

Mary Zicafoose/Narrative Bio

Michigan born, I received my BFA from St. Mary's College, a small women's liberal arts college, at that time the sister school to the University of Notre Dame. Between the two art departments I received an inspired art education. Graduate studies include the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and the University of Nebraska.

As a young carpet weaver, seeking to make my work in cloth more painterly, I was drawn to the ikat technique. Three decades later, I remain joined-at-the-hip with this complex and relatively obscure ethnic resist-dye textile process. I am a devotee of its characteristic feathered bleeding edge, a willing partner in its demand for detail, and obediently submit to its time-consuming appetite in order to create remarkable cloth.

I strive to be an inspirational presence in the textile world. I am co-director emeritus of the American Tapestry Alliance, and formerly served on the board of GoodWeave, an NGO dedicated to eliminating child labor in Southeast Asian rug factories. My work is exhibited and collected internationally, included in the collections of sixteen United States Embassies on four continents. My studio practice has for the last decade focused on creating large-scaled ikat tapestry installations for public buildings. My most recent contribution to the textile field is the Penguin/Random House book, *Ikat: The Essential Guide to Weaving Resist-Dyed Cloth*, released in 2020.