



ELIZABETH TURK

E L I Z A B E T H   T U R K

R E C E N T   S C U L P T U R E

October 2 – November 8, 2008

H I R S C H L   &   A D L E R   M O D E R N

21 East 70th Street

New York, New York 10021

212 535-8810

[www.HirschlAndAdler.com](http://www.HirschlAndAdler.com)

P R E F A C E

Elizabeth Turk’s sculpture never ceases to amaze us. In this, her second solo exhibition with Hirschl & Adler Modern, the artist once again embraces the classical medium of marble. Turk’s exquisite, ethereal forms defy convention and challenge our preconceptions of what marble can do.

Turk creates a provocative tension between the intrinsic strength of the stone and its inherent fragility. We are awed by the lightness and transparency achieved in the thin folds of her intimate, undulating “ribbons,” and captivated by the complexity of her grand-scale “pinwheel.”

Painstakingly carved by hand, this new body of work demonstrates not only Turk’s remarkable technical ability, but also her indefatigable spirit. She strives to create sculpture that is beautiful and honest, while engaging us aesthetically and intellectually. Hers is an ongoing “conversation” with the stone, a deep and serious exploration of form and material, a questioning of boundaries.

At Hirschl & Adler Modern, thanks are due to Dunham Townend. The artist wishes to thank the people who have helped her to bring this new body of work to fruition: Grant and Jill Robbins, the Chiarini Family, Memo Memovic, Ron Houghton, Eric Risser, and Bill Folan.

S H E L L E Y   F A R M E R

E L I Z A B E T H   F E L D

LEFT

*Ribbon #11, Standing, 2007*  
Italian Carrara marble  
11 x 5 x 2½ in.  
cat. 12

MIDDLE

*Ribbon #13, Standing, 2008*  
Italian Carrara marble  
17 x 7½ x 7½ in.  
cat. 14

RIGHT

*Ribbon #10, Standing, 2008*  
Greek Pentelicon marble  
6 x 4¾ x 4½ in.  
cat. 11

ARTIST'S NOTES

“Great art is an instant arrested in eternity”

— JAMES G. HUNEKER

A classical sculpture show amid an art world of bold political commentary and audio-visual installations? Is this relevant? Is it too quiet to resonate? Or, do these objects, more of contemplation than interaction, answer a longing?

My marble sculptures are intimate, visual symbols of the mental and the physical, meditative objects for thoughts that swirl up from the pages of my sketchbooks. The work is reduced to a core—ideas, time, and physical matter. They rest on limestone bases marked with conceptual fragments—words, drawings—which, when linked, provide a rich and vast context. These markings feel at once ancient and contemporary, scientific and spiritual. The insatiable demand for “the shock of the new” has infiltrated fine art, and I have, at times, felt myself spinning like a hamster on a wheel. Though recognizably a self-imposed emotion, the lens through which I see “what is possible” is informed by today’s context. This work is not an attempt to best myself, but to honor the humble nature of physical sculpture. There is no desire to overwhelm senses or to promote viewpoints. Instead, I look to initiate conversation.

I call these sculptures “Ribbons” and “Pinwheels”—words that feel light, an easy doorway to exploring my work. When I think of ribbons I think of movement, flow, braiding systems, graphs, music, the individual parts to a great pattern and, also, a simple device to tie a child’s ponytail. When I think of pinwheels, I think of happy days in theme parks, targets, swarms, the chaos of patterns in motion and tension. For me the “Pinwheel” is a symbol for new consequences, it is the accumulation of “Ribbons.”

*Pinwheel #1*, 2007 (side view)  
Italian Carrara marble  
60 in. diameter x 2 in. deep  
cat. 1





*Ribbon #16, Standing, 2008*  
Italian Carrara marble  
7 x 33 x 5 in.  
cat. 17

#### OPPOSITE

*Ribbon #17, Standing, 2008*  
Italian Carrara marble  
50 x 8 x 7 in.  
cat. 18

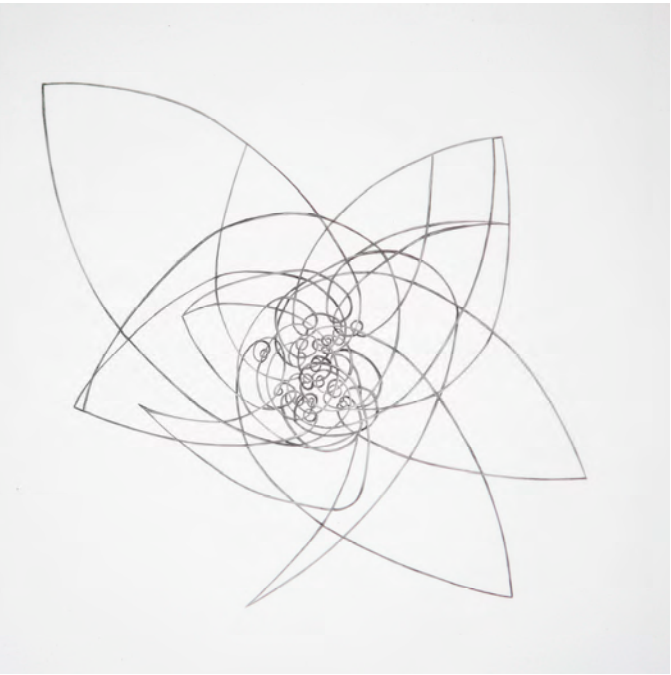
I like difficult things. I like to measure myself. I like competition. I like to have a dialogue with something that is non-human. Stone affords a timeless conversation; it will last longer than I, no matter what I do. How is the rock shaping my hands? My shoulders? What does it do to me, while I am so focused on doing something to it? All the stone I used to create these works found me. It has “baggage,” a life before this form, a unique history. *Ribbon #17, Standing* was carved from a discarded Italian marble banister, taken from an eighteenth-century loggia in Verona. This adds depth, an unseen fragility. I give new life to old materials. I reshape the stone in extreme and contemporary ways, pushing its technical boundaries.

My work plays with intuitive notions of gravity. As I fold the precarious strips of my ribbons, I adapt to the various restrictions in the stone that emerge unexpectedly in the course of carving. These ribbons are shaped more by the structure from which they are born than by concepts growing in a vacuum. A line. Simple folds in a blanket. My father’s sheets as they spill over the side of his bed; his blanket when sitting in a chair. If I follow the crest of the fold, I can feel the weight of his forms and the strength of gravity.

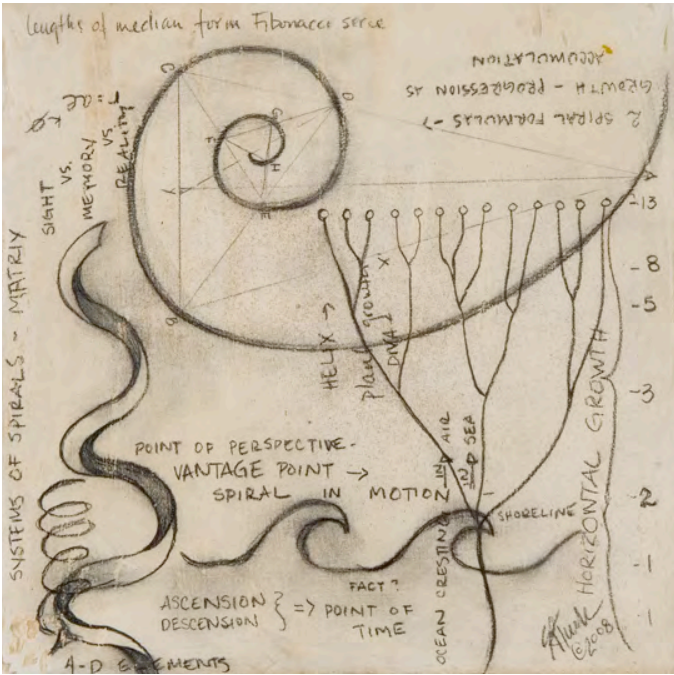
There is so much emotion to describe what I see. It is not a rational viewpoint, but it is real. Yet, this is only a line that does not touch his skin. This, too, is a line of a ribbon, the edge of depth.

What lies at the core of my work—my inspiration—is a desire to study and uncover the complexities of nature and the systems that exist already. My pursuit is one of discovery, not a competition for creating new forms for their sake alone. At the root of science, art, and religion, the purest commonalities exist, linking past, present, and future. I prefer the quest for understanding the nuances of those commonalities.

If I devote my time to sanding this marble, it is my time that I give to you. Is this not the most significant of gifts? Can artwork that is earnest and simple be heard? Yet, a sense of earnestness in art can be perceived as saccharine. Still, I continue to err on that side. I like working with stone. I like creating art not knowing exactly where the path lies. It is the reflective life, the process, which imbues meaning and answers my own longings to simply “be.”



Drawing #2, 2008  
Graphite on claybord  
8 x 8 in.



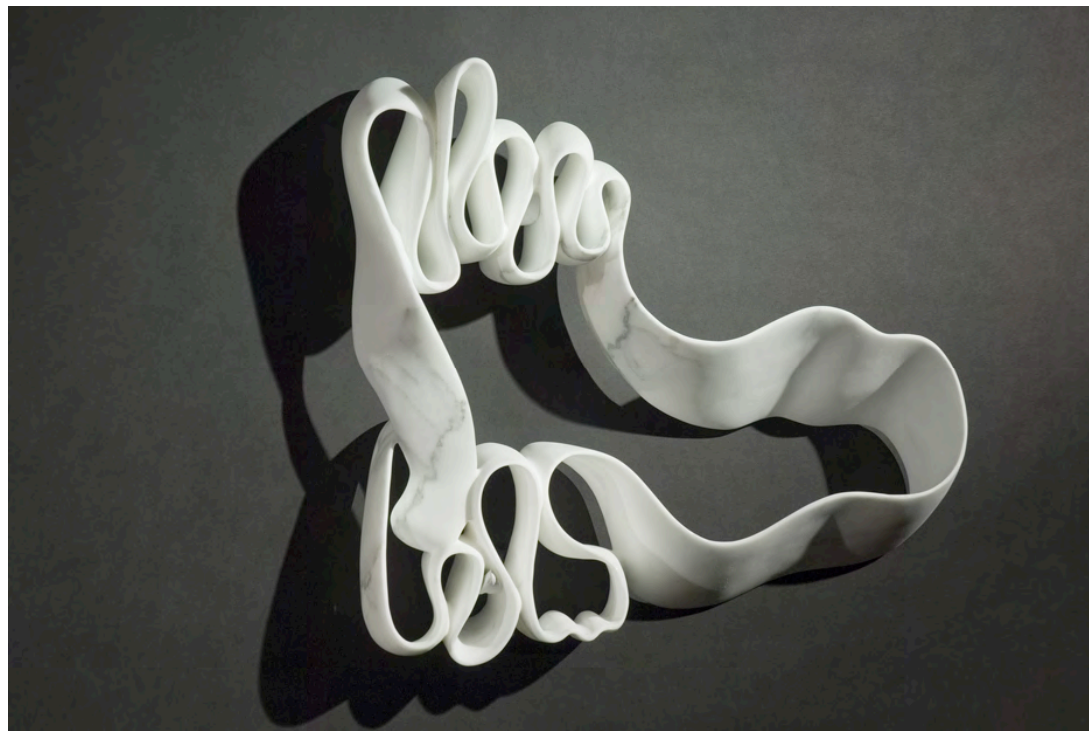
Base, Ribbon #10, Standing, 2008  
Limestone fresco  
1½ x 5¾ x 5¾ in.



Ribbon #15, Standing, 2007  
Italian Carrara marble  
1½ x 10 x 7 in.  
cat. 16

My previous body of work, “The Collars,” exhibited at Hirschl & Adler Modern in March 2006, focused on the matrix created by repeating fundamental shapes, singularities creating structures. The new series, “Ribbons & Pinwheels,” brings the vantage point outward, from the matrix itself to the fabrics created; from molecules to macrocosm. “Ribbons” and “Pinwheels.” These two words together represent the individual and the group. Individual parts defined by specific natural perimeters (ribbons) organized or, rather, grouped and in motion (a pinwheel) becoming something more, an entity governed by complexity. Where the words for this body of work are a touchstone for larger concepts, the sculptures are the artifacts of actions, planned as well as spontaneous. Art is more of an idea than an object, but it is the object which resonates qualities that are not bound by words.

ELIZABETH TURK



*Ribbon #6, 2008*  
Italian Carrara marble  
16 x 17<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in.  
cat. 7

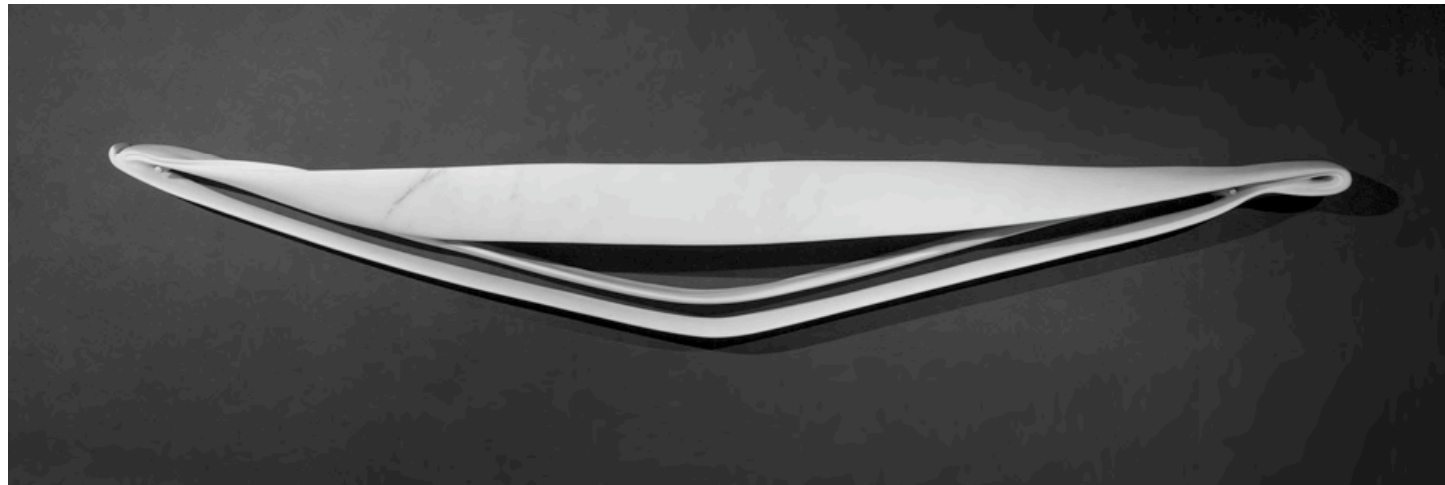


*Ribbon #7, 2008*  
Italian Carrara marble  
7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 47 x 4 in.  
cat. 8

OPPOSITE

*Ribbon #13, Standing, 2008*  
Italian Carrara marble  
17 x 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> x 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in.  
cat. 14





*Ribbon #1, 2007*  
Greek Pentelicon marble  
7½ x 48 x 7 in.  
cat. 2



*Ribbon #14, Standing, 2008*  
Italian Carrara marble  
11 x 8 x 2½ in.  
cat. 15



ABOVE

*Ribbon #12, Standing, 2008*  
Italian Carrara marble  
4½ x 7½ x 2½ in.  
cat. 13

RIGHT

*Ribbon #11, Standing, 2007*  
Italian Carrara marble  
11 x 5 x 2½ in.  
cat. 12



*Ribbon #9, Sphere, 2008*  
Greek Pentelicon marble  
10 in. diameter  
cat. 10





*All dimensions in inches,  
height x width x depth*

1  
*Pinwheel #1, 2007*  
Italian Carrara marble,  
60 in. diameter x 2 in. deep  
*Illustrated cover, p. 5, back cover*

2  
*Ribbon #1, 2007*  
Greek Pentelicon marble,  
7½ x 48 x 7 in.  
*Illustrated p. 12*

3  
*Ribbon #2, 2007*  
Italian Carrara marble,  
35½ x 6 x 2 in.

4  
*Ribbon #3, 2007*  
Italian Carrara marble,  
18 x 6 x 3 in.  
*Illustrated p. 15*

5  
*Ribbon #4, 2007*  
Italian Carrara marble,  
19½ x 6 x 4 in.  
*Illustrated p. 15*

6  
*Ribbon #5, 2007*  
Italian Carrara marble,  
48 x 5 x 2 in.

7  
*Ribbon #6, 2008*  
Italian Carrara marble,  
16 x 17¼ x 4½ in.  
*Illustrated p. 10*

*Elizabeth Turk in her studio, 2008*

8  
*Ribbon #7, 2008*  
Italian Carrara marble,  
7¼ x 47 x 4 in.  
*Illustrated p. 10*

9  
*Ribbon #8, 2008*  
Italian Carrara marble,  
13 x 21 x 2 in.

10  
*Ribbon #9, Sphere, 2008*  
Greek Pentelicon marble,  
10 in. diameter  
*Illustrated p. 13*

11  
*Ribbon #10, Standing, 2008*  
Greek Pentelicon marble,  
6 x 4¾ x 4½ in.  
Limestone fresco base,  
1½ x 5¾ x 5¾ in.  
*Illustrated p. 2*



12  
*Ribbon #11, Standing, 2007*  
Italian Carrara marble,  
11 x 5 x 2½ in.  
Limestone fresco base,  
1½ x 5¾ x 5¾ in.  
*Illustrated pp. 2, 13*

13  
*Ribbon #12, Standing, 2008*  
Italian Carrara marble,  
4½ x 7½ x 2½ in.  
Limestone fresco base,  
6½ x 3½ x 2½ in.  
*Illustrated p. 13*

14  
*Ribbon #13, Standing, 2008*  
Italian Carrara marble,  
17 x 7½ x 7½ in.  
Limestone fresco base,  
1½ x 5¾ x 5¾ in.  
*Illustrated pp. 2, 11*

15  
*Ribbon #14, Standing, 2008*  
Italian Carrara marble,  
11 x 8 x 2½ in.  
Limestone fresco base,  
2 x 5½ x 9 in.  
*Illustrated p. 12*

16  
*Ribbon #15, Standing, 2007*  
Italian Carrara marble,  
1½ x 10 x 7 in.  
Limestone fresco base,  
1½ x 10¾ x 10¾ in.  
*Illustrated p. 9*

LEFT

*Ribbon #4, 2007*  
Italian Carrara marble  
19½ x 6 x 4 in.  
cat. 5



ABOVE

*Ribbon #3, 2007*  
Italian Carrara marble  
18 x 6 x 3 in.  
cat. 4

17  
*Ribbon #16, Standing, 2008*  
Italian Carrara marble,  
7 x 33 x 5 in.  
Limestone fresco base,  
2 x 34 x 5 in.  
*Illustrated p. 7*

18  
*Ribbon #17, Standing, 2008*  
Italian Carrara marble,  
50 x 8 x 7 in.  
Limestone fresco base,  
2½ x 26 x 14 in.  
*Illustrated p. 6*

19  
*Cage #1, 2008*  
Corton French limestone,  
35 x 29 x 12 in.

E L I Z A B E T H   T U R K

Born

1961      Pasadena, California

Education

1994      M.F.A., Rinehart School of Sculpture,  
Maryland Institute, Baltimore, MD

1983      B.F.A., International Relations, Scripps College,  
Claremont, CA

Solo Exhibitions

2008      *Traces*, Bandini Art, Culver City, CA

2006      *Elizabeth Turk: The Collars*, Hirschl & Adler Modern,  
New York, NY  
*Drawings*, Joie Lassiter Gallery, Charlotte, NC  
*Domestic Settings*, Galerie Lareuse, Washington, D.C.

2004      *VantagePoint III Elizabeth Turk The Collars:  
Tracings of Thought*, Mint Museum of Art,  
Charlotte, NC

2003      *(Know) Fly Zone*, Installation, Santa Ana, CA

2001      *A Memorial to Nature I, An Installation by  
Elizabeth Turk*, Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum,  
Santa Barbara, CA

1998      *Elizabeth Turk*, Hemphill Gallery, Washington, D.C.

Selected Group Exhibitions

2008      *Modern Love: Gifts to the Collection from Heather and  
Tony Podesta*, National Museum of Women in the Arts,  
Washington, D.C.  
*Looky See*, Ben Maltz Gallery, Otis School of Art,  
Los Angeles, CA  
*Celebrating Women Artists*, Hirschl & Adler Modern,  
New York, NY  
*Poetry & Works on Paper*, Joie Lassiter Gallery,  
Charlotte, NC

2007      *Los Angeles Printmaking Society 19th National  
Exhibition*, Riverside Art Museum, Riverside, CA

2006      *Complicit*, University of Virginia Art Museum,  
Charlottesville, VA  
*Draw, Paper, Scissors*, Jeanne Patterson, Los Angeles, CA

2004      *3 Solo Projects: Jane Mulfinger, Ross Rudel, Elizabeth  
Turk*, Ben Maltz Gallery, Otis College of Art and Design,  
Los Angeles, CA

2003      *Matter and Matrix*, Ruth Chandler Williamson Gallery,  
Scripps College, Claremont, CA  
*Going Public*, American Institute of Architecture,  
New York, NY

2002      Japan Bank Building, Hiroshima, Japan,  
collaboration with Koso Haranka and Kirara Kawauchi

2000      *New York—Classicism—Now*, Hirschl & Adler Galleries,  
New York, NY

1998      *Objectivity-International Objects of Subjectivity*,  
Contemporary Art Center, Virginia Beach, VA

1997      *From Here*, Baumgartner Gallery, Washington, D.C.  
*A Sculpture Show*, Grimaldis Gallery, Baltimore, MD

1996      *Louis Bourgeois: Elizabeth Turk*, Baumgartner Gallery,  
Washington, D.C.  
*A Sculpture Show*, Grimaldis Gallery, Baltimore, MD  
*Fresh Out*, Maryland Art Place, Baltimore, MD  
*Superbia*, Washington Project for the Arts,  
Washington, D.C.

Grants, Residencies, Awards, and Fellowships

2003      McColl Center for Visual Art, Artist in Residence,  
Charlotte, NC

2002      Kyojima Artist in Residency Program, Tokyo, Japan  
Ensemble Studio Theater, Artist in Residence (Summer),  
New York, NY

2001      California State University Fullerton, Artist in Residence,  
Fullerton, CA

2000      Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant  
New York City Art Commission Award for Excellence  
in Design  
John Michael Kohler Arts & Industry Program,  
Artist in Residence, Sheboygan, WI

1994      Amalie Rothschild Award

Selected Public Collections

Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D.C.

Weatherspoon Gallery, University of North Carolina at  
Greensboro, NC

The Mint Museum, Charlotte, NC

Scripps College, Ruth Chandler Williamson Gallery, Claremont, CA

The Bechtler Art Museum, Charlotte, NC

D E S I G N

Elizabeth Finger

P H O T O G R A P H Y

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except: *Pinwheel #1*; *Ribbon #9*,  
*Sphere*; *Ribbon #12, Standing*;  
*Drawing #2*; and photo of artist  
© Eric Stoner

P R I N T I N G

The Studley Press

C O V E R

*Pinwheel #1*, 2007 (detail)  
Italian Carrara marble  
60 in. diameter x 2 in. deep  
cat. 1

I N S I D E   C O V E R S

*Base, Ribbon #15, Standing*, 2007  
(details) Limestone fresco  
1½ x 10¾ x 10¾ in.

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