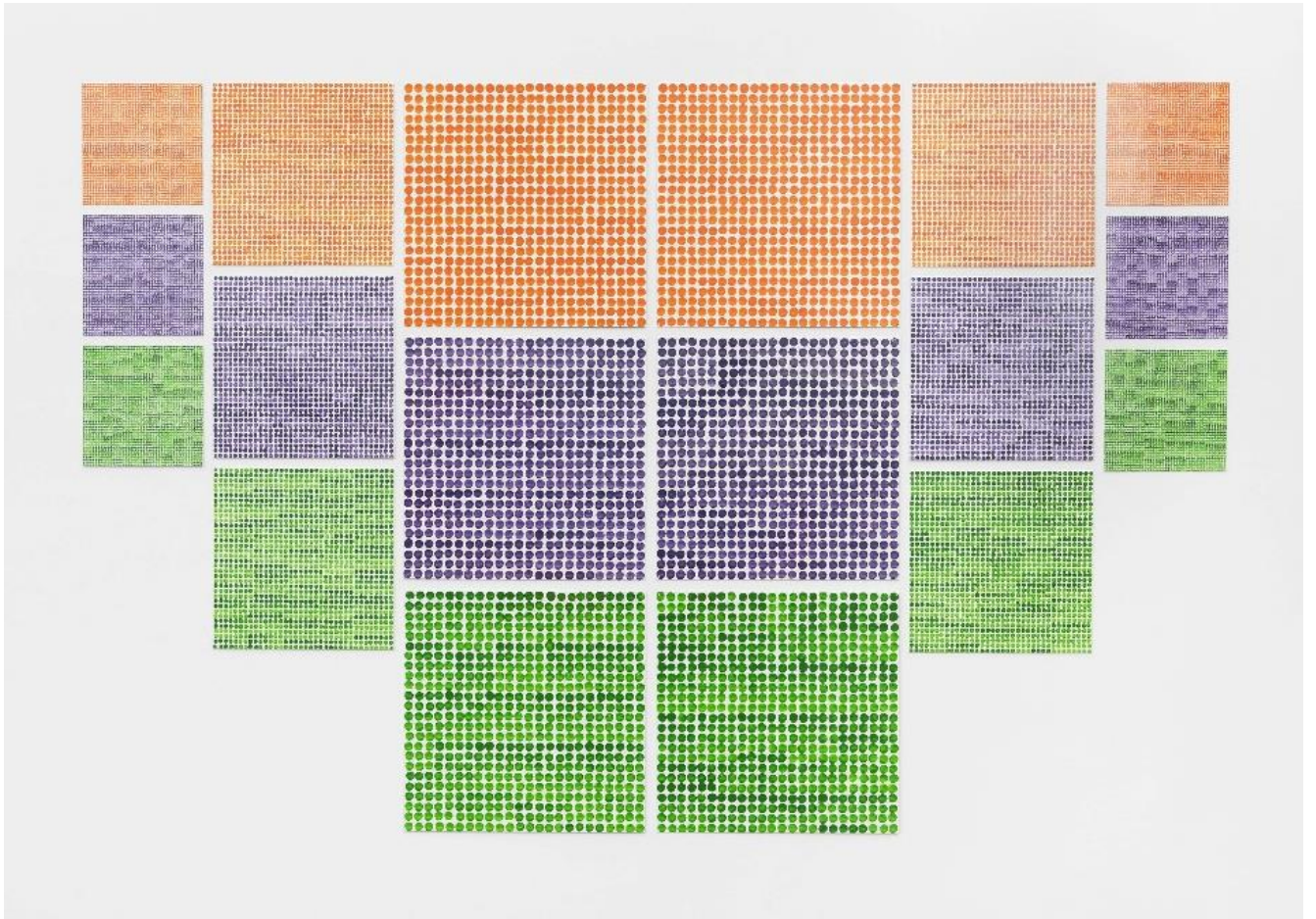


YOSSI MILO



For Immediate Release:

Group Exhibition: *Matrices*

Artist's Reception: Thursday, February 15, 6-8PM
Thursday, February 8, 2024 – Saturday, March 9, 2024

Yossi Milo is pleased to announce *Matrices*, a group exhibition featuring works by Magdalena Abakanowicz, Jennifer Bartlett, Lauren Luloff, and Rachel Mica Weiss. *Matrices* opens to the public on Thursday, February 8, 2024, and the gallery will host a reception on Thursday, February 15, 2024 from 6 – 8 PM. The exhibition will be on view through Saturday, March 9, 2024.

Matrices showcases the work of four women artists, posing an intergenerational conversation on notions of abstraction, modularity, structure, and pattern. Through their unconventional approaches to materiality, especially in relation to traditions of painting as a historically male-dominated field, the artists create and challenge repetitive structures — both in the innovative nature of their pursuits and in rethinking preconceptions of practice, craft, and form. The artists included in the show uphold and subvert a continual grid, through regimented and formal experiments in painting, and in the alternating threads of woven fabric. In doing so, they form a vanguard of women artists who are formally innovative, as well as historically prescient in their times.

Within *Matrices* are multiple artistic lineages, bridging notable bodies of work by women artists from the late 20th century with works from a generation of artists working today. In pushing against the norms of their mediums, both **Magdalena Abakanowicz** (Polish, 1930-2017) and **Jennifer Bartlett's** (American, 1941-

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2022) practices worked to disrupt the strictures of painting on canvas and those placed on women artists of their time. Abakanowicz's distinctive woven installations created monuments from notions of craft, emphasizing humanity as a quality of her work. Having studied textile design and techniques with influential women professors in the early 1950s at the Warsaw Academy of Fine Arts, Abakanowicz found fabric to be a powerful foundation in her practice. This lent her work a feminist read, especially within the changing economic and social contexts of Poland. Bartlett grounded her oscillation between figurative and abstract modes of painting in a formal adherence to grids and organization, an interplay that became a defining feature of her practice. Beginning in the late 1960s, Bartlett began creating her distinctive and celebrated steel plate works, which were inspired by materials used in industrial signage. In these works, the artist divided her painting surface into many individual elements, resulting in individual plates that could be hung in varying arrangements. These modular works elaborated on Postminimalist ideas of painting, and even of discrete art objects. Seeking an organizing structure akin to the graph paper favored by her conceptual artist peers, Bartlett would turn to further imposing a silkscreened grid onto each plate — a recursive organizing structure that would become a fixture of her work.

Arranged along regular, converging intervals, the very materials of works on view in *Matrices* build on regimented structures as the nexus of innovation, especially in relation to the nature of textile work. Textiles inherently depend on the organizing principle of a grid, most clearly articulated by the alternating warp and weft of weaving. Historically, textiles also served as a medium and industry in which women's artistic work and productive labor would be exploited and relegated — a precedent remedied in contemporary feminist scholarship. This designation also made the textile arts an important artistic space: in centuries past, the textile arts were the sole arena in which women were the exclusive creators, critics, and educators. In *Matrices*, the pervasive grid could be read as an allusion to textile design, or to systems that exert oppression on the basis of gender. Experimenting with and subverting the rigidity of these structures, the more recent works on view form new conceptions of textile arts and painting at once, making evident legacies such as those of Abakanowicz and Bartlett.

The possibilities of fabric, and its creation, design, and deconstruction, form a cornerstone on which **Lauren Luloff** (American, b. 1980) and **Rachel Mica Weiss** (American, b. 1986) build their practices. Luloff applies fabric dyes directly onto silk surfaces to create abstract paintings that reimagine forms and color relationships seen in nature. These works are underpinned by an ever-present grid that both constrains and liberates Luloff's improvised compositions, which take on resemblances to mosaic, digital displays, and patterned fabrics. Through her distinct pictorial technique and fabric-focused material decisions, Luloff's works are as closely tied to textile design as they are to landscape and color field painting. Weiss, in her "Woven Screens" series, invokes the warping of a loom, using many mathematically arranged threads to create open, diaphanous color fields suspended within the frame. The tightly strung individual strands visually interlock and overlap as viewers move around the space, configuring textile materials into spatial and experiential works. Both bodies of work, in subverting visual languages of textile production, not only elaborate on traditions of fabric arts, but on histories of fabric in the context of industry. In embracing these unconventional materialities, they also form bold innovations on traditions of abstract painting.

The works on view in *Matrices* share an adherence to grid-based organization and formal repetition as the underlying structures that support organic, intuitive compositions. The title of the exhibition, *Matrices*, draws on the multiple meanings of the singular word "matrix," built on the Latin root "mater," meaning "mother." Today, the word also means a suspension in which individual processes take place, such as a geological fine-grained rock that forms fossils, or the arrays used in mathematics that expand equations into multiple calculating cells. Progressing from the human-centered notions of motherhood to structural notions of form and process, the term "matrix" carries aspects of development and creation, as well as an overall sense of matrilineal inheritance. *Matrices* presents four bodies of work that use grids as an inherent structure, one that both necessitates an abstract approach and enables system- and textile-based ways of making.

Across *Matrices*, mid-century practices lay foundations for present ones: in the historic career precedents set by women artists; in the artistic innovations accomplished within the works themselves; and through these practices' shared motivations to subvert straightforward ideas of production, labor, and conceptual organization. Abakanowicz and Bartlett are here positioned as artistic forebears to Luloff and Weiss, as could innovative and underrepresented women makers back through generations. In doing so, the four

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artists on view chart a path that dissolves the boundaries between textiles, painting, and installation, resulting in convergent practices of material-centered abstractions. The works in *Matrices* — steel, sisal, embroidery thread, and silk — illuminate matrilineal histories of art and material sites of innovation and dialogue, envisioning new relationships between makers, viewers, and forms.

For more information, please contact Jack Cassou at 212.414.0370 or jack@yossimilo.com, or visit the gallery's website at www.yossimilo.com

Image: Jennifer Bartlett, *Small, Medium, Large (secondary)*, 2007, Enamel over silkscreen grid on baked enamel, steel plates.
Overall, installed: 75 x 115 inches 190.5 x 292.1 cm

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