

Foragers

Mint Museum Atrium
North Carolina

As part of the *In Vivid Color* exhibition in Fall 2020 and to honor its tenth anniversary in Charlotte's city center, the Mint Museum Uptown has added *Foragers* by the Oklahoma City native Summer Wheat to its public atrium. This monumental "stained glass" installation celebrates the resilience of North Carolina's community of makers and providers and creates a space where our present-day Charlotte community can gather for contemplation and inspiration. Collaging sheets of colored vinyl, Wheat has created a towering, prismatic composition that fills all 96 windows of the Mint atrium with female figures of varied sizes, ages, shapes, and races performing acts of labor: fisherwomen, beekeepers, hunters, mothers, caretakers, farmers, bankers.

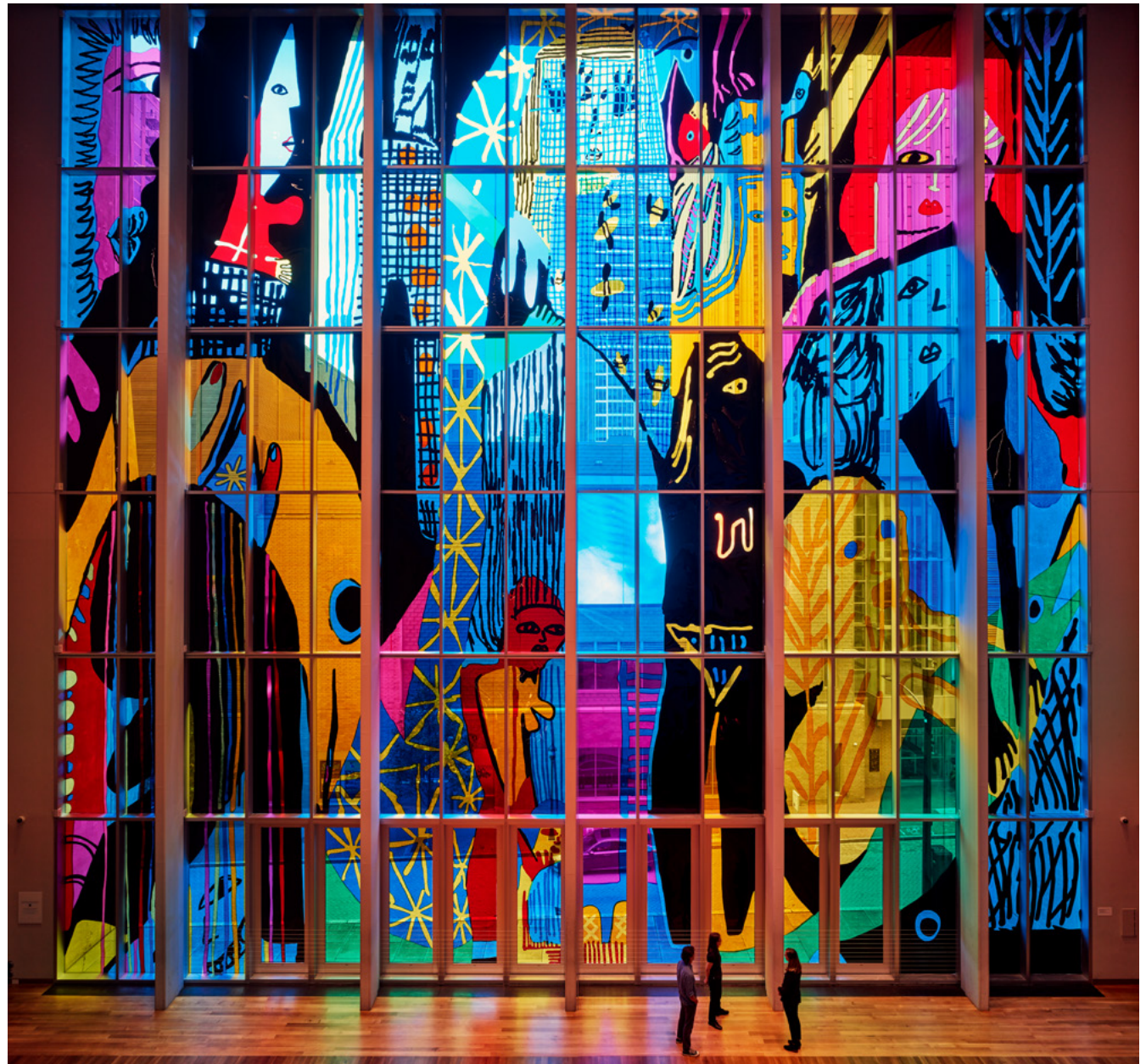
Following the tradition of stained-glass windows found in places of worship, Wheat offers a narrative of hope and resilience that can be enjoyed in a few minutes or studied over hours. Wheat says that "*Foragers* presents a tradition in which women were the original hunters, technologists, and artists. This array of women connected by geometric patterns echoes the psychological space of women supporting each other. They are marching together, connecting to creatures from land and water, demonstrating their inherent link to natural elements and to the intricate depths of the unconscious."

The women in *Foragers* also call attention to the underrecognized populations who have cultivated the land that we now call North Carolina, from the indigenous tribes to the colonial settlers to the enslaved Africans and all those who have followed. The region is home to myriad traditions—ceramics, basket weaving, quilting, furniture construction, textile production—and the Mint Museum specifically celebrates that legacy through its collection and exhibitions. *Foragers* salutes North Carolina's history of creativity and industry, both by those whose names we know and those who remain anonymous.

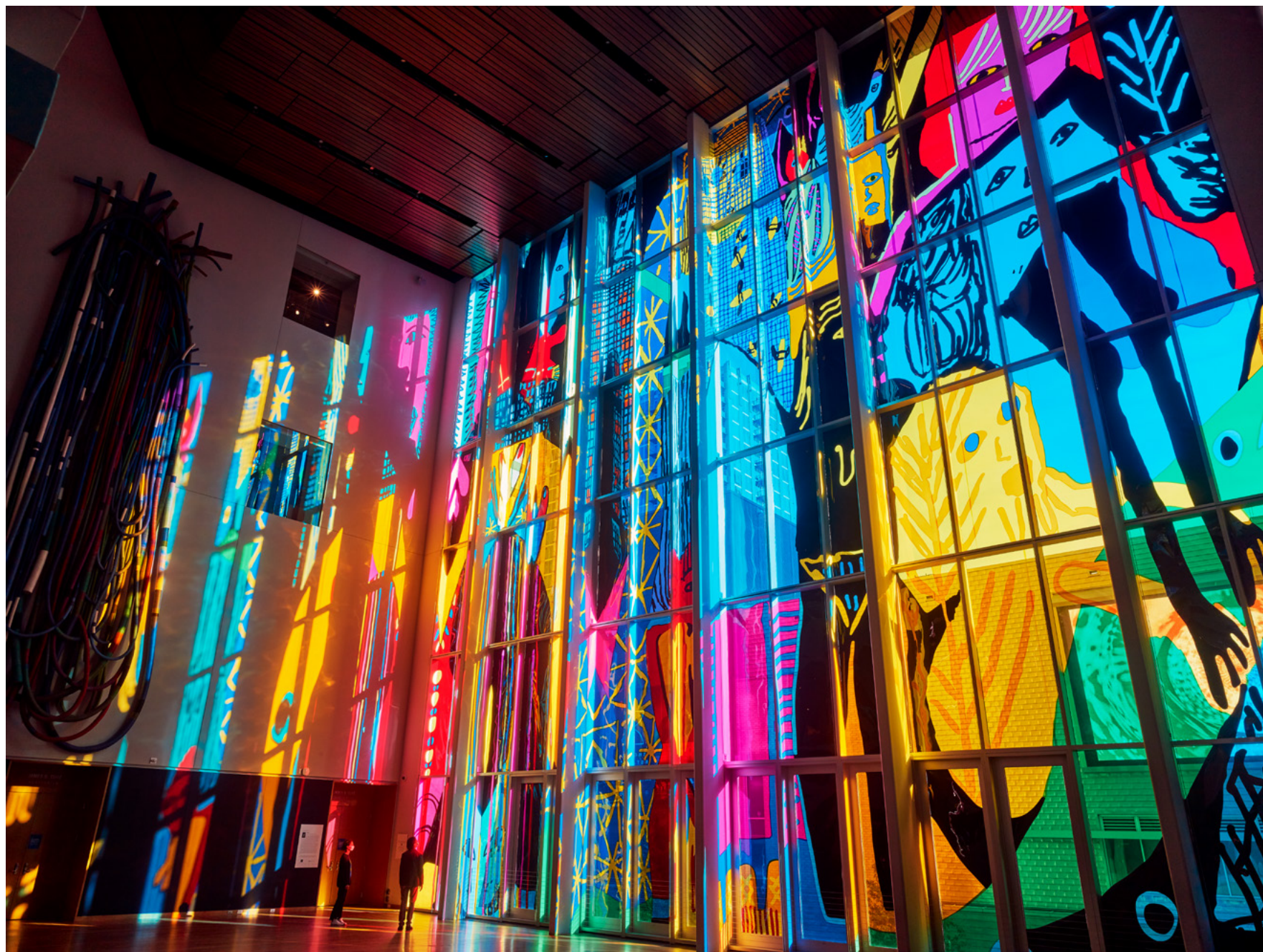
The fabrication and acquisition of *Foragers* was made possible entirely with funds from the Wells Fargo Foundation's Women Artists Fund, a stalwart supporter of the Mint Museum with a particular mission to reconcile the imbalance of representation in museum collections around the world.



Foragers, 2020
colored vinyl on mylar, 805.5 x 738.5 inches



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