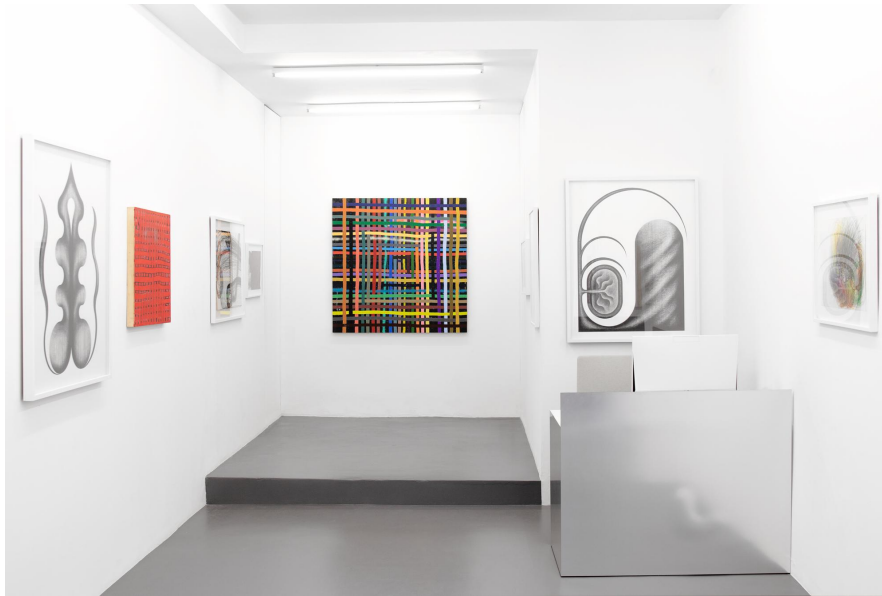


The Bridge by Christian Berst presents "DE LA LIGNE DANS LE FIL"

Judith Scott, Alicia McCarthy, Francesco Igory Deiana, Beverly Baker,
Yuichi Saito, Jill Gallieni, Yumiko Kawai, Momoko Nakagawa



When the line departs from its role as an outline to become the core material of the work, everything changes. The frontier becomes its own territory and the marginalised who roam around it become its citizens. Wirey abstractions attract high-wire artists, driven by the need to confront elementary forms of expression, to explore original spaces and to trace paths with mysterious destinations. 'De la ligne dans le fil' (The line within the thread) initiates a conversation among these artists, whose universal vocation involves the evocation of craft practices, often attributed to women, which they put at the service of their works in order to weave connections.

Judith Scott's enigmatic woollen assemblages, meticulously organised around a volume of which nothing remains visible, prompt questions about what they enclose. The artist attended the Creative Growth Center in Oakland, California, where she was able to develop her art. One might be tempted to imagine the obsessive work of an eight-legged artist enthroned in the middle of her web, imprisoning an object just trapped with her thread, to get rid of its surface and keep only its shape. However, when one allows one's gaze to wander over the meanders of these soft, colourful cocoons, one can also wonder if the chrysalis isn't more beautiful than the prey that lies within.

At the other end of the thread, **Alicia McCarthy**, an artist whose career also began in Oakland. With lightness, audacity and detachment, right from her youth, she has integrated herself into the urban fabric of her immediate environment by practicing a very raw form of graffiti, without artifice. Her work quickly spread beyond the boundaries of her city to the entire San Francisco Bay Area. Now a major figure in that area, her abstract paintings made of intertwined lines have been included in the collections of the MOMA in San Francisco and the Oakland Museum of California. She refers to the use of motifs familiar from art brut in these words:

"All my works revolve around the same metaphor. Bands of colors weaving and connecting with each other. It is adaptative, it is how plants, animals and people survive. There is a lot of beauty in that, people connect with them. To me they are abstract paintings. Even though they are weaves, I don't think of them this way, I think of them as interacting bands of colors, creating something larger than themselves."

Other weavers join in this conversation. **Francesco Igory Deiana** draws with a plumb line. Each of his abstractions is guided by a vertical line drawn in pencil. He succeeds in making his line vibrate enough for fluid and organic forms to emerge from this almost mechanical approach. Born in Italy, he has lived for a long time in the San Francisco area. A close friend of McCarthy, he has been able to rub shoulders with the local art scene, notably Barry McGee, with whom he shares a particular taste for graffiti, and a solid culture in art history.

Lines of cursive writing are not absent from these exchanges. **Beverly Baker's** dense overlays intersect with **Yuichi Saito's** saturated writing and **Jill Gallieni's** illegible prayers, while **Yumiko Kawai's** raised embroidery is echoed in **Momoko Nakagawa's** sinuous arcs.

Though diverse in their individual paths, through this visual conversation the artists in this exhibition demonstrate the commonality of their practice. Coming from the margins, they draw their own trajectory through the use of the linear motif, to make a deeply human statement: from the power of threading together and delicacy of aligning the self.

- Baimba Kamara, *curator of the exhibition*