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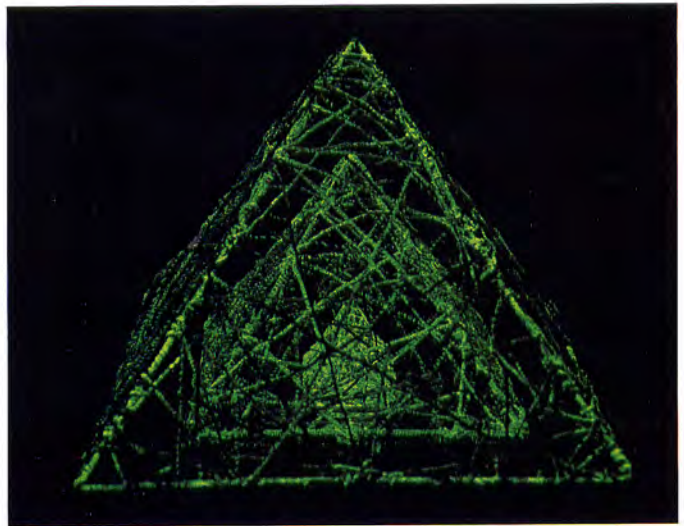
## Textiles That Glow

French textile artist Brigitte Amarger has spent the past 25 years absorbed in an investigation of two- and three-dimensional tapestry. For many years, large-scale installations, exhibited outdoors in response to environmental themes such as global warming and pollution, captured the artist's creative imagination.

More recently, phosphorescence has become an area of intense investigation, taking form in studies painted with glow-in-the-dark substances. When viewed in darkness,

these studies react in one of two ways: they either heighten the presence of the form or alter it completely. Fiber-optic filaments, phosphorescent paint, and reflective surfaces have each played a part in Amarger's developing language of nighttime communication.

In her "Pyramides" series, phosphorescent pigments glow in unexpected shades of green and blue when engulfed in darkness. The exterior shape of each wrapped form remains constant; random networks of threads partially fill the sides. Some



Brigitte Amarger, *Pyramide II (view by night)*, 2001; phosphorescent pigment, Lurex yarn, linen, acrylic paint, Plexiglas, brass, thread, glass beads; wrapping; approx. 8 by 8 by 8 inches. Photos by the artist.

Shapes are empty; others contain nesting pyramids of descending size. In daylight, a small interior pyramid may be difficult to distinguish; in darkness, the dense interior threads shine brightly, drawing the eye inward.

In contrast to the pyramids' small scale, *Lumieres Devoilees* is a large-scale installation that towers over the viewer. The pyramid shape appears here as well, created of three sections based on a dialogue between positive and negative space. Glass beads and phosphorescent paint applied to the surface of the woven strips allow the sculpture to be viewed in darkness. But in contrast to the "Pyramides" series, the form here is clarified rather than altered when viewed in the dark. The lines between positive and negative shape become more distinct, heightening the tension between absence and presence that is central to the form.

Amarger has taught textile design at the Applied Arts School in Paris since 1989. She considers herself fortunate to

be employed in the discipline that is her passion and finds that the environment in which she teaches creates an ongoing source of ideas for future projects. This passion for and commitment to textiles is palpable in her conversation. She even admits that during traffic jams on the long commute to and from work she can often be found with knitting or braiding in one hand and the gear shift in the other—her thoughts turning to her next project.

Amarger explains that her recent interests revolve around the exploration of dichotomies: "day/night, life/death, transparency/opacity, and absence/presence." From these simple and universal investigations, her specific vocabulary is emerging from the darkness.

—Jessica Hemmings

Jessica Hemmings, a doctoral candidate at the University of Edinburgh, holds a B.F.A. in textiles and writes frequently about textile art. She teaches in the English department at the Rhode Island School of Design.



Brigitte Amarger, *Lumieres Devoilees*, 2002; installation of three textiles; cotton, satin, shiny, and opaque fabrics, veils, glass beads, phosphorescent pigments and threads; 16.5 by 4.25 by 13.75 feet.