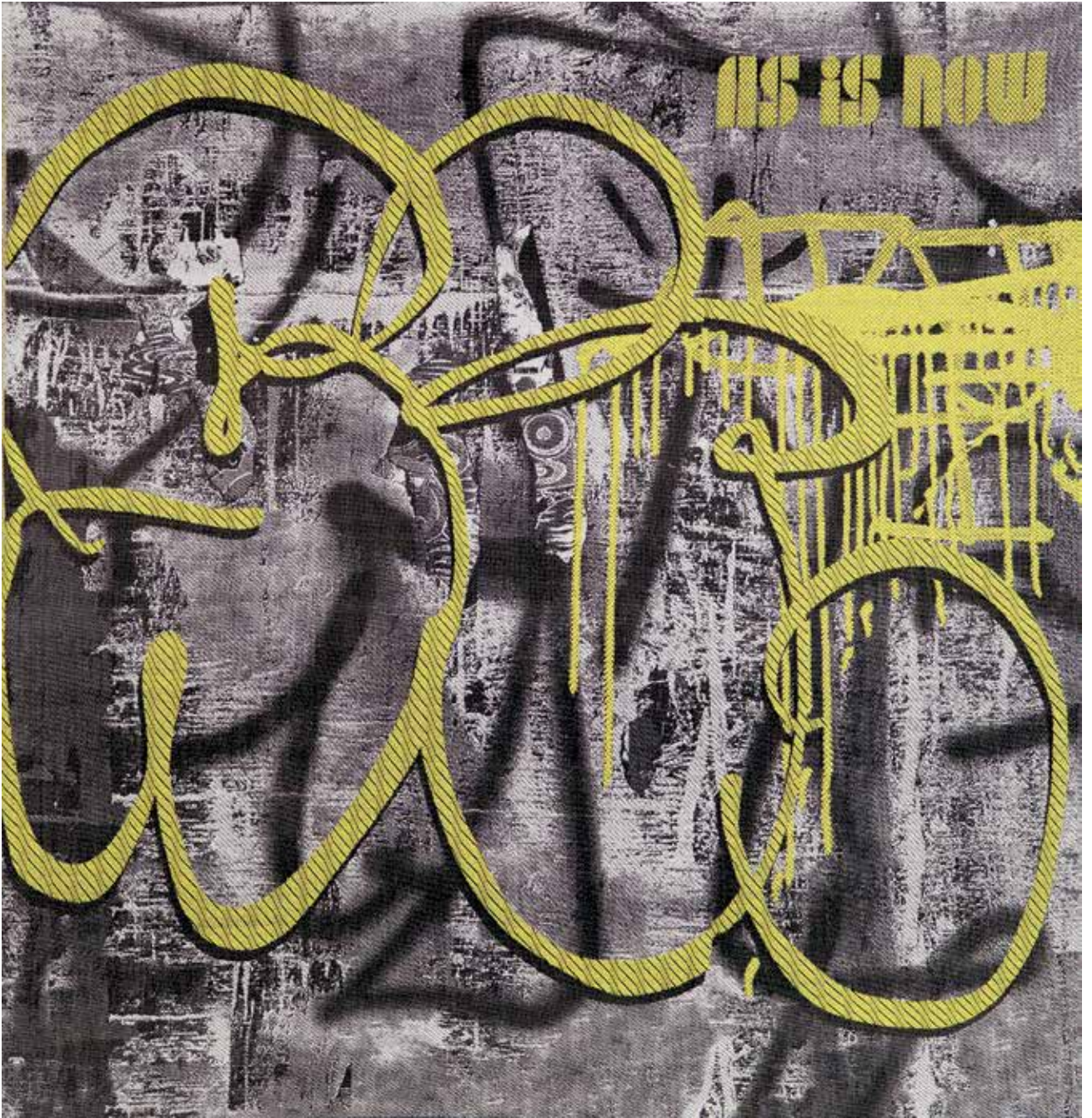
Hand-woven Jacquard tapestry, cotton & wool, 2016
50 x 41 inches, 127 x 104 cm





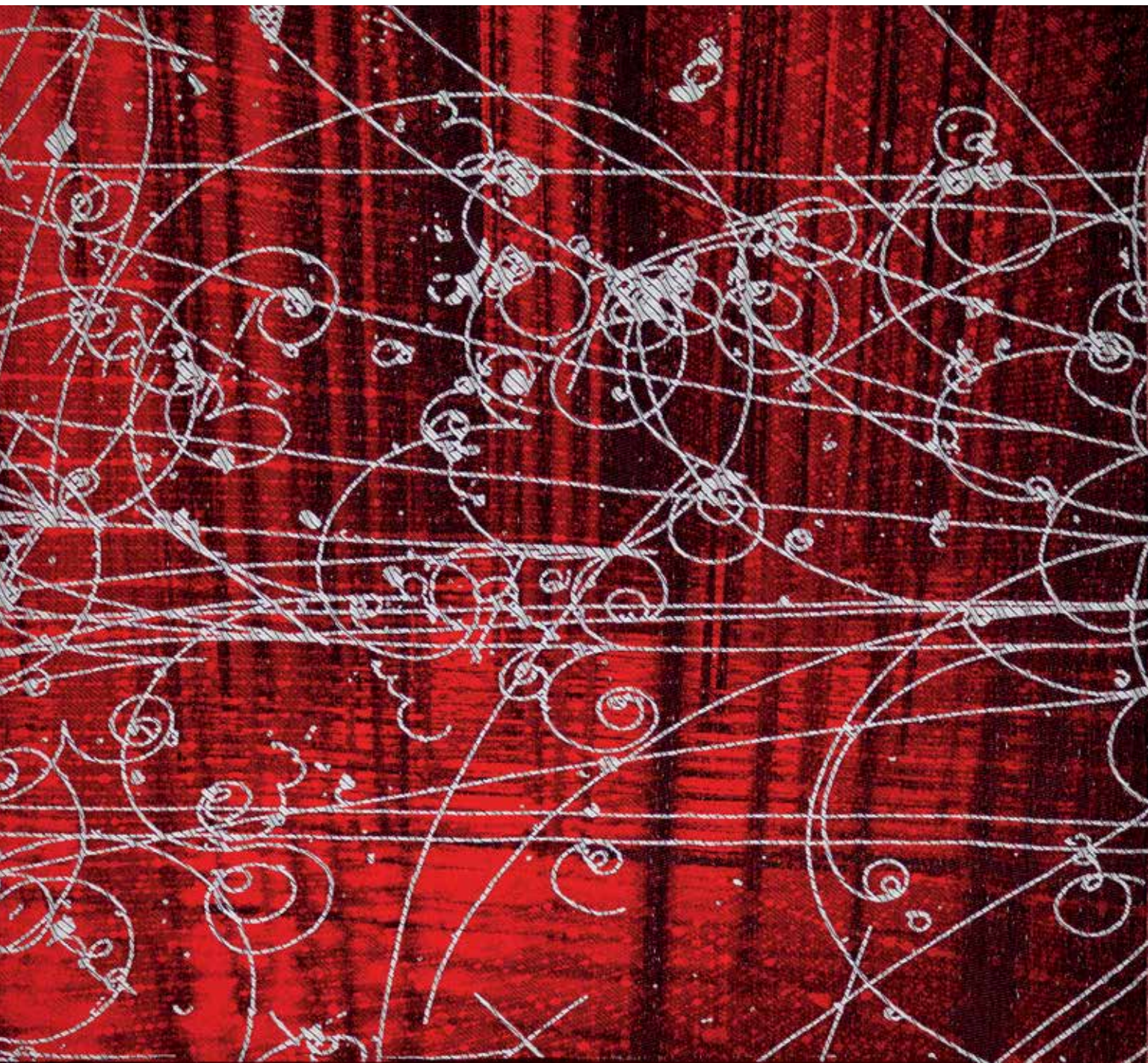
Local Generation

Hand-woven Jacquard tapestry, cotton & wool, 2014
47 x 40.5 inches, 119.5 x 103 cm



As Is Now

Hand-woven Jacquard tapestry, cotton, wool & metallic thread, 2016
47.5 x 41.5 inches, 120.5 x 106 cm

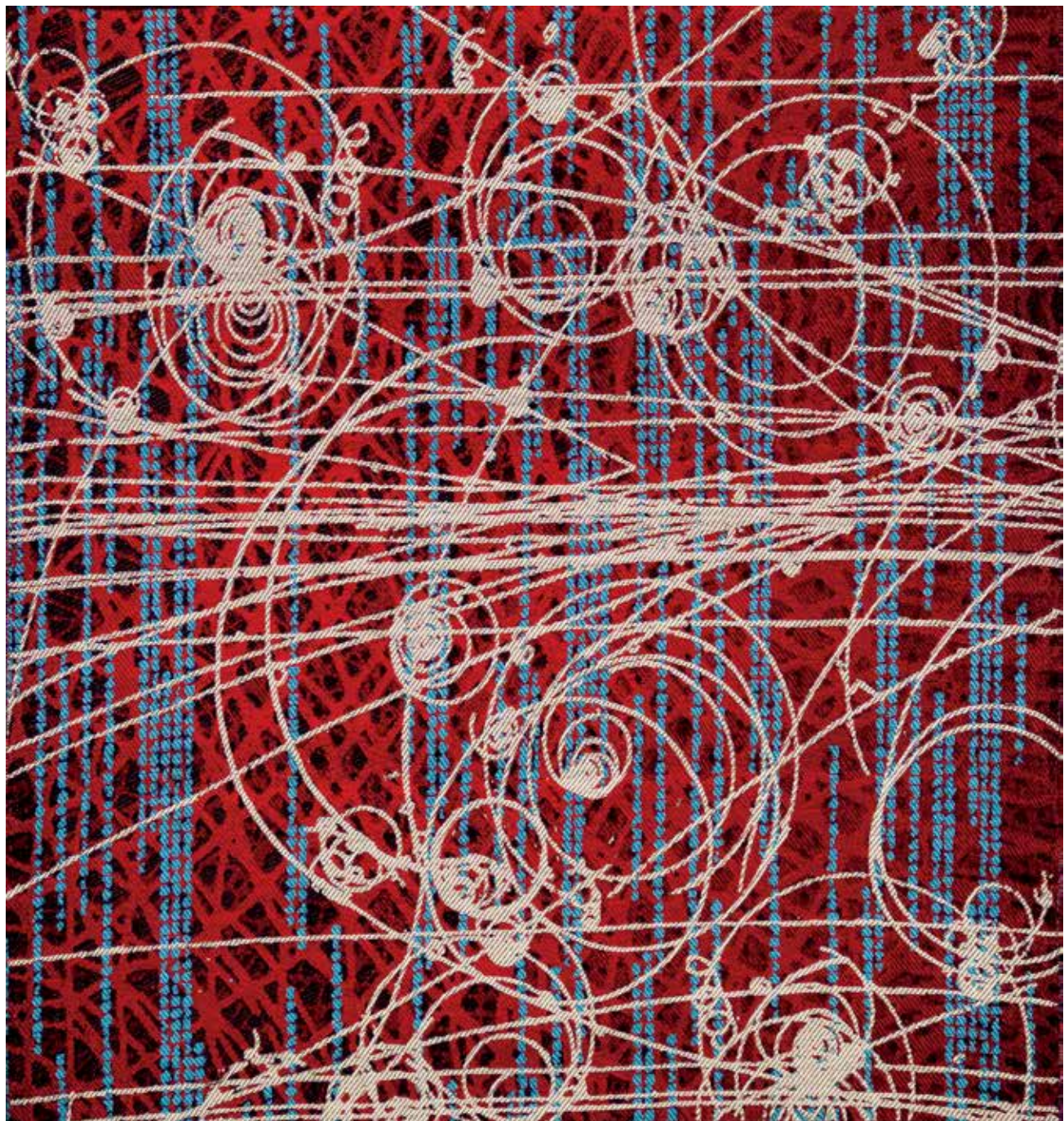


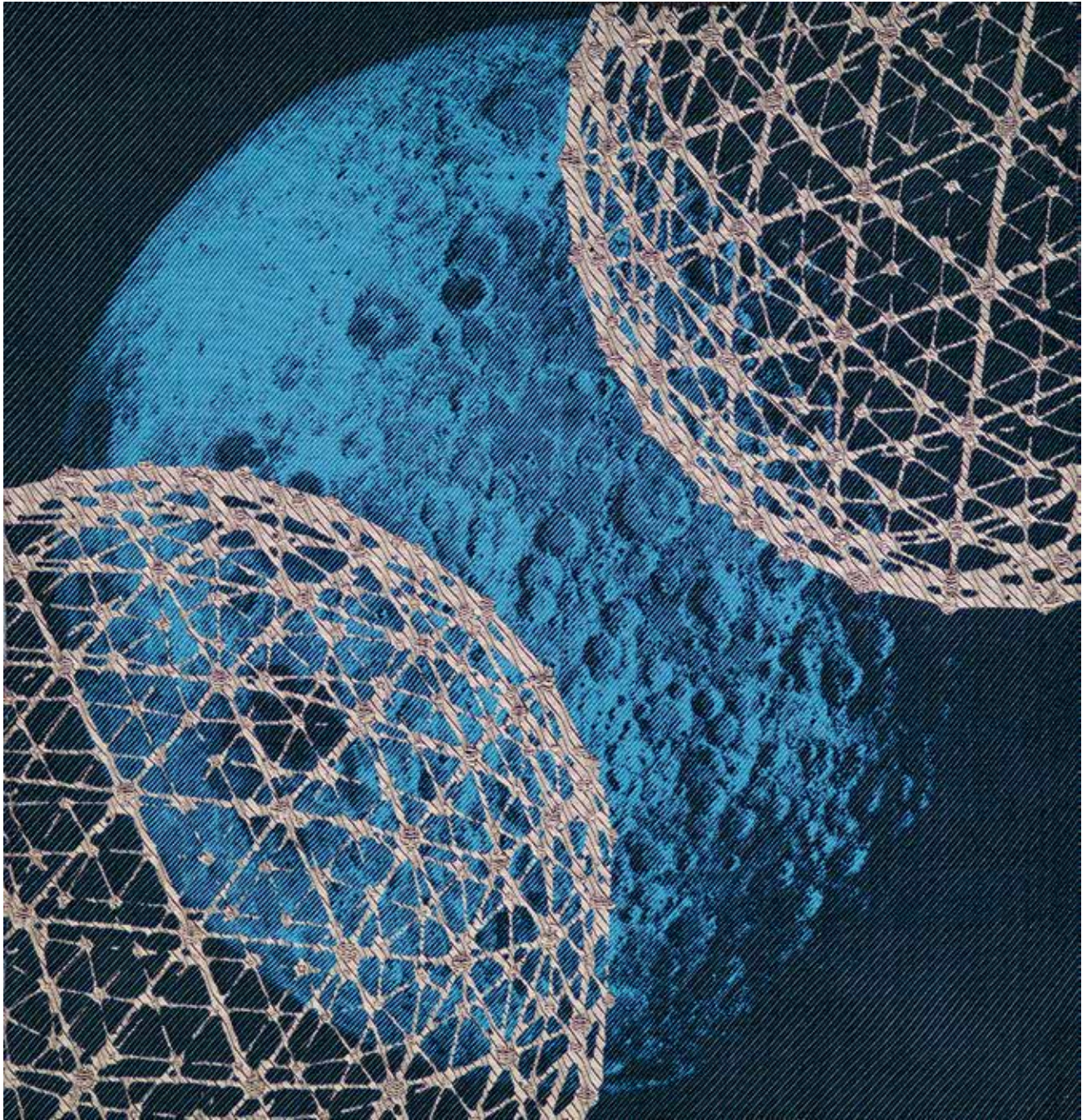
This Will Be Here Tomorrow

Hand-woven Jacquard tapestry, cotton & wool, 2014
42.5 x 40.5 inches, 108 x 103 cm

Private Spaces

Hand-woven Jacquard tapestry, cotton, 2012
48.5 x 39.5 inches, 123 x 100 cm





Combined Operations

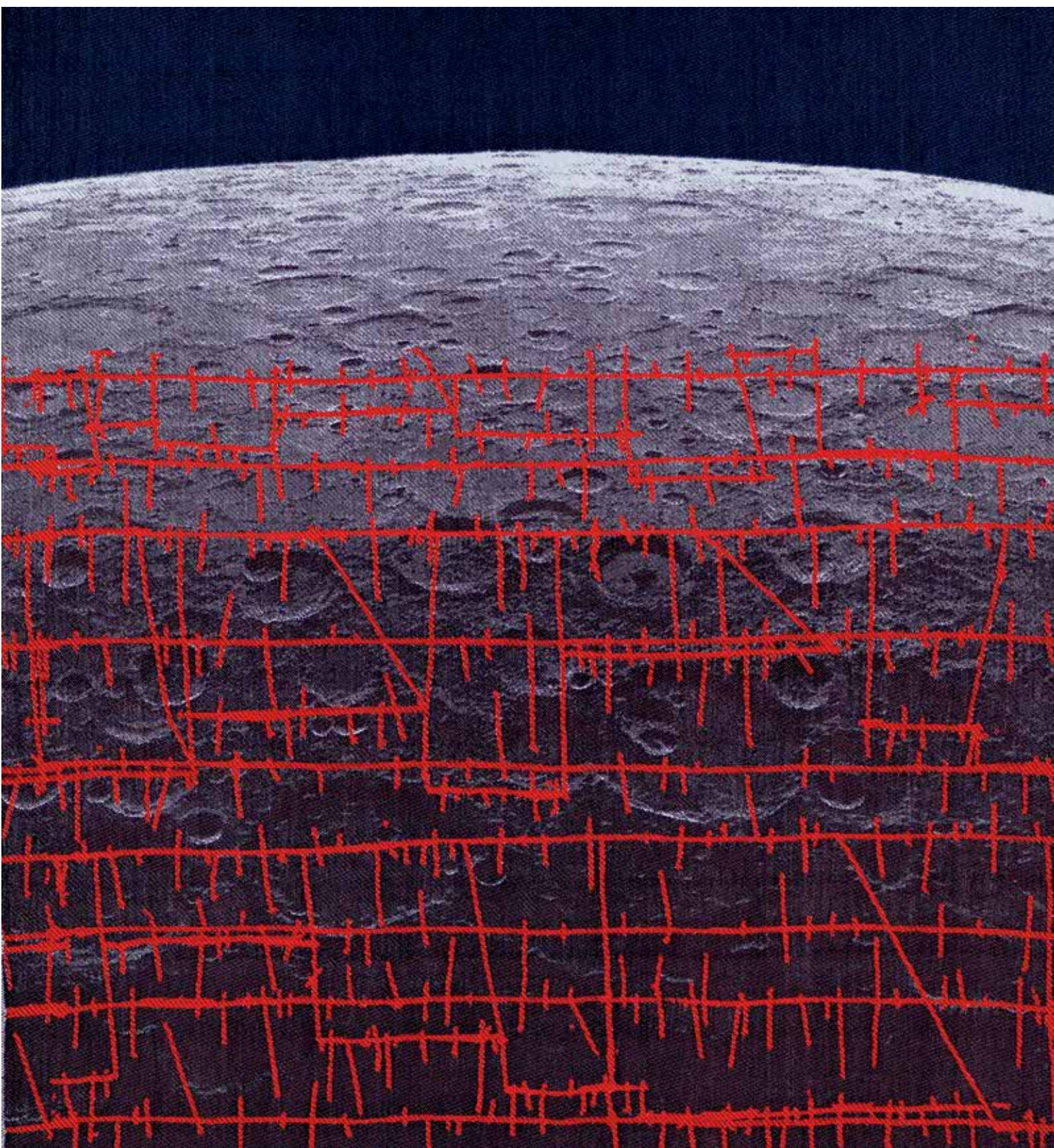
Hand-woven Jacquard tapestry, cotton, 2012
46.5 x 39 inches, 118 x 99 cm



Installation View, New York Public Library, Mid-Manhattan Branch
Blaise, Combined Operations, Private Spaces
Variable dimensions

Crosstalk

Hand-woven Jacquard tapestry, cotton, 2013
49 x 41 inches, 124.5 x 104 cm



More information
www.annettecords.net

Photography

Ken Cushman
Pages: 3-12, 15, 19-26, 29

Andres Ramirez
Pages: 13, 16, 17

Annette Cords
Pages: 10, 31

Arezo Moseni
Page: 27

ISBN 978-1-36-682171-3
Copyright © 2016 Annette Cords

Infinite Islands Press
170 Second Avenue
New York, NY 10003

