



*Jack the Dropper and the little girl were in arcadia,  
painting, dripping all over the meadow.*

*I AM Nature! Jack exclaimed.  
Same! shouted the little girl exuberantly.*

*Thunder sounded. Nature said Ahem! YOUR pleasure  
begets labor little girl. You're working for the species if  
it kills you.*

*The government agreed.*

*The little girl was confused, frustrated, supine. On the  
couch. Dr. Freud scratched his chin and said "There is  
weaving... one of few things ladies invented, little girl. So  
they could weave their pubes together to hide their lack."*

*The little girl understood she had the paint but not the  
tool....  
A noncoercive rearrangement of desire was underway.*

*(These facts are indisputable, like taste itself.)*

*following*

Installation views from "I AM NATURECULTURE!", at Veda, Florence (IT), 2023









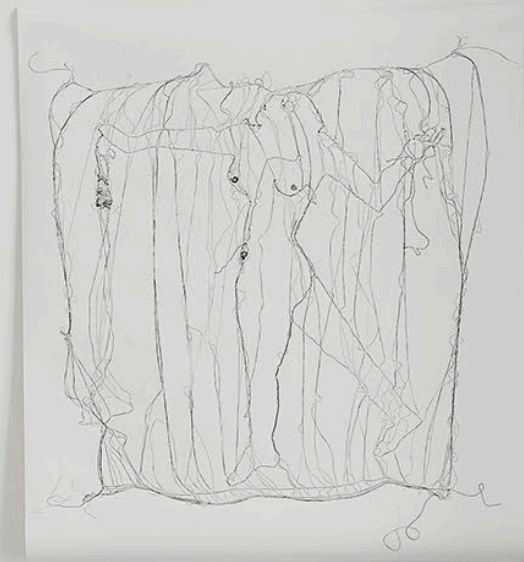
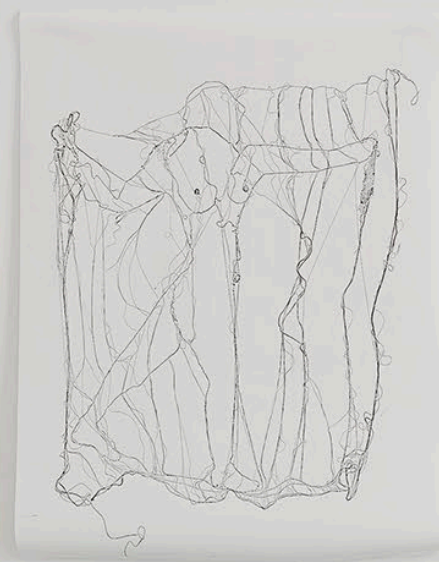
Whose internal reward system?  
2023  
hand-woven and hand-dyed cotton fiber on iron folding screen  
267 x 335 x 1.5 cm

and

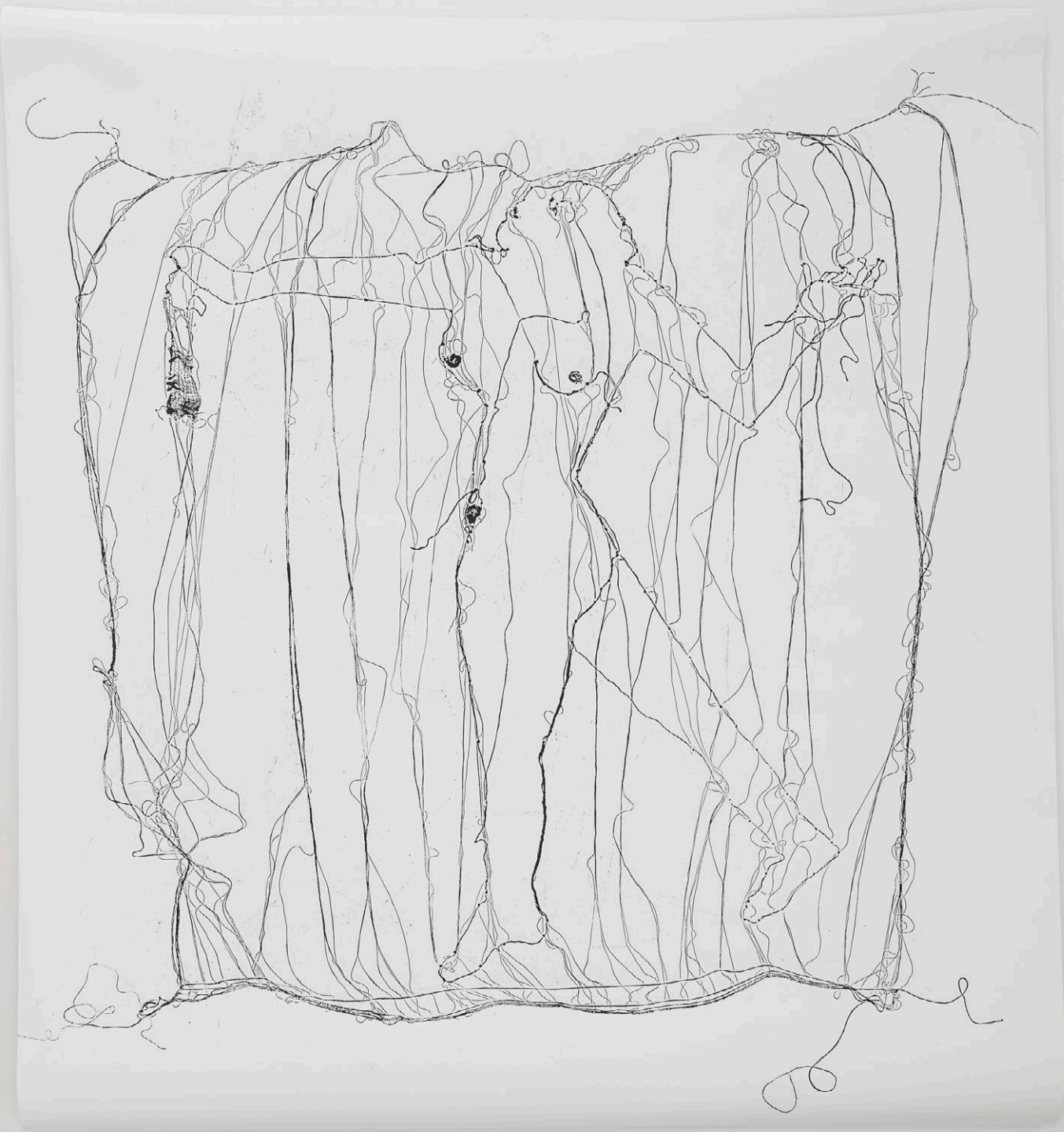
Instabile #9 (Positive, released)  
2020  
monotype on paper  
38 x 28 cm







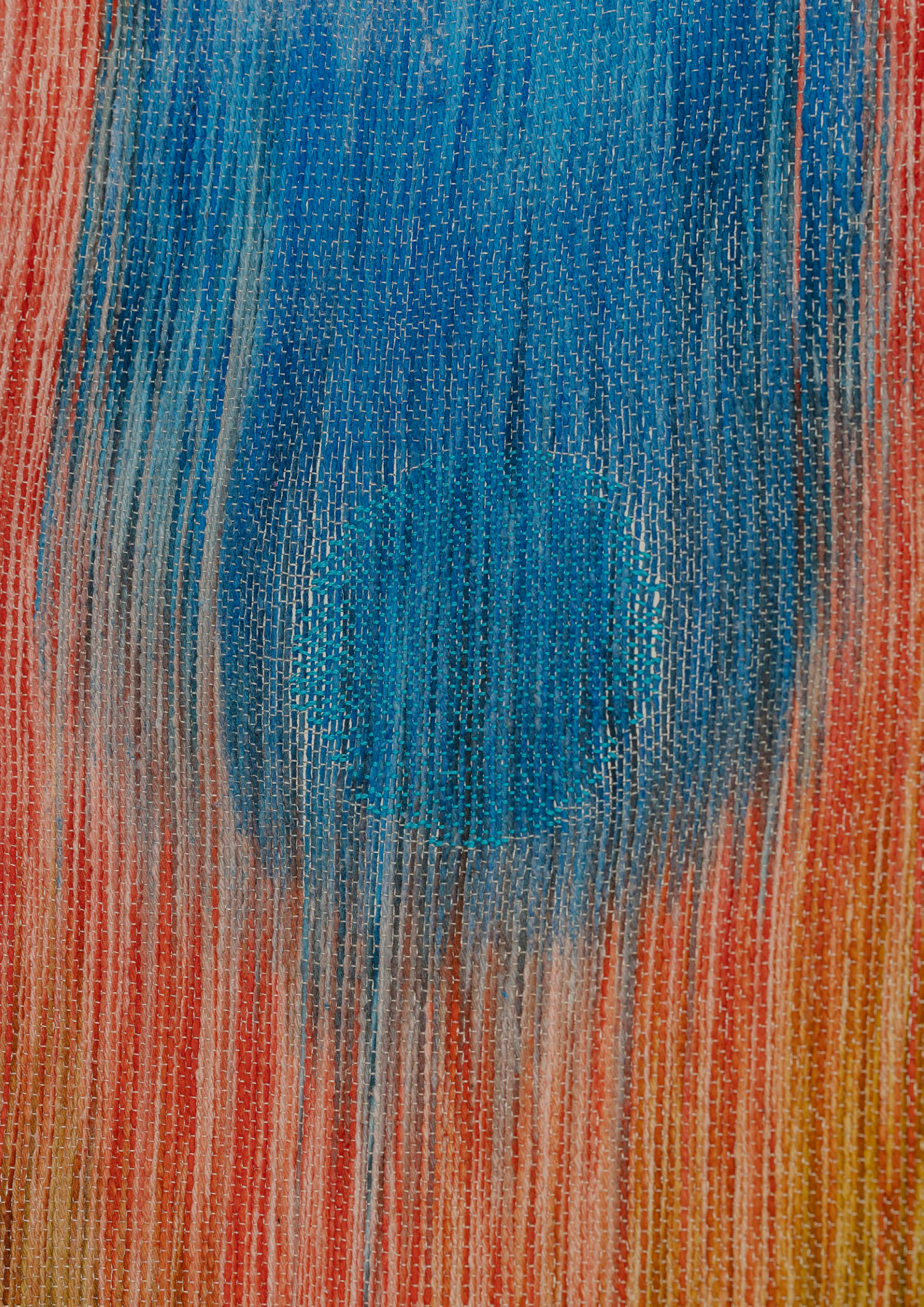




(top)  
*A poor, bare, forked animal*  
 2023  
 hand-woven and hand-painted cotton and silk fiber on iron folding screen  
 251.5 x 312 x 1.5 cm

(right)  
*The right hates Eros*  
 2023  
 monotype on paper  
 245 x 223 cm















MY

GREEN

AGE







(top)

*Icelandic Poppies III.*  
2022

Oil on canvas on Paul McMahon's stretcher bars  
88.9 x 101.6 cm

(left)

*Wild Roses*  
2022

Oil on canvas  
27.9 x 35.5 cm





My Green Age,  
Poppies, summer 2022

While working in a studio near a flower farm, I became seduced by the twisting, stretching, and entangled stems of stringy Icelandic poppies grown there. These papery flowers with their furry stems, even after they'd been cut, continued to elevate and explode into bloom before my eyes as I painted them.

The resulting canvases are representative of how my work with fibers has influenced my oil painting practice in the years since I started weaving. Tension, which is so important to the interrelationship of warp on weft on a loom, is something that I've come to look for in the subjects that I paint from observation.

My involvement in the structuring of what Anni Albers called "The Pliable Plane" has heightened my interest in how tension is built into the picture plane of a painting. I was immediately attracted to the dynamism of these stringy, ephemeral poppies and their dramatic flux of energetic motion.

Patience is another thing that weaving has taught me, enabling me to devote more time to the less spontaneous moments of painting: the building up of the surface, the repetitive application of multiple coats of paint.

It has been said that flowers are a "non subject" that invite a painter to address problems of painting as such. But it is also easy to anthropomorphize these animated figures. I am touched by their almost hysterical reaching and, ultimately, their slump and disintegration. I saw it all unfold. In these paintings they are preserved in their moment of delicate vitality.

(left)

Icelandic Poppies I.  
2022  
Oil on canvas  
40.6 x 50.8 cm





*Icelandic Poppies II.*  
 2022  
 Oil on canvas on Paul McMahon's stretcher bars  
 86.3 x 101.6 cm





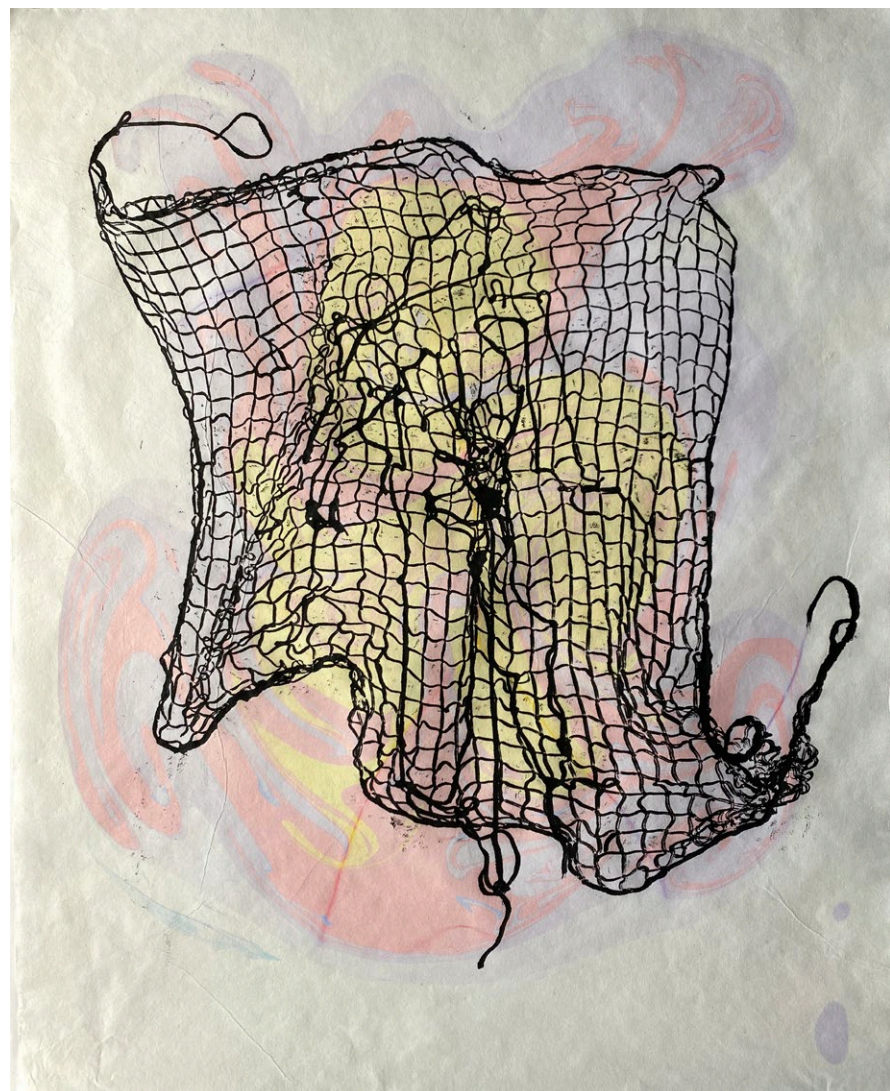


SOMETIMES I GO ABOUT IN PITY FOR MYSELF AND ALL THE WHILE A GREAT WIND CARRIES ME ACROSS THE SKY









50.8 x 76.2 cm each  
 series of 20 monotypes on Kitikata paper.  
 Produced with Christin Ripley at Objects in the Round, 2022.



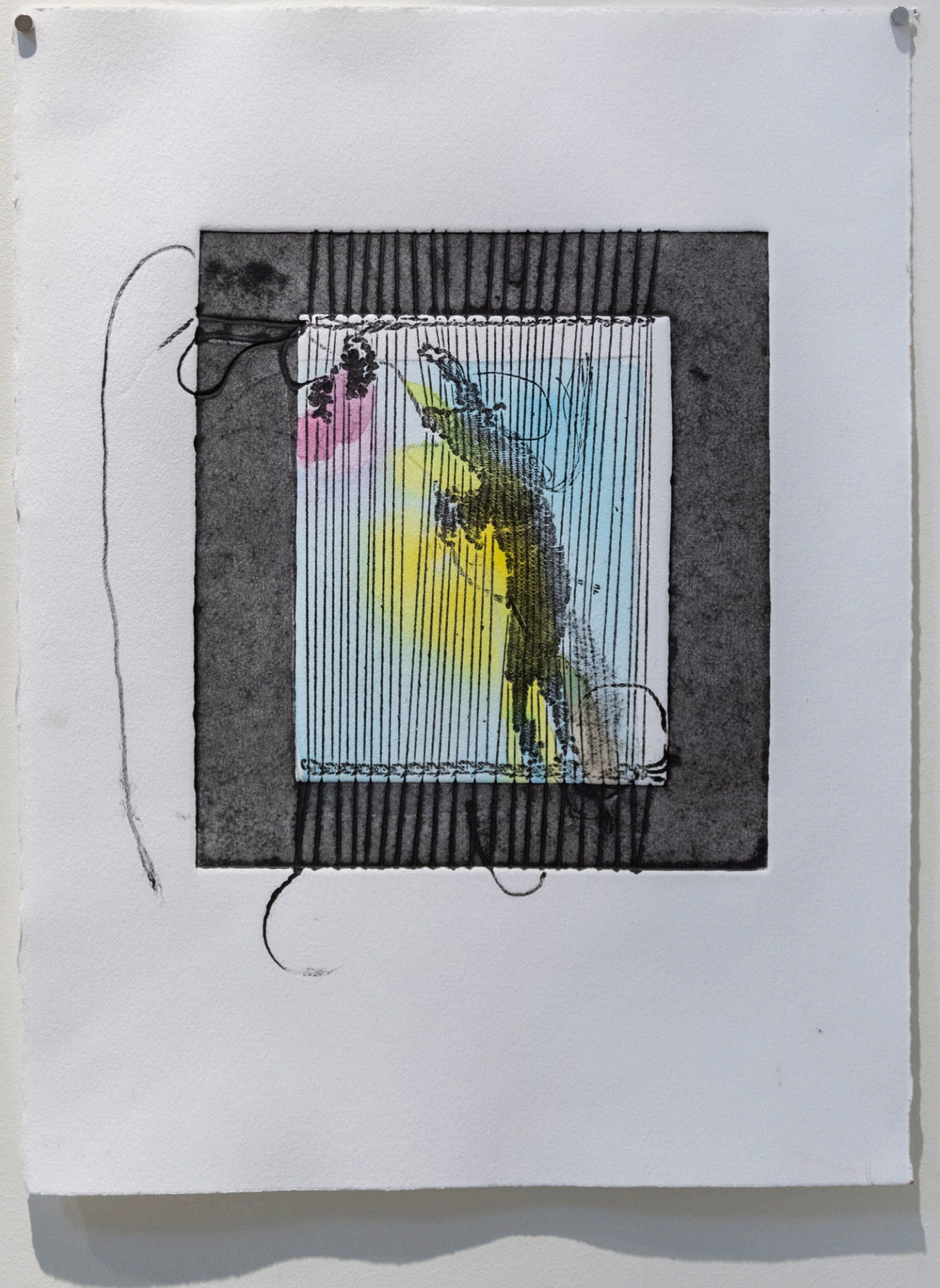


*following*

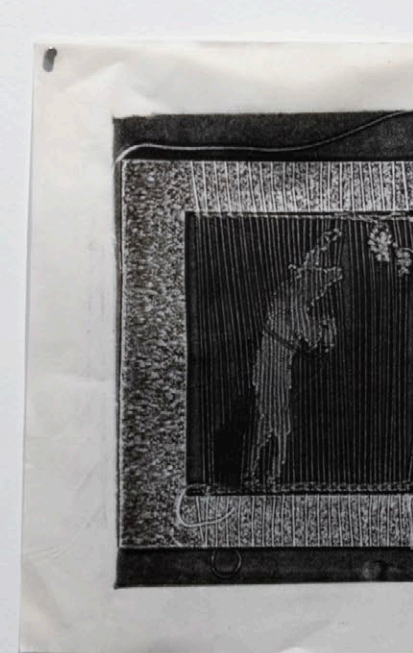
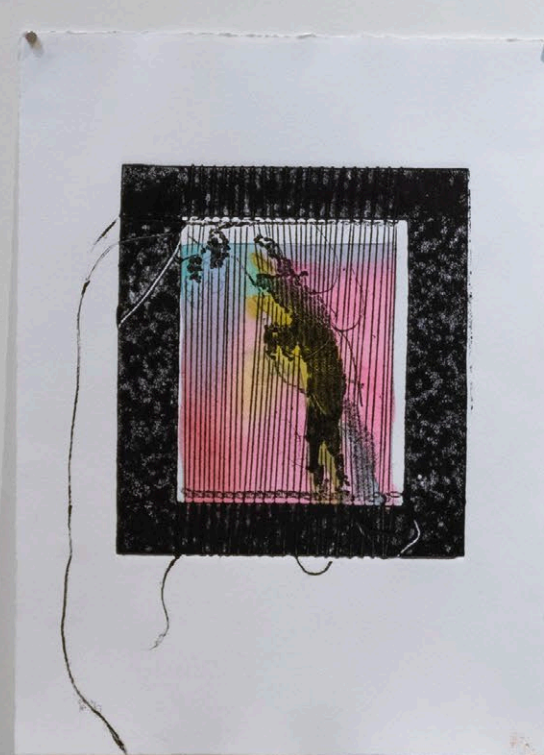
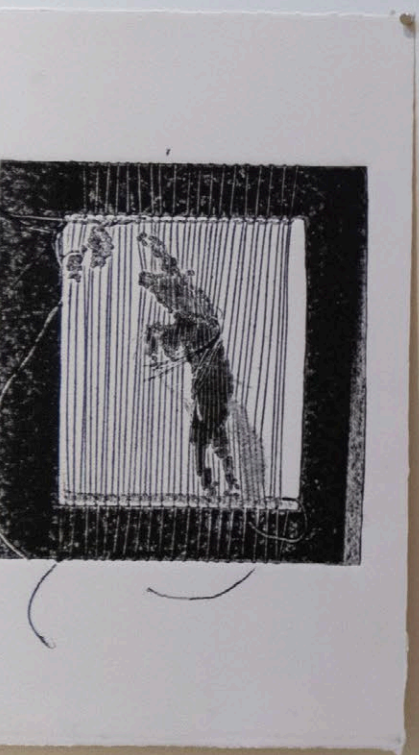
Installation views from *Dramas of Adjustment*, at April in Paris Fine Arts, Soeast (NL), 2021



Clusters of Promises (H)  
2021  
collograph on cotton rag paper, hand colouring with acrylic ink  
36.5 x 28 cm











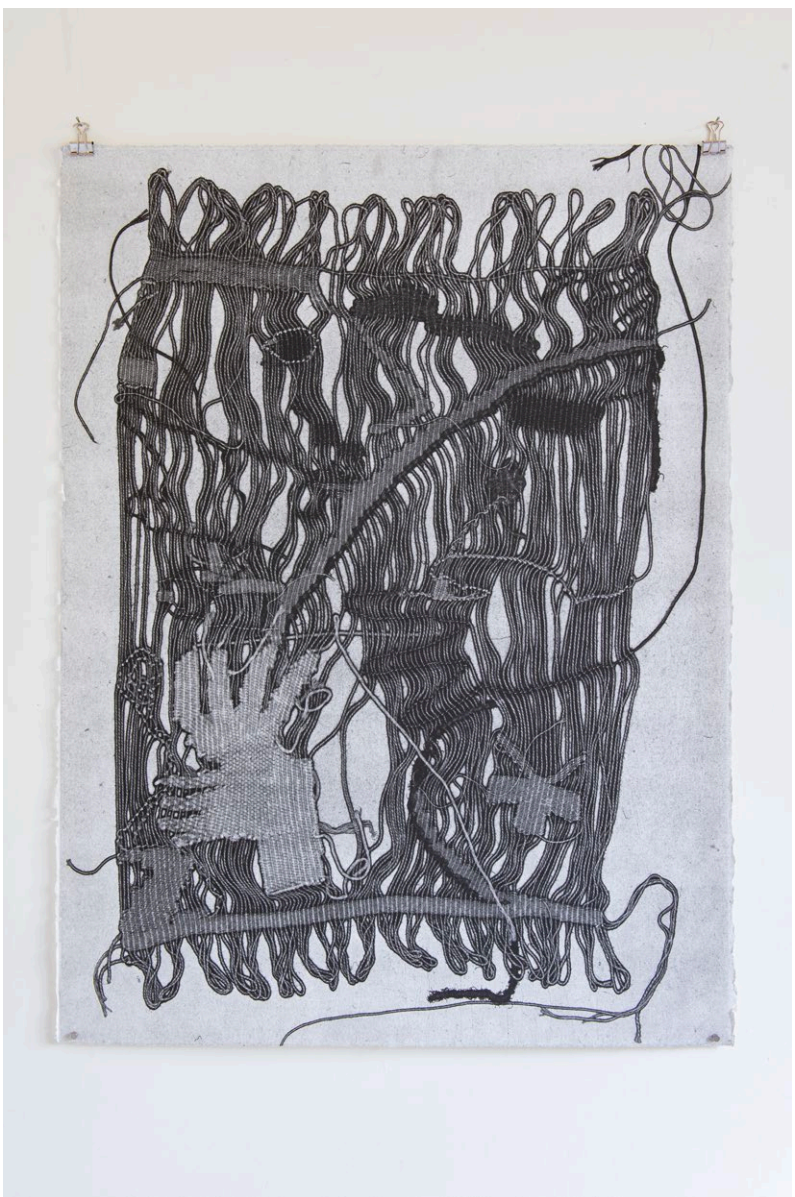








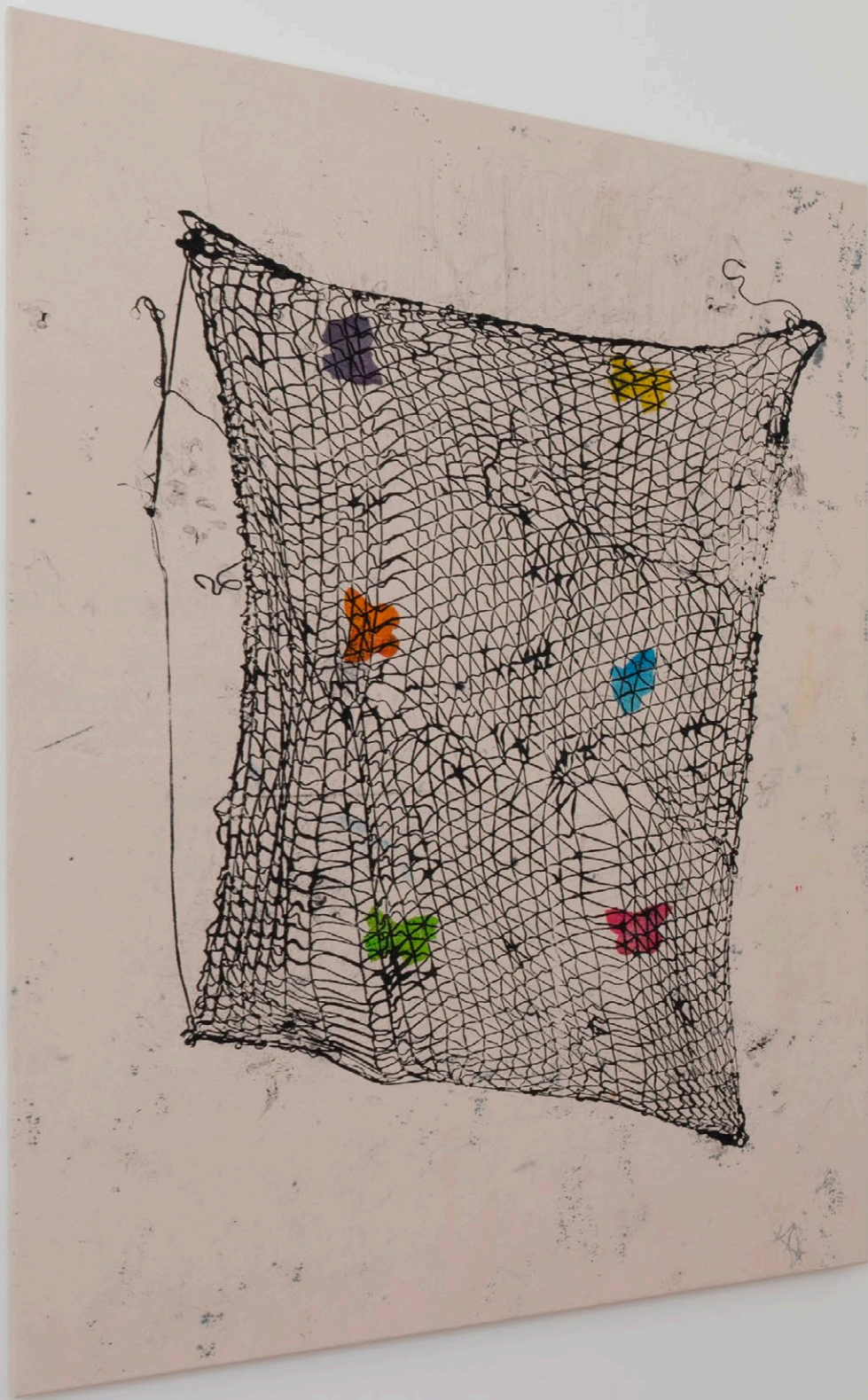




“Naess’s collagraphs are prints of loosely woven figurative constructions of threads. The fragile matrix is recomposed each time it is inked and printed. The prints are thus the result of a circular process of stretching, loosening, inking and repeating. Besides her examination of narratives such as myths and fables, Naess depicts in her paintings details she observes in everyday life, often looking to plant forms and their negative space between the foliage, as a mirror of the tensions in the woven work. “

Untitled (Arc, negative) and Untitled (Arc, positive)  
 Publication in collaboration with Marina Ancona  
 2020  
 collagraph  
 76.5 x 57 cm





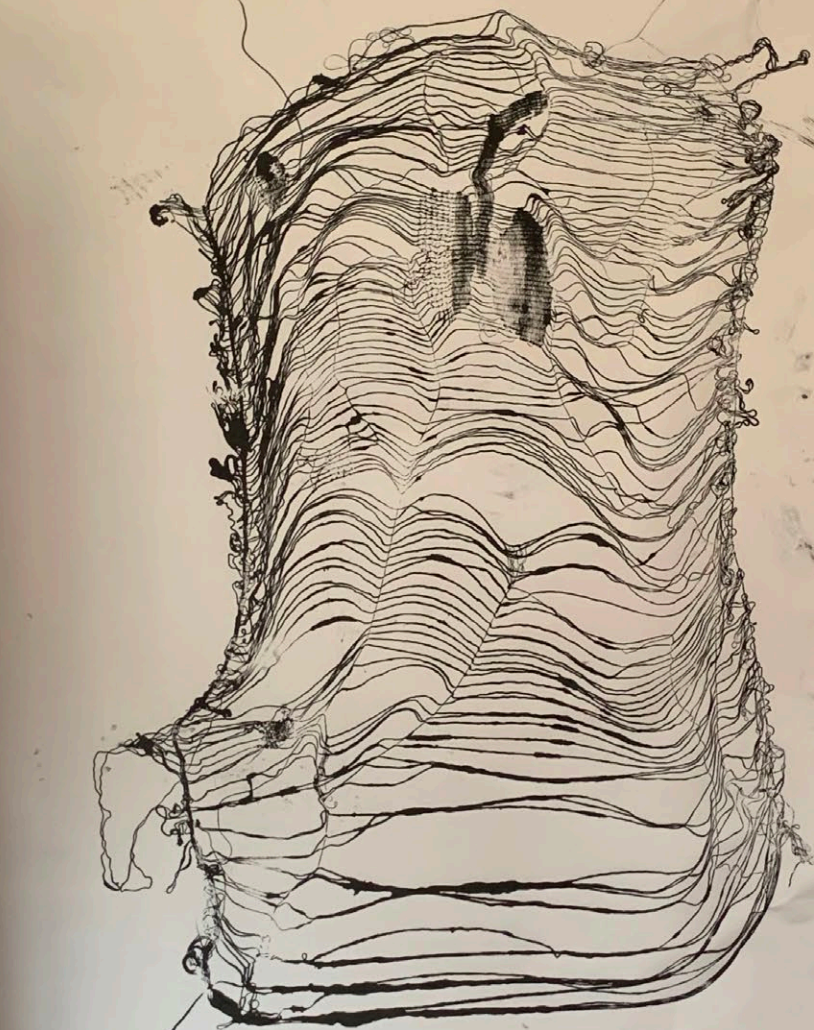
Butterfly net  
2021  
collagraph on canvas, acrylic ink  
190 x 130 cm



NUT

ISLAND













Untitled (runner)  
2020  
gouache on paper  
90 x 67 cm





The Apocalypse Tapestry was commissioned by the French throne during the Hundred Years' War against England, a war which resulted in the emergence of strong national identities in both countries. The capitalist mode of production was establishing itself in Europe as common lands were enclosed, and the ravages of the black plague also gave resonance to the tapestry's monstrosities.

During the French Revolution the Apocalypse Tapestry was looted and cut up into pieces which were used for various purposes: as floor mats, to protect local orange trees from frost, to shore up holes in buildings, and to insulate horse stables.

\*

The pastoral vision is characterized by a negative ethos: it requires omission.

\*

Anni Albers writes of curtains: The very fact of mobility makes them the carrier of extra aesthetic values. A red wall may become threatening in the constancy of a high pitch, while red curtains of equal color intensity and able to cover an equal area can be of great vitality and yet not overpowering because the red area can be varied by drawing the curtain.

\*

The Tortoise and the Hare is an ancient account of a race between unequal partners. Its proverbial moral is flexible. A 17th century version of the story advises lovers to 'hasten slowly.'

\*

*following*

Installation views from *The Tapestry of the Apocalypse*, at 17 Essex, New York (US)), 2018













Slow Thing  
2018  
handwoven silk and cotton fiber  
249 x 305 cm



“A couple years ago a friend showed me a piece of cloth she had made in a class about the painted warp weaving technique. I was struck by how the painted image (applied to the warp) was diffused by the weft threads woven into it. The dialectical combination of warp and weft softened and destabilized the image. It was a beautiful kind of facture I had never seen before.”

In her essay “Pictures Made of Wool: the Gender of Labor at the Bauhaus Weaving Workshop,” T’ai Smith compares the status of pictorial weaving to that of painting, examining the reasons for weaving’s “linguistic absence” and inferior status in modernist discourse:

“Weaving practice is on the one hand “feminine”—unable to sublate the body and its labor into the transcendental realm of painting, and on the other hand “feminized”—kept untheorized, without discursive parameters. My purpose has been to give a theory of weaving so that it can be assessed on its own terms. For though grounded in process and labor, weaving has other possibilities within the limits of its craft. Contrasting material features, such as silky vs rough, or shiny vs matte, as well as contrasting weaves, show that the formal design is not merely imposed onto the material, but itself transformed by the different weaves and yarns harnessed in the process. The pictorial form, the materials, and the fabric’s structure are mutually entwined. The limitations of weaving, in other words, are not inadequacies. Rather, they help us understand weaving as a medium, which, like other disciplines, generates its own ideas.”









LABOR

OF

LOVE





I retrieved the loom from Phillipsport, New York, with the help of my father. It became a psychic presence in my room, commanding me to think about structure, design, purity, and hard work. It was a salvation. My mother spent the night. I realized how sexualized my place had become. I hid the coconut oil. I hoped there were no condom wrappers floating around in bed.

I wanted to work harder and I couldn't afford the distraction of all these men coming over to fuck at all times of day. I cancelled all my dates except for \_\_\_\_\_. We made a plan to paint with oil and I set about preparing canvases.

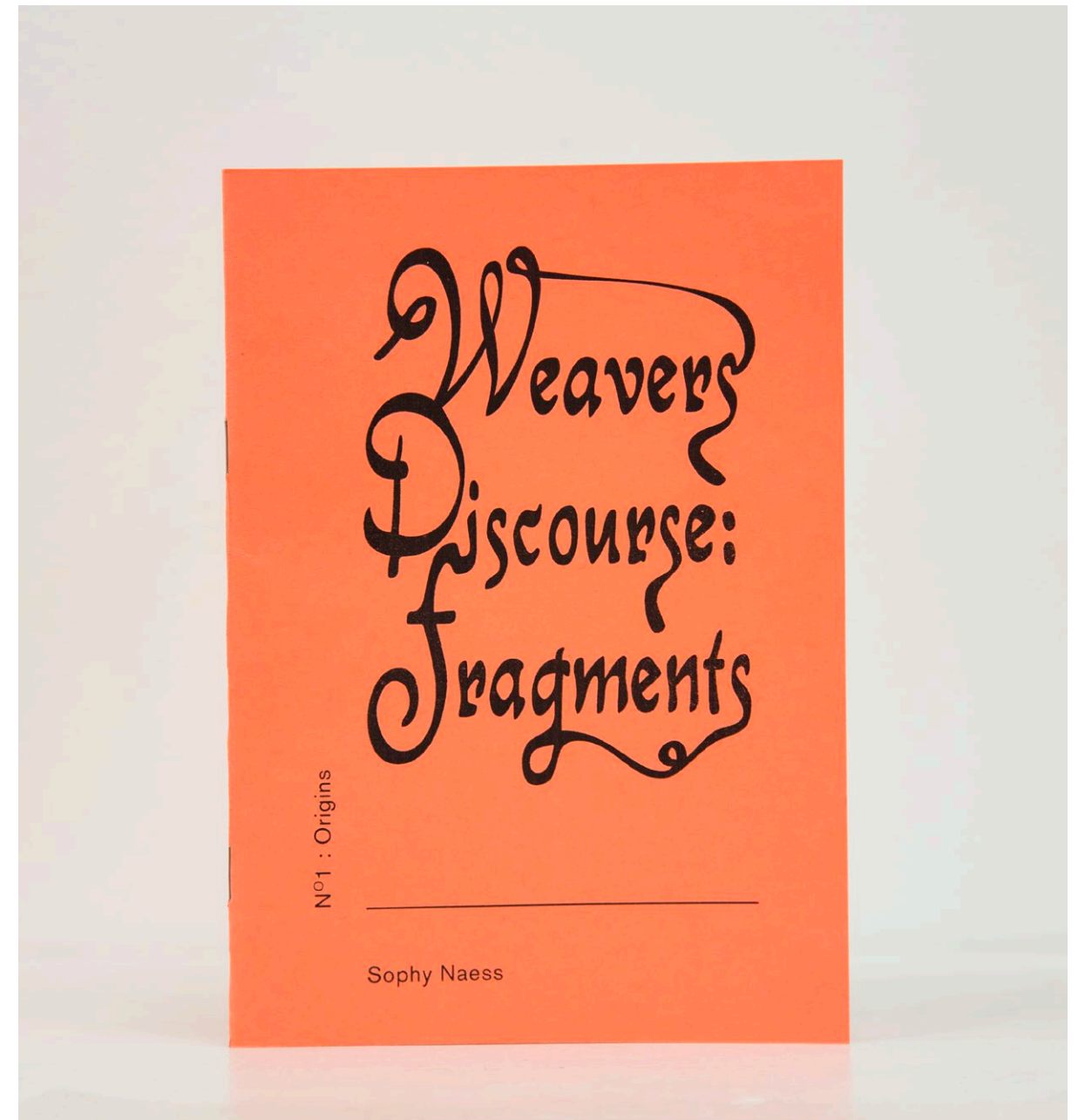
- Rachel would help me dress the loom
- Sarah would teach me how to use weave drafts
- \_\_\_\_\_ would be my model
- Emma would show me how to use my new shuttles
- I would use canvas for my cartoons and stretch these paintings
- I would continue writing my weavers discourse, my self being the warp into which so many experiences were woven.

a Tergo  
2016  
handwoven silk and cotton fiber  
330 x 244 cm









Weavers Discourse: Fragments  
N°1: Origins  
2016  
Sophy Naess Brooklyn, NY  
designed by Adam O'Reilly



(...)

I leave the house and see the BQE is like the warp threads I dreamed about, elevated, going right across my field of vision with a backdrop of night sky over Staten Island, with some ocean in between, but really a filthy urban landscape of speeding trucks and their fumes at the same time as being very romantic and refreshing because there are some stars in the evening sky and the temperature hints of a time of year that has certainly been lusty and verdant since time immemorial and my body is responding to it. The city and this, together, are a radical form of weaving. Looking at this weaving I know also that Emily Sunblad is singing in a church somewhere, because I saw it on instagram. It feels remote, but still part of this weaving.

A man in a gay bar tells me about a video game called LOOM. He also asks me, why is the thread made of many fibers stronger than the one big thread?

I don't know, but I become fascinated by just the idea of the many fibers. What if it was possible to pay attention to every fiber? Every person in the subway a fiber? Every word, every sign, every shoe, every mouth. This would surely give one confidence in the strength of the greater filament, this would reduce disgust, increase courage.

(...)

I promised myself to write about weaving tonight. Drinking a bottle of wine and writing is a form of weaving.

To Hayley: my experience of weaving comes from two important things: that of having played near my grandmother's loom as a child, and that of living with your mothers loom, calling it my own, learning to use it and feeling connected to something through it.

To anyone: it has helped me in times of disgust to see weaving as an overarching metaphor. When I look at everything around me, and try to dissolve categories and merely observe unanchored details, I enjoy thinking of each of these details as a fiber that is being spun together with all the rest. When I walk through Atlantic Pacific I try to see each person I pass and every sign, perhaps a newspaper headline when I pass the newsstand — as all being fabulously interspersed.

Why does this make me feel better? What is this fantasy of organization, fantasy of a whole thing that encom- passes all those fibers?

Perhaps in weaving everything is equal. There is no hierarchy, there is no detail, there is only structure. Color is superficial. The pattern would exist without color. Decorum is possible but not necessary. If you pay attention to the weave you are paying attention to a superstructure that every fiber can be made to participate in.  
Does it sound fascist?  
Holistic?

People say “the fabric of” for instance of “everyday life.” Everything is part of this fabric because of weaving.

Weaving builds structure out of the disparate threads of wine bottle and goose, young woman and sawhorse, extension cord and cloud, baseball cap and lightbulb, pink felt blanket and tourist, sidewalk and kitchen — any two threads, structured as warp and weft, cross each other to produce strength and meaning.

(...)

I meet my brother for an Ozu film, the Only Son.

The opening credits roll over a background of woven cloth. The first subtitle that appears says, “all tragedy begins in the bond between parent and child.”

The movie is partly about debt. A female factory worker is convinced to send her son to high school and beyond, despite the fact that she is raising him alone, poor, and “getting old.” She works very hard spinning wool.

A young teacher convinces her she must send her son to school. “Who will take care of me?” she asks. “I will study hard and will become a great man,” her son says.

Years later she visits him in Tokyo. He is poor and borrows money from other teachers at the night school where he teaches geometry, in order to feed and entertain his mother.

The most awful part of the film is after mother and son sit in an open landscape near an incinerator and he confesses how disappointed he is with how his life has turned out. “I wish I never came to Tokyo, i wish i never went away to school” he says. The mother is terribly upset. At night she reveals to her son that she had to give everything up to pay for his education, has sold her house and all her property. “I live in the factory dormitory now,” the old mother says to our shock, while her sons wife sobs in the next room. “It would all be for the good if you were happy,” the mother says.

I meet a much younger man or boy. He tells me about the tapestry in the book “OF HUMAN BONDAGE.” He says surely i know of Hegel's use of the weaving metaphor. Yes, I am down with those dialectics. Originally he had only asked me out to lunch, calling it the least assuming meal date. I say, sorry an unassuming lunch has turned into such a tapestry! meaning, lots of time in bed, weaving, weaving bodies, telling stories, listening to records, sharing meals, looking at the harbor at close proximity from various vantages, chasing geese, kissing relentlessly. Truly a lot of weaving.

Rachel comes over to help dress the loom. First is a lot of counting, tracing a path around a warping board for hours. While I do this Rachel sits with an unruly ball of yarn, slowly untangling it and winding it into neat balls on the wool winding machine that came with Hayley's mom's loom.

I like this, she says. It reminds me of being close to my mom on the couch where she sat with her balls of yarn.



*Sophy Naess*  
*Supporters' Circle*



Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I am sending you this special invitation because you have collected my work in the past. I'm offering a subscription opportunity that invites you to help me focus on my art at the same time that I provide you with a growing collection of my work -- at an unusually low cost.

As a member of my Supporters' Circle, you will receive a hand- printed silk scarf each month. Scarf editions will employ a variety of print processes, including relief, silkscreen, and monotype, with occasional hand-painting. The prints will feature subjects that reflect my interests: from current events to classical, allegorical, and vegetal motifs, portraiture, and text.

I've chosen the silk scarf for my Supporters' Circle editions because of its versatility. The silk square can be framed and hung, worn as an accessory, or easily stored and transported. In short: it's a highly circulatable product. Scarves are 22 inches square and 100 percent silk, with rolled hem and an embroidered Sophy Naess Supporters' Circle label designed by Raque Ford.

Subscribers pay \$100 per month, and commit to the subscription for at least three months, beginning in November 2015.

I'm grateful for your support in this unique relationship. Consider this also an invitation to visit my studio. I look forward to talking with you about what I'm working on.

Thank you,

Sophy Naess

[Sunset Park, Brooklyn, October 2015]



Scarf 2 pictures the Scandinavian landscape that is home to the Skogsrå, a mythological siren of sorts who appears in the trees and tempts the wanderer to pursue her deeper and deeper into the forest. When finally she turns her back she reveals herself to be an apparition, a hollow body that can only be a portal into further depths. This is also the moment when the one following her realizes there is no known path out of the forest. Anyone who knows the enchantment of the woods may recognize the legend as a sensible warning to turn back at a reasonable hour. I always related to it as a metaphor for problems in painting.



2. THE SKOGSRÅ  
DECEMBER 2015



3. APRIL FOOL IN A BOX  
MARCH 2019

This scarf is a silkscreen with hand-coloring. I posed in a semi-headstand position in front of the mirror and photographed myself with my phone, attempting to approximate a position that would fill the square scarf and push against its edges as an expression of my feeling of confinement in an academic workplace, instagram feed, etc as I approached my April Fool's birthday anniversary.



This scarf commemorates the July 4th protest at the Statue of Liberty. Protesters unfurled a banner calling for abolition of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency, which was founded as recently as 2003 and seems clearly, tragically at odds with the American values the Statue stands for.

Therese Patricia Okoumou of Staten Island scaled the Statue and is pictured here resting at its base before being apprehended by police. I thank these protesters for bringing such unique visibility to the outrage so many Americans are feeling these days.



33. JULY 4 2018  
AUGUST 2018



44. MELUSINE  
DECEMBER 2019

Scarf #44 is a companion to the Medusa which precedes her in the series. This is a silk-screened scarf with hand coloring. While researching the Medusa Gorgon I encountered the character of Melusine in medieval manuscripts. She seems to be a beneficent figure, but she apparently grows a serpent's tail when she believes she is bathing in privacy. If the Medusa is about pussy envy, Melusine seems to be about "Big Dick Energy."







SOPHY NAESS  
b.1982, New York US

EDUCATION

- 2013 MFA Mason Gross School of the Arts
- 2004 BFA Cooper Union

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 “I AM NATURECULTURE!”, Veda, Florence, IT
- 2021 Dramas of Adjustment, April in Paris Fine Arts, Aerdenhout, NL
- 2020 Floating World Revisited, 628 Grand St, Brooklyn
- 2018 The Tapestry of the Apocalypse, 17 Essex, NYC
- 2018 Selections from Sophy Naess Supporters' Circle scarf editions at 45b Rue Ramponeau, Paris
- 2017 All The Things You Are, The Middler, Brooklyn
- 2016 Labor of Love, 321 Gallery, Brooklyn
- 2013 Furtive Movements, Weekend Projects, Brooklyn
- 2011 Unexpected Pasts and Frantic Futures, Galleri Box, Gothenburg, Sweden
- 2009 The Fairest of them All, Galleri Thomassen, Gothenburg, Sweden
- 2008 Like to Get to Know You Well, Galleri 54, Gothenburg, Sweden
- 2008 The Railton Collection, New York

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 Mosaics, James Barron Fine Art, Kent CT
- 2022 The Printer's Proof, Albuquerque Museum, Albuquerque, NM
- 2021 Sonia Louise Davis Selects: Foundation for Contemporary Arts Benefit Exhibition, Greene Naftali Gallery, NYC
- Asynchronous Viewing, Heroes Gallery NYC
- Anarchy of the Imagination, Kerry Schuss Gallery, NYC
- Art for Life's Sake, April in Paris Fine Arts, Aerdenhout, NL
- Love at the End, Heroes Gallery <http://www.heroesgallery.gallery/>
- 2020 Sikås Biennale 2020, Sikås Art Center, Sweden
- 2019 May China, Xi’anAcademy of Fine Arts, Xi’an, China
- Pulled in Brooklyn, IPCNY, New York
- Grand Buffet, Baba Yaga Gallery, Hudson NY
- 2018 NADA New York with 321 Gallery, New York NY
- Editions/Artists Book Fair with 10 Grand Press, New York NY
- To Whom It May Concern, BILAGA Editions, Skövde Konsthall, Skövde Sweden
- Summer in Sikås, Växjö Konsthall, Växjö Sweden
- 2017 How to Draw the Human Figure, Agency Gallery, Brooklyn
- Capitalist Realism Surimono, Situations, New York
- Ephemeroptera, The Hand Space, Brooklyn
- We The Watchers Are Also Bodies, Hercules Art Space, New York

- 2016 J'AI RÊVÉ LE GOÛT DE LA BRIQUE PILÉE, Centre of Contemporary Ceramics of La Borne, France
- Five Holes All Smiles, Greenpoint Terminal Gallery, Brooklyn
- The Good Life, The Range, Saguache, CO
- Syntagma, Eugene Lang College, New York
- Large Glass curated by Jennifer Sullivan, Spring/Break Art Fair, NYC
- 2015 I Lost Something in the Hills or A Painting of Blue Roses, US Blues, Brooklyn
- The Harmers, Joan Gallery, Los Angeles
- ‡ Anti--Fertility Garden, organized by Mary Walling Blackburn, Sala Diaz, San Antionio, TX
- The Harmers, David Lewis Gallery, New York
- 2014 Artists for Artists, Foundation for Contemporary Art Benefit, Matthew Marks, New York
- About Like So: The Influence of Painting, curated by Terri C Smith, Franklin St. Works, Stamford, CT
- The Shandaken Project Retrospective Exhibition, Creative Time, New York
- And the Villagers Never Liked you Anyway, Knockdown Center, Brooklyn
- Sisrahtac, organized by Brie Ruais and Maria Stabio, Torrance Shipman Gallery, Brooklyn
- Zero Point, Jackie Klempay Gallery, Brooklyn
- The View from the Window, curated by Lumi Tan, Chapter NY
- Yard Show, Essex Flowers, New York
- Speaking Through Paint: Hans Hofmann's Legacy Today, Lori Bookstein Fine Art, New York
- The Last Brucennial, New York
- Correspondance, Publication Studio Hudson, Catskill, NY
- Tag Sale, organized by Julia Sherman, New York
- Material Memory: Heather Hart, Nick Pilato, Sophy Naess, Gallery Aferro, Newark
- 2013 Speaking Through Paint: Hans Hofmann's Legacy Today, Lori Bookstein Gallery, NY
- FABRIKA (with Jam Archives), Court Square, Queens
- Your Content Will Return Shortly, Franklin Street Works, Stamford, CT
- 2012 The End(s) of the Library, Goethe Institut, New York
- Fruit and Vegetable Stand by Paul Branca, New York
- Leisure / Work, The Wassaic Project, Wassaic, NY
- Bazaar, Soloway, Brooklyn
- Little Languages Coded Pictures, Kathryn Markel Fine Arts, New York
- The Brucennial, New York
- Dependent Art Fair with New Capital Projects, New York
- 2011 99% Wizards of Change, Mason Gross Galleries, New Brunswick, NJ
- Blackout, Port d’Or, Brooklyn
- A Person Of Color / A Mostly Orange Exhibition (with Carmelle Safdie), The Green Gallery East, Milwaukee WI
- Best of 2011, Soloway, Brooklyn
- Tide Pool Shop, Sara Meltzer Gallery, New York
- 2010 Par Avion, Parlour No. 19 (home of D. Endo), Siena, Italy
- First Rate Second Hand (calendar and poster launch and signing), Printed Matter, New York
- Brucennial, New York
- The Artist At Work, Recess Activities, New York
- A Reluctant Apparition, Sue Scott Gallery, New York
- 2009 Galleri 54, Supermarket Art Fair, Stockholm, SE



- 2008 Memories of Development, Pocket Utopia Gallery, Brooklyn  
Kunstpublikationer 2008, Overgade Institut for Samtidskunst, Copenhagen, DK  
Brevity's Rainbow, Cinders Gallery, Brooklyn
- 2007 Darling What Color, Thrust Projects, New York (with Matthew Lutz Kinoy)
- 2005 No Apology for Breathing, Jack the Pelican Presents, Brooklyn  
Tutti Frutti Miami Basel, Miami, FL  
Memorial Daze, RKL Gallery, Brooklyn (with Natsuko Uchino)  
Sisters, The Fresh-Up Club, Austin, TX
- 2004 The Liberty Fair, New York  
Horror Vaccui, The Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, New York  
The Lucky Seven, The Cooper Union School of Art, New York

#### AWARDS & RESIDENCIES

- 2023 Artist in Residence at the Shandaken Governor's Island, NY
- 2019 Lenore Tawney Foundation Artist in Residence, ISCP New York
- 2016 The Range, Saguache, CO  
SU-CASA Artist In Residence, Brooklyn Arts Council
- 2015 Sikås Art Center, Sweden
- 2013 Artist in Residence at Scuola Grafika, Venice, Italy  
Artist in Residence at the Shandaken Project, NY
- 2011-2012 Full TA, Mason Gross
- 2010 Artist in Residence, Recess Activities, New York 2008  
Lundgrenska Stiftelsen, Sweden  
Artist in Residence, The Press at Colorado College, Colorado, USA  
Guest lecturer at Bennington College, Vermont, USA  
Guest lecturer at California College of Art, San Francisco.
- 2007 Otto och Charlotte Mannheimer Fonden, Sweden
- 2004 Pietro and Alfrieda Montana prize for excellence in drawing and sculpture
- 2002 New York Central Supply Award
- 2001 Frank Caldiero Humanities Award, Cooper Union



