

ANNE WILSON: *Dispersions*

October 26 – December 7, 2013

Opening reception:

Saturday, October 26, 2013, 2-5pm



Anne Wilson, *Dispersions*, 2013, cloth, hair, thread, and white metal frame. Detail.

“History is a conversation and sometimes a shouting match between present and past, though often the voices we most want to hear are barely audible.” – Laurel Thatcher Ulrich

Chicago-based artist Anne Wilson tackles issues of history, memory, and domestic and social ritual through a multi-media art practice. ***Dispersions*, her third solo exhibition at Rhona Hoffman Gallery, envelops the front gallery with twenty-six individual fabric pieces.** Taking heirloom white damask cloth with holes or tears caused by use, Wilson sewed open the flaw with thread and hair to form a perfect, sculptural circle in the fabric. Piercing the decorative, time-worn cloth with the precision of a gunshot, the circles' edges softly disperse with a haloed effect, stopped again by the white metal frame.

Trained in an interdisciplinary fiber context and influenced by feminist and post-minimalist thought in 1970s California, Wilson asserts the relevance of fiber and textile materials in a contemporary, conceptual art practice. She has expanded into installation, social practice, and performance during the past decade; one of her most extensive projects, *Local Industry* at the Knoxville Museum of Art, brought together 2,100 volunteers and 79 experienced weavers for a community weaving project. ***Dispersions* returns to Wilson's foundation in personally-scaled, intricately stitched 'textile drawing.'** In the early nineties, she created a series of works stitching hair around fabric tears to disrupt the social ritual of historical, bourgeois damask. Similar in process, the 2013 *Dispersions* yield markedly different results. In this new body of work, the sculptural voids carved from the fabric dissolve into finely-sewn thread to create an abstract imagery that alludes to cosmic and heavenly bodies. A palpable bridge between cellular and celestial reflects Wilson's ability to evoke particular, singular, and mortal realities through ambiguous imagery. Installed edge-to-edge to wrap the gallery, the works create an all-encompassing installation that emphasizes their ethereal quality.

Born in Detroit, **Anne Wilson** earned a BFA from the Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan and a MFA at the California College of the Arts in Oakland, California, also attending the University of Michigan's School of Art in Ann Arbor. Wilson explores themes of time, loss, private, and social rituals; her artwork embraces conceptual strategies and handwork using everyday materials- table linen, bed sheets, human hair, lace, thread, glass, and wire. Recent group and solo exhibitions include *The Hangzhou Triennial of Fiber Art*, Hangzhou, China (2013); *Cotton: Global Thread*, Whitworth Art Gallery in Manchester, England (2012); *Local Industry* (2011) and *Wind/Rewind/Weave* (2010) at the Knoxville Museum of Art, Tennessee; *Hand+Made: The Performative Impulse in Art and Craft*, Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, Texas (2010); and *Out of the Ordinary*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England (2007-08), among others. Her work is found in permanent collections including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Museum of Contemporary Art-Chicago, the Detroit Institute of the Arts, and the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, Japan. She is a Professor in the Fiber and Material Studies Department at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.