

For Immediate Release

Lisa Solomon

Amime

7 September – 26 October 2024

Opening Reception: Saturday, September 7th, 5:00 – 8:00pm

Walter Maciel Gallery is pleased to present the exhibition, *Amime* by Lisa Solomon marking her sixth solo show with our gallery. The new body of work includes different rope installations – including knots, watercolor paintings, thread drawings and prints derived from the Japanese nautical pattern of fishing nets. *Amime* came into prominence in the Edo period and symbolizes success, both in terms of fishing and more largely in life.

The amime pattern was first introduced to Solomon on wrapping paper used for packages while shopping in Japan. Soon she realized it was common on numerous Japanese items –traditional kimonos, dish ware, hand towels and origami paper. This body of work was started when Solomon was invited to be included in the exhibition, *Reflecting on Ruth Asawa and the Garden of Remembrance* in the Fine Arts Gallery at San Francisco State earlier this year. Solomon instantly made a connection with the amime pattern to Asawa's graceful sculptures that were made with delicate interconnections of wire. She chose the color indigo paying homage to the pigment which was first brought to Japan in the 5th or 6th century and originally was reserved for the wealthy and Samurai class particularly because of its anti-bacterial qualities and ability to repel insects. By the 17th century, thousands of indigo vats were spread throughout the country and the color became synonymous with Japan. Indigo is loved for its ability to be many shades of blue referencing water in which the fishing nets are utilized.

Our exhibition includes two large wall installations done in various shades of indigo blue and are presented in conversation across from one another in Gallery 3. Playing on the sense of scale, the newest rope installation mimics the fishing net pattern in its unique form with the darker hues of blue starting at the top and fading down to the off-white color of the rope on the bottom. The second larger installation includes Solomon's more familiar knots recognizable from previous installations at our gallery and museums. Unlike the past versions shown in a standard grid, the knots follow the amime patterns created by the rope installation with white diamond shapes of the wall seen in between each intersection. The large French knots pay tribute to Senninbari (the auspicious number of 1,000) and the gathering of Japanese women who would make felt belts for their husbands that included 1,000 stitched French knots, each one by a different woman, to be worn under their uniform in combat for protection and good fortune. The knots symbolized the protection of the men's hara, a spiritual source that resides in one's gut. This physical act of gathering and inclusion is enacted in Solomon's art practice generating a group of participants who help cut, glue and hang the knots. Like Asawa who often used materials such as wire not associated with "fine art," Solomon uses common rope to explore the importance of its tactile and porous surface. The results are enlarged fishing nets but upon closer inspection it becomes evident that there is the artist's hand involved in making all the elements. Each knot is hand-tied with slight imperfections and differences in size and form. These artworks represent an accumulation of labor in a nod to tradition as well as the idea that labor itself offers solace and moments of resistance that are often overlooked but incredibly important.

In addition, a smaller dip-dyed rope piece with softened colors of the rainbow will be included and a Koi fish wall installation made of watercolor and cut to the shape of each fish. They are individually pinned to the wall in a circular pattern and represent strength of character, resilience, perseverance and courage. Smaller works with watercolor and stitching also depict the amime pattern and will be included in the show with a series of gelli prints.

Solomon received her BA in Art Practice at UC Berkeley and her MFA from Mills College. She is currently an adjunct professor at San Francisco State University. She has shown widely in the US including a recent solo exhibition entitled *Cellular Memory* at the San Luis Obispo Museum of Art in 2023. She currently has work in the public art program, Art Kiosk on Courthouse Square in Redwood City. Other group exhibitions include *Then As Now: Woodland Pattern 1980-2022* at the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design and the traveling exhibition, *A Beautiful Mess: Weavers and Knotters of the Vanguard*. Solomon has participated in several residencies and has completed a major commission for Meta in the Silicon Valley. In 2020 she completed a large commission at the headquarters of the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative. Her work is included in several private collections across the US.