

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# (un)common threads

May 23 - July 31, 2008

Opening Reception  
Thursday, May 22, 2008 / 6:00-8:00pm

(May 20, 2008, New York) - Michael Rosenfeld Gallery is pleased to present **[un]common threads**, a group exhibition featuring fourteen female artists: Magdalena Abakanowicz, Hannelore Baron, Lee Bontecou, Barbara Chase-Riboud, Lesley Dill, Nancy Grossman, Faith Ringgold, Yayoi Kusama, Annette Messenger, Anne Ryan, Betye Saar, Mimi Smith, Lenore Tawney, and Claire Zeisler. Scheduled to be on view from May 23 to July 31, 2008, **[un]common threads** presents two and three-dimensional works where fiber and fabric - new and recycled - are the predominant media and have been knotted, layered, drawn, woven, sewed, or collaged. Despite disparate styles, influences, and intentions, the fourteen artists included in this exhibition share a heightened sensitivity to the history and expressive possibilities of textiles.

**[un]common threads** refuses to connect the artists and their materials solely on the basis of either gender or medium. In fact, the individualistic eccentricities of the fourteen artists make any schematic classification of their work difficult and imperfect, and it is their very ungroupability that creates the character of this ensemble. By juxtaposing extremes like Hannelore Baron's intimate box assemblages of distressed remnants or Anne Ryan's sensitive paper collages with the aggressive wall constructions of Nancy Grossman and Lee Bontecou, **[un]common threads** offers the versatility of a medium once reserved to craft and dismissed because of its associations with the home.

This "taint" of domesticity has been explored most notably in the pioneering work of Mimi Smith, whose *Basic Black* (1966) and *Table and Chair* (1973) use knotted string and other media to portray women's clothing as well as furniture that evokes the heart of the home - the family table. But Smith's work shares with all of the pieces in this show a keen awareness of texture, and like Magdalena Abakanowicz's (*Backward*) *Standing Figure* (1987), what remains absent in the representation is just as important as what is physically present. Overall, the works in **[un]common threads** confound preconceived notions about women's art and/or textile as a medium, offering unexpected combinations like the polished bronze that rests on a base of raw silk in Barbara Chase-Riboud's *Untitled: Pushkin* (1985); turning the softness and lightness of fabric into weighty, spiky, almost menacing beings in Annette Messenger's *Replicant* works; or appealing to senses other than sight by offering forms that have been stuffed, woven, knotted, painted, pierced, and sewn. This is art that begs to be touched and, in the case of the leather and jute pieces, sniffed.

In addition to the works mentioned, other contemporary highlights in the



Nancy Grossman (b. 1940), *Potawatami*, 1967, leather assemblage including horse harnesses, 63 x 37 3/4 x 13 inches

exhibition include several large-scale works by Yayoi Kusama, Lesley Dill, Lenore Tawney, and Nancy Grossman; Faith Ringgold's *Weeping Woman #4* (1973-89); and collages by Betye Saar, Hannelore Baron, Anne Ryan, and Lenore Tawney.

Over the years, Michael Rosenfeld Gallery has consistently championed many of the artists and sensibilities represented in **[un]common threads**. Two landmark exhibitions organized by the gallery were *Fiber and Form: The Woman's Legacy* (1996) and *True Grit* (2000).

Visuals available upon request. To view this exhibition in its entirety online, please visit [www.michaelrosenfeldart.com](http://www.michaelrosenfeldart.com).

Michael Rosenfeld Gallery is located at 24 West 57th Street, 7th Floor, New York City. Gallery hours are May & June: Tuesday-Saturday, 10AM-6PM; July & August: Monday-Friday, 10AM-6PM. For additional information, please contact Marjorie Van Cura at 212.247.0082 or [mv@michaelrosenfeldart.com](mailto:mv@michaelrosenfeldart.com).

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