

Study for Sculpture



Why Knot?

Eva Hesse created sculptures using malleable mediums including latex, plastic, and rope. Unlike Minimalist artists, who produced hard-edged, geometric forms with a machine-made aesthetic, Hesse manipulated soft materials to cascade, spiral, and gently drape in response to gravity.



Study for Sculpture, 1967

Take a closer look

Eva Hesse (1936–1970) activated a rigid grid with a field of knotted cords. The work embraces a multitude of contradictions: hard/soft; light/shadow; precise/irregular; durable/fragile.

In her own words

“Don’t ask what it means or what it refers to.... Don’t ask what the work is. Rather, see what the work does.”

Who knew?

Hesse, a German-born Jew, escaped Nazi Germany at age two, when she and her older sister boarded one of the last Kindertransport trains bound for the Netherlands. The family reunited in England six months later and immigrated to the United States.

Eva Hesse, *Study for Sculpture*, 1967; Varnish, liquitex, Sculp-metal, cord, and Masonite; 10 x 10 x 1 inches; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Gift of Wallace and Wilhelmina Holladay; © The Estate of Eva Hesse, Hauser & Wirth Zürich, London

