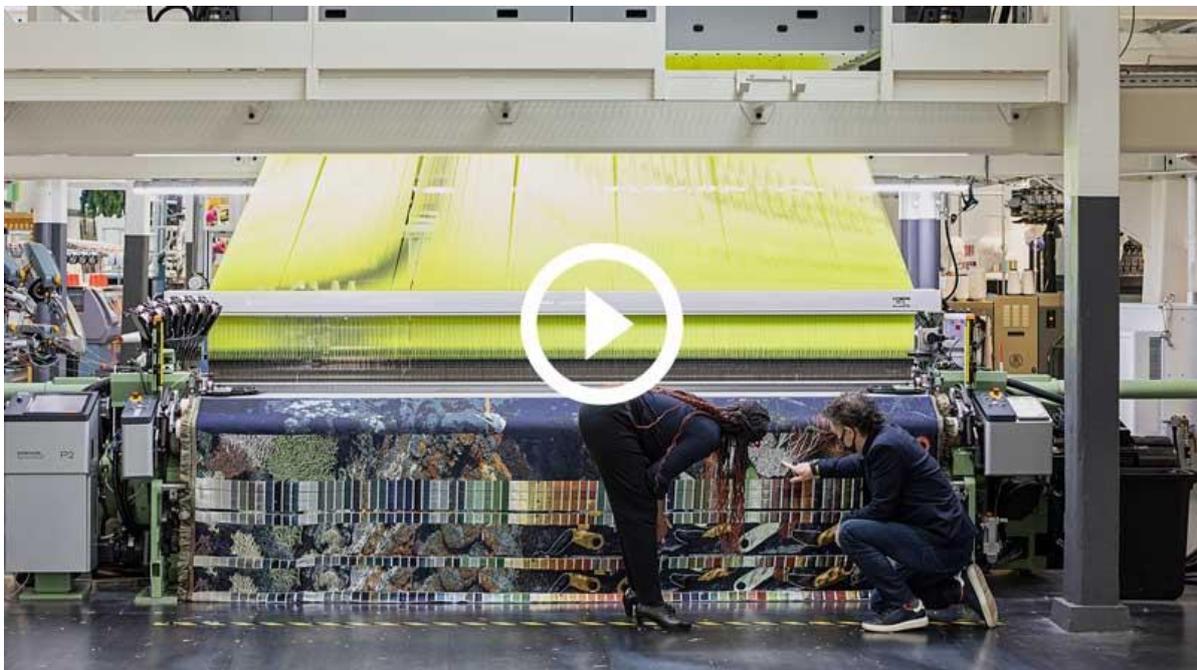


Press release, 18 March 2021

## New TextielLab weaving machine brings excitement to artists and designers

Otobong Nkanga inaugurates new acquisition

Since recently, the TextielLab in Tilburg (the Netherlands) has a brand-new computer-controlled Dornier weaving machine with a width of no less than 3.5 metres. TextielLab made this long-cherished dream come true thanks to a contribution by the national government, being awarded the Dutch Basic Cultural Infrastructure. With its unprecedented width, the machine opens up a world of new technical possibilities for (textile) artists and designers. The internationally renowned Nigerian-Belgian artist Otobong Nkanga has the honour of inaugurating the new acquisition.



[Watch the video](#)

The new weaving machine was on the wishlist of the TextielLab, the professional workshop of the TextielMuseum, for quite some time already. The lab has three computer-controlled weaving machines, for which the waiting list was getting longer and longer. “A fourth machine not only allows us to welcome more artists and designers but also allows for new creative possibilities at our lab,” says Hebe Verstappen, head of the TextielLab. “The width of the new machine makes it possible, for example, to weave gigantic surfaces without seams. Now artists can finally make that big statement.”

### **Otobong Nkanga X TextielLab**

The internationally renowned artist Otobong Nkanga (born 1974 in Kano, Nigeria, based in Antwerp) has the honour of inaugurating the new acquisition to the TextielLab. Nkanga will make a series of four tapestries. What she'll do exactly remains to be seen. “That's the fun part. I will get to know the machine, in close collaboration with Stef Miero, master weaver at the TextielLab. Playing with yarns, volumes, and textures. Seeing what happens. Going from one discovery to the next. That's what I'm looking forward to.” The four-part series that Nkanga's creating in the TextielLab will be shown for the first time in her solo exhibition in Kunsthaus Bregenz in the autumn of 2021.

### **About the TextielLab**

The TextielLab is both a professional workplace and knowledge institute. A place with state-of-the-art machines and technology, as well as expertise and knowledge, to carry-out innovative textile projects. The possibility to develop cutting-edge textiles in collaboration with the best craftsmen and machines makes the TextielLab a treasured creation space for designers and artists from all over the world. Both young talent and established artists, from the Netherlands and beyond, make use of this testing ground. Nkanga has been loyal to the TextielLab for many years. “I get all the space and time I need to do research, to experiment, to try out new materials and techniques. This is immensely valuable to me. I also get a lot of inspiration from the contact with people in the lab, the knowledge that is available, and the other artists and designers I meet there.”

### **Future plans for TextielLab**

As of this year, the TextielLab is part of the Dutch Basic Cultural Infrastructure. The TextielLab wants to use this government subsidy, which will guarantee additional income for four years, to professionalise its activities. In the coming four years, the lab will not only invest in machines, but will also devote itself to digitalisation, research projects, and talent development programmes, organise symposiums and masterclasses, and strengthen its role as a connector between artists and clients.

In response to the worldwide covid-19 pandemic, the TextielLab rapidly digitalised its work processes the past year. Despite the (travel) restrictions, artists were able to continue their textile projects at the TextielLab, digitally, or in a safe manner in the lab.

The TextielLab is structurally supported by the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, the Province of Noord-Brabant and the municipality of Tilburg.

The TextielMuseum is currently closed to visitors. The TextielLab is open to artist and designers with a booking. View the website for current information about visiting and opening hours: [www.textielmuseum.nl](http://www.textielmuseum.nl)

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## Bijlagen



*Hyperlink* [Website of TextielMuseum](#)



*Hyperlink* [Press imagery New Weaving Machine](#)

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The TextielMuseum is a dynamic and creative museum, located in a former textile factory in Tilburg, The Netherlands. It is the only place in the world where design, art, fashion, heritage and innovation in the field of textiles come together. The combination of inspiring exhibitions, workshops and the specialized TextielLab for making and innovating textiles makes the museum unique in its kind.

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