

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Shaker  
Museum

**EMILY ADAMS BODE AUJLA CURATES *THE COMMERCIALIZATION OF SHAKER KNITS* FOR SHAKER MUSEUM**

**The New Exhibition Explores the Origins of the “Shaker Knit” and its Impact on American Sportswear**

*Exhibition Will Run from Friday, June 16<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, September 10<sup>th</sup>  
at the Kinderhook Knitting Mill in Kinderhook, NY*

**CHATHAM, NEW YORK, June 9, 2023** – Shaker Museum, which stewards the most comprehensive collection of Shaker material culture and archives, announced today that its latest exhibition – *The Commercialization of Shaker Knits* – will debut Friday, June 16<sup>th</sup> from 5:00pm to 7:00pm at the Kinderhook Knitting Mill in Kinderhook, NY. Curated by Bode designer and two-time CFDA American Menswear Designer of the Year, Emily Adams Bode Aujla, the exhibition will explore the evolution of Shaker knitting from nineteenth-century craft to profitable commercial practice and its distinct and long-lasting impact on American athletic wear and fashion.

With *The Commercialization of Shaker Knits*, Shaker Museum looks closely at the turning point within the Shaker community when, in 1886, sisters in the Canterbury Shaker Village received an order for 60 dozen pieces of knitwear. Though the communities had long utilized hand-knitting techniques and knitting machines, this particular order inspired the purchase of both a single web knitting machine and exclusive, high-quality yarn. The resulting combination was characterized by a heavy, tightly knit, ribbed pattern which was malleable without sacrificing strength, leading to the product’s rapid rise in popularity among Northeastern Ivy League athletic programs. Today, the term “Shaker Knit,” now used to refer to any knit that embodies the dense, durable pattern and quality of original Shaker knits.

The show features dozens of items from Shaker Museum including a dark blue wool machine knit sweater by the sisters at Canterbury Shaker Village, a white wool knit sweater coat produced by the Shakers at Enfield, a Lamb knitting machine used by the Shakers, knit mittens, clothing labels, and more. Over twenty Shaker knit sweaters, dating between 1920-1981, and various archival photographs from Bode Aujla's personal collection will be on display, along with two contemporary Bode knit pieces which utilize and interpret the traditional Shaker knit.

Designer Emily Adams Bode Aujla, commented: "*The Commercialization of Shaker Knits* shows the lasting inspiration and influence of Shaker knits on contemporary design. It was an honor for me to work with Shaker Museum to put together this important exhibition. As a designer, I believe it's my duty to not only help preserve some of these emotional responses that we have to objects and clothing but also to preserve the narrative and the technique behind them. Visitors will be able to see the connection between these archival pieces and my current work."

Shaker Museum Executive Director Lacy Schutz commented, "Through her creative process, Emily remains committed to the preservation of American craft, as well as the study and recontextualization of historically female-centric textile techniques. Emily has been a great collaborator with Shaker Museum and we are thrilled to present this show which highlights her work and the enduring Shaker influence on design."

The exhibition will run from Friday, June 16<sup>th</sup> through Sunday, September 10<sup>th</sup>. Exhibition hours are Thursday through Saturday from 10:00am to 6:00pm and Sundays from 11:00am to 4pm. No tickets or advanced reservations are required. For more information on the exhibition visit: <http://shakermuseum.us>. For more information on the Kinderhook Knitting Mill (located at 8 Hudson Street in Kinderhook, NY) visit: [www.kinderhookknittingmill.com](http://www.kinderhookknittingmill.com).

In addition to *The Commercialization of Shaker Knits*, Shaker Museum's programming for 2023 includes summer and fall activations and more information is forthcoming. Shaker Museum's programs are made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

Shaker Museum purchased a 19<sup>th</sup>-century industrial building in Chatham, NY and is in the process of renovating and building an expansive addition to the facility designed by Selldorf Architects. The physical building will embody Shaker values of inclusion, innovation, and equality to create a museum that both tells the Shaker story and is responsive to the needs of the community in Chatham, Columbia County, and the surrounding Hudson Valley. The museum will also retain and maintain the historic Shaker site in Mount Lebanon. The new campus located at 5 Austerlitz Street will provide ample space

for exhibitions and respond to the need for inclusive community gathering spaces through its exhibitions and robust programming.

### **About Shaker Museum**

With more than 18,000 objects, Shaker Museum stewards the most comprehensive collection of Shaker material culture and archives. It is the leader nationwide among organizations devoted to Shaker history. Its permanent new facility in Chatham, NY, which is in development, was designed by Selldorf Architects. The museum also stewards the historic site in New Lebanon, NY and has a campus in Old Chatham, NY, which is open year-round by appointment, where the administrative offices, collections, library, and archives are housed. The museum's collection can be viewed online at <http://shakermuseum.us>.

**Photos Link:** [Here](#).

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