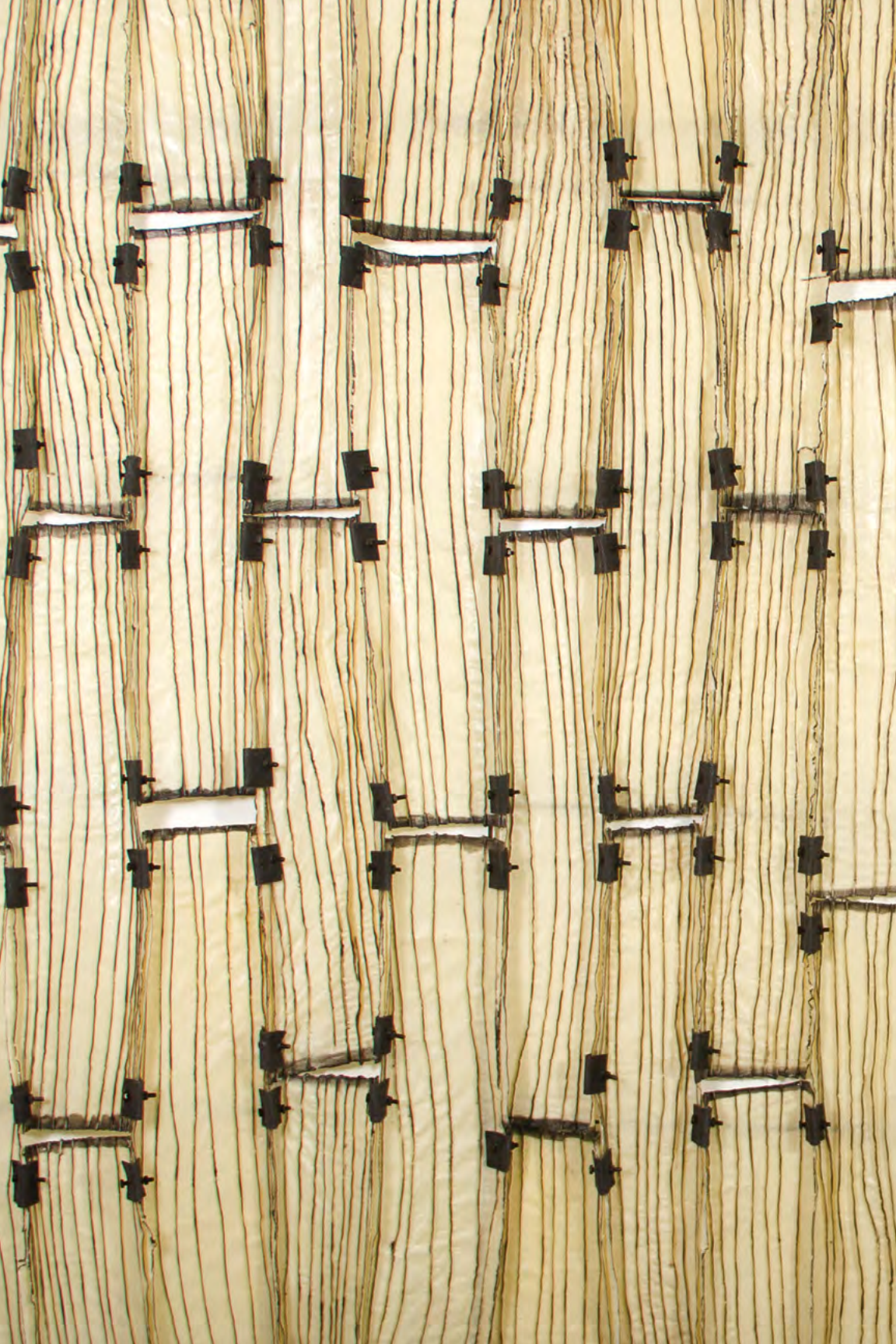




**BRENDA MALLORY
REFORMATIONS**





cover:
Soft Focus #4 (detail), 2018

waxed cloth, hog rings and
welded steel armature
66 x 100 x 2 inches

full view pg. 8

endsheets:
Reformed Order (detail), 2013

waxed cloth, felt, nuts
and bolts
72 x 120 x 3 inches

Private Collection
full view pg. 11

facing:
*Recurring Chapters in the
Book of Inevitable Outcomes
#38*, 2015

waxed cloth, nuts, bolts
and steel
22 x 22 x 12 inches



BRENDA MALLORY REFORMATIONS

DOMINION, DISRUPTION, RENEWAL

Recently, Brenda Mallory has been pondering the meaning of the word “dominion” and the way it can describe humankind’s efforts to control the natural world and its inhabitants, both plant and animal. Her works often deal with the effects of dominion: broken and disrupted systems, the legacies of Colonialism and Manifest Destiny; and current, disastrous policies concerning the environment and immigration. Think about the depredations associated with the Monsanto brand and its cancer-causing herbicides and genetically altered seeds. Think about Mallory’s own ancestors—the Cherokee—and their forced relocation in the early 19th century. Think about the millions of needlessly discarded things that choke our landfills and lay waste to the oceans. Mallory’s works are both a reckoning and a desire to affect a kind of reparation.

Mallory grew up in rural Oklahoma and is a citizen of the Cherokee Nation. As the daughter of a farmer, she learned about “making do, working with what you had.” She remembers beehives, catfish hanging on a line, rows of coyote skins: the patterns of rural existence. She learned to sew at a time when it was cheaper to make your own clothes than to buy them, when labor cost more than material; the exposed seams in her works honor that labor. Her pieces reference her experiences, but not in an elegiac manner. She celebrates her ancestors and their resilience in the wake of the Trail of Tears, when the Cherokee were removed from their southeastern homelands and marched to Indian Territory: “The fact that a whole culture could be uprooted, moved to a new place, and then keep going—it’s incredible.”¹

Because they are sculptural but most often wall-mounted, Mallory’s pieces occupy their own particular space. She trained as a sculptor, learning to work in metal while earning her BFA in General Fine Arts at PNCA. She has also created performance art and immersive installations. For most of her career, Mallory has employed a thoughtful form of bricolage. She uses an

unexpected range of castoffs, and cites a residency at Glean, which gave her access to Portland's city dumps, as being among the most important in her career. These reclaimed materials include honeycomb cardboard, scraps of fabric, spools of thread, automotive drive belts, rubber cording and linen fire hose. As she manipulates and combines them, Mallory reveals her fascination with patterns, with serial forms, and with elements that break those patterns. Among the artists she cites as inspiration are such figures as Louise Nevelson, Lee Bontecou, and Eva Hesse—women who, like her, were concerned with repetition and who made works that often contrasted fragility with toughness, and who found the aesthetic value in discarded, quotidian materials.

The breaks that occur in her work are an intentional part of her process, which Mallory describes as one of repair. She makes and unmakes so that her final pieces reveal a narrative of destruction and of reinvention and mending. There is a sense that matter is finite, and can be reformed and repurposed in ways that are beautiful and transformative. Mallory is perhaps best known for her cellular pieces made of identical fabric scraps. Dipping these scraps into wax makes them malleable; “stitching” them together with nuts and bolts or hog rings yields a wave of undulating forms, reminiscent of cellular structure as seen through a microscope, or the intricacies of a beehive.

In more recent years, Mallory has extended her practice and created prints, worked in glass, and made paper, thanks to residencies at print ateliers, at Bullseye Glass and at Pulp and Deckle. These residencies, and access to a new range of materials and techniques, have allowed Mallory to take some of her overarching themes and reimagine them. An earlier work made of strips of rubber drive belts, for instance, has become the mold for pieces made of pressed paper and of glass. And she has begun to introduce color—rich, saturated reds—to her palette of creams, grays, and blacks. This is most vividly apparent in an elegant cloak-like wall hanging composed of several industrial spools of thread, which she transformed by slicing through to the cardboard core, laying the spools open, so that the frayed ends resemble

luxurious, plushy fur or massed feathers. Joined together, the individual spoils look like pelts and the piece takes on the character of a ceremonial object waiting to be performed.

In Mallory's works, one can sense the adaptability and the beauty of the natural world and of its inhabitants, even under conditions of extreme stress and dominion. As she notes, "People (and things, systems, or histories) get messed up but they are rarely completely destroyed."

- Prudence F. Roberts

1. Brenda Mallory: Repurposed Reality, by Noelani Kirschner, *The American Scholar*, April 8, 2019, <https://theamericanscholar.org/brenda-mallory/#.XUNx1ZJKifc> Accessed Aug. 1, 2019

WORKS IN WAX

Waxed cloth became a favorite material for Brenda Mallory while a student at the Pacific Northwest College of Art in Portland, Oregon, where she earned her BFA in 2002. Before learning sculpture processes like welding, she turned to materials and tools she could readily manipulate: wax, cloth, a sewing machine, an iron. The resulting forms emulate organic properties and conceptually inform her work: they build on themselves, referencing the connections and reconnections, formations and reformations of the natural world. The malleable quality of waxed cloth “is endlessly versatile,” Mallory says, “and the soft, luminous quality of the wax contrasts with the hardware and steel I use as connectors.”

facing:
Soft Focus #2, 2016

waxed cloth, hog rings and
welded steel armature
50 x 23 x 3 inches

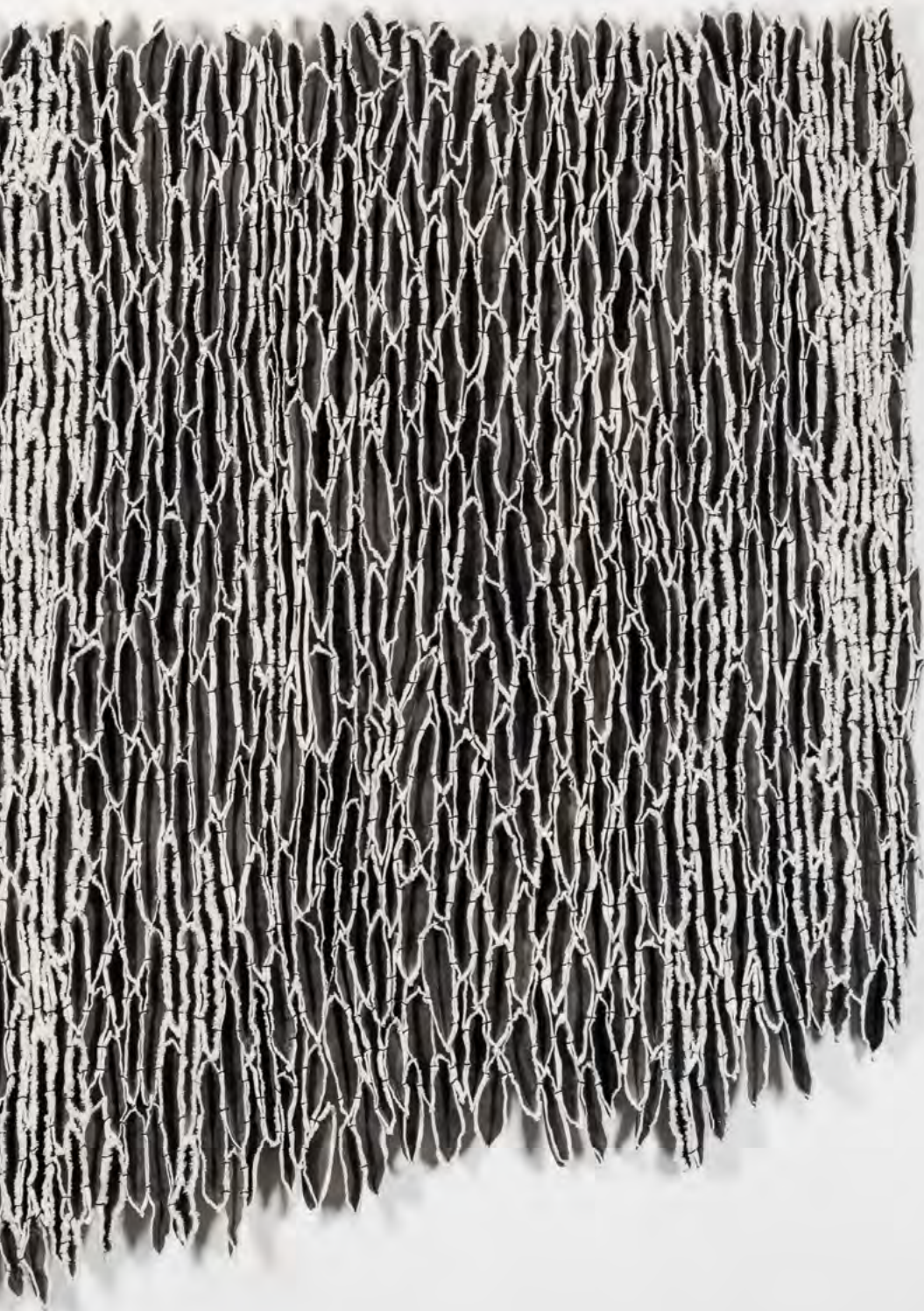
Private Collection





Soft Focus #4, 2018

waxed cloth, hog rings and
welded steel armature
66 x 100 x 2 inches





Undulations (Red), 2012

waxed cloth, nuts, bolts
and welded steel
48 x 80 x 7 inches

Eiteljorg Museum, Indianapolis, IN



Reformed Order, 2013

waxed cloth, felt,
nuts and bolts
72 x 120 x 3 inches

Private Collection



Scaffold, 2008

waxed cloth and welded steel
14 x 18 x 4 inches

Private Collection



Porous Borders - Red, 2012

waxed cloth, nuts, bolts
and welded steel
33 x 33 x 3 inches

Private Collection



Waveform (dark), 2011

waxed cloth, threaded
rods and nuts
31 x 5 x 4.5 inches

Private Collection

Waveform (light), 2011

waxed cloth, threaded
rods and nuts
57 x 7 x 5 inches

Private Collection





Undulations
2009

waxed cloth, nuts, bolts
and welded steel
48 x 70 x 6 inches

Private Collection



INSTALLATION

Brenda Mallory's installations are temporary, immersive experiences often incorporating performative elements. They address different aspects of the symbiotic relationship between the natural world and human activity—particularly the problems that arise when this is ignored or taken for granted—from the effects of colonialism and abuse of human labor, to the ecological impact of disposable consumer goods made of materials impervious to natural decay. Formally, Mallory focuses on organic patterns, such as cells or pollen spores, and frequently repurposes components of her installations in subsequent works.



above:
*Recurring Chapters in the
Book of Inevitable Outcomes*
#33, 2015

waxed cloth, nuts, bolts
and steel
24 x 24 x 24 inches

Private Collection

following spread:
*Recurring Chapters in the
Book of Inevitable Outcomes*
(detail), 2015

waxed cloth, hardware, nuts,
bolts and steel
dimensions variable

Eitlejorg Museum,
Indianapolis, IN









above and left:
*Protean Forms: A Performance
in 24 Acts, 2007*

waxed fabric, nuts, bolts,
ladder, chair, hand drill
and bucket
dimensions variable

PDX Contemporary Art
Window Project, Portland, OR



above and right:
Mechanics of Hither and Yon
(details), 2011

waxed cloth, paper, nuts, bolts
and welded steel
dimensions variable

Portland International Airport,
Portland, OR



RECLAIMED MATERIALS

Brenda Mallory uses reclaimed materials to address issues of human consumption, and patterns of growth, decay and reformation. According to Mallory, “An important part of engaging with reclaimed materials is transforming them into something not immediately recognizable as the original source.” While always an aspect of her practice, this use of reclaimed materials gained fresh emphasis during a residency at GLEAN in 2015. Their five-month program grants participating artists access to the Metro Central Transfer Station, Portland OR’s garbage dump, for the purpose of creating artwork from the unusual and unexpected objects they might find, such as, in Mallory’s case, decommissioned linen firehoses and industrial cast-offs.

facing:

Drive Belt #2, 2016

rubber drive belts and paint

on wood panel

46 x 20 x 1.5 inches



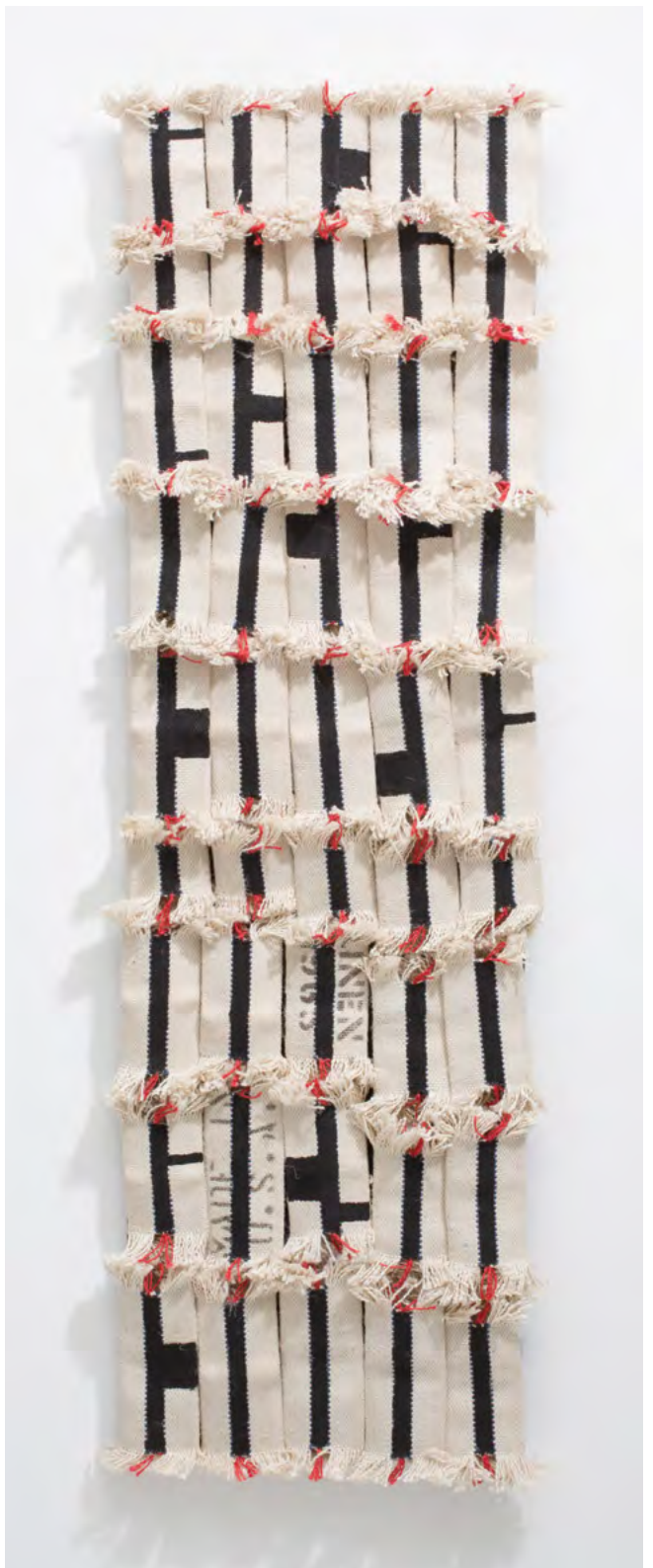


above:
Firehose Experiment #6
2016

deconstructed linen firehose,
paint and hog rings
48 x 38 x 1.5 inches

right:
Firehose Experiment #1
2015

deconstructed linen
firehose and paint
41 x 12 x 2 inches





Reformed Spools #2, 2015

deconstructed thread spools
on panel
42 x 80 x 4 inches

Private Collection





above:
Reformed Packings #11, 2018

honeycomb paper, paint
and encaustic
40 x 40 x 2 inches

Private Collection

right:
Keen Reforming, 2016

paper shoe forms, paint
and wood
34 x 22 x 4 inches

Private Collection





Firehose Experiment #3, 2015

deconstructed linen firehose,
paint, threaded rods and nuts
24 x 28 x 3 inches

Collection of Recology



Zen Scrubber #3, 2017

Nylon scrubber pad, paint,
rubber cable and metal
54 x 18 x 6 inches



Zen Scrubber #1, 2015

Nylon industrial scrubber pad,
rubber drive belt and
rubber cable
60 x 18 x 6 inches

Private Collection



New Release, 2015

16mm film and varnish
variable dimensions
each approximately
12 x 9 x 9 inches

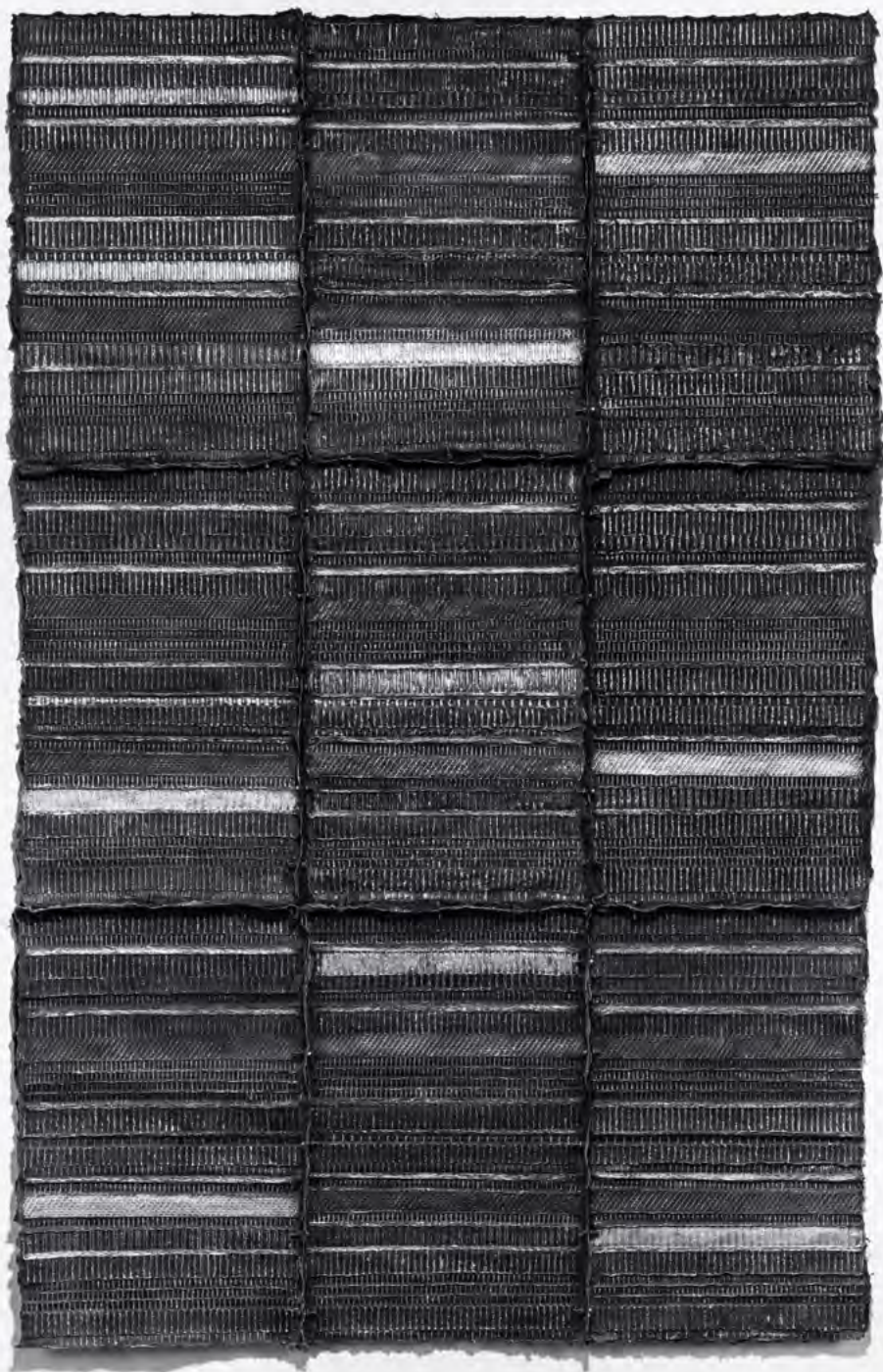


OF AND ON PAPER

Usually employing found materials as mark-making devices or fodder for paper-making, Brenda Mallory's paper-based works span editions of lithographs and etchings, to unique works created by tearing apart and reforming collograph prints. She incorporated papermaking into her practice in 2017 thanks to a c3: Papermaking Residency at Pulp & Deckle in Portland, OR. To produce recent print editions, Mallory worked with master printer Frank Janzen during her 2016 Golden Spot residency at Crow's Shadow in Pendleton, OR, and with Julia D'Amario during her 2019 Jordan Schnitzer Printmaking Residency at Sitka Center for Art and Ecology in Otis, OR.

facing:
Further Function, 2017

handmade cast paper, paint,
nuts and bolts
62.5 x 41 x 1.5 inches





above:
Focus Break, 2017

collagraph on Moravia paper
with handmade paper
chine-collé
24 x 20 inches, edition of 25



right:
Warm Lines (trptych), 2014

wool on paper
22.5 x 30 inches each





above:
Plural of Nexus, 2016

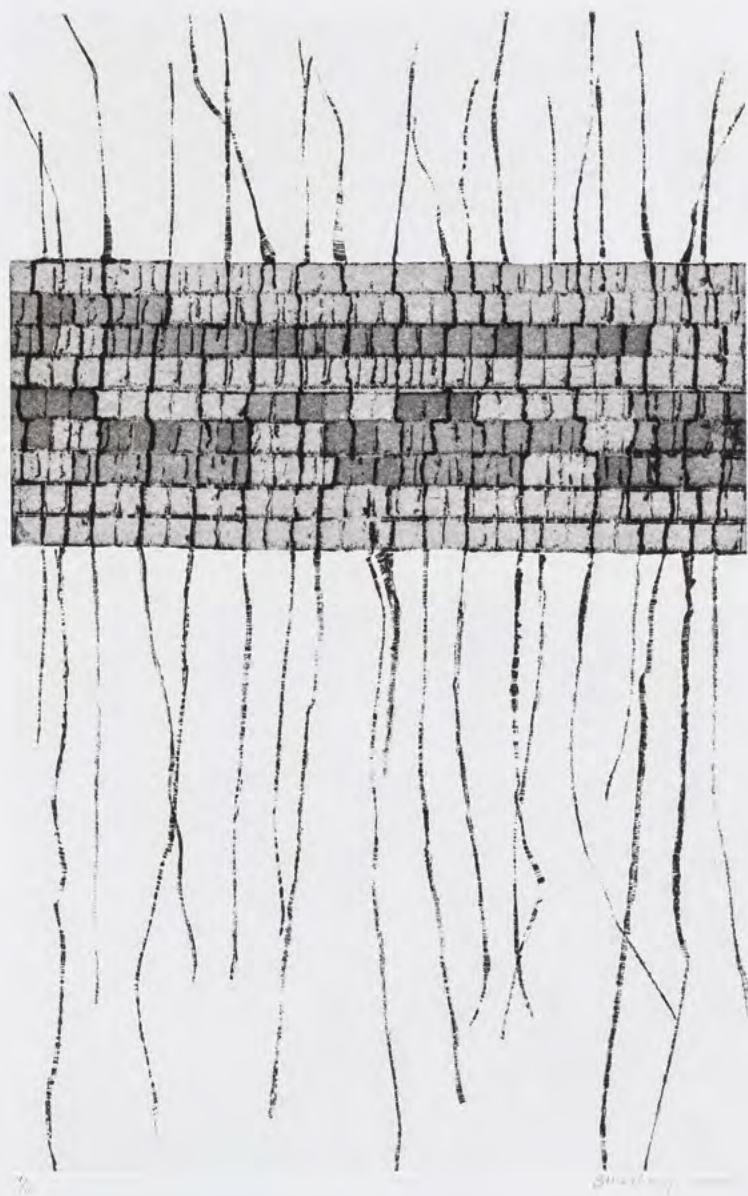
three-color lithograph on Rives
BFK white paper
30 x 23 inches, CTP 3

right:
Rifts, 2014

collagraph print on rice paper,
thread and encaustic paint
45.5 x 26 x 1 inches

Private Collection





above:
Raveled Band, 2019

intaglio on Hahnemühle
copperplate paper
25 x 17 inches,
edition of 10

right:
Iterum (Parts), 2019

etching on Hahnemühle
copperplate paper
22.25 x 13 inches,
edition of 10



1/3

WILLIAM 2019



above:
Interrupted Lines #2, 2017

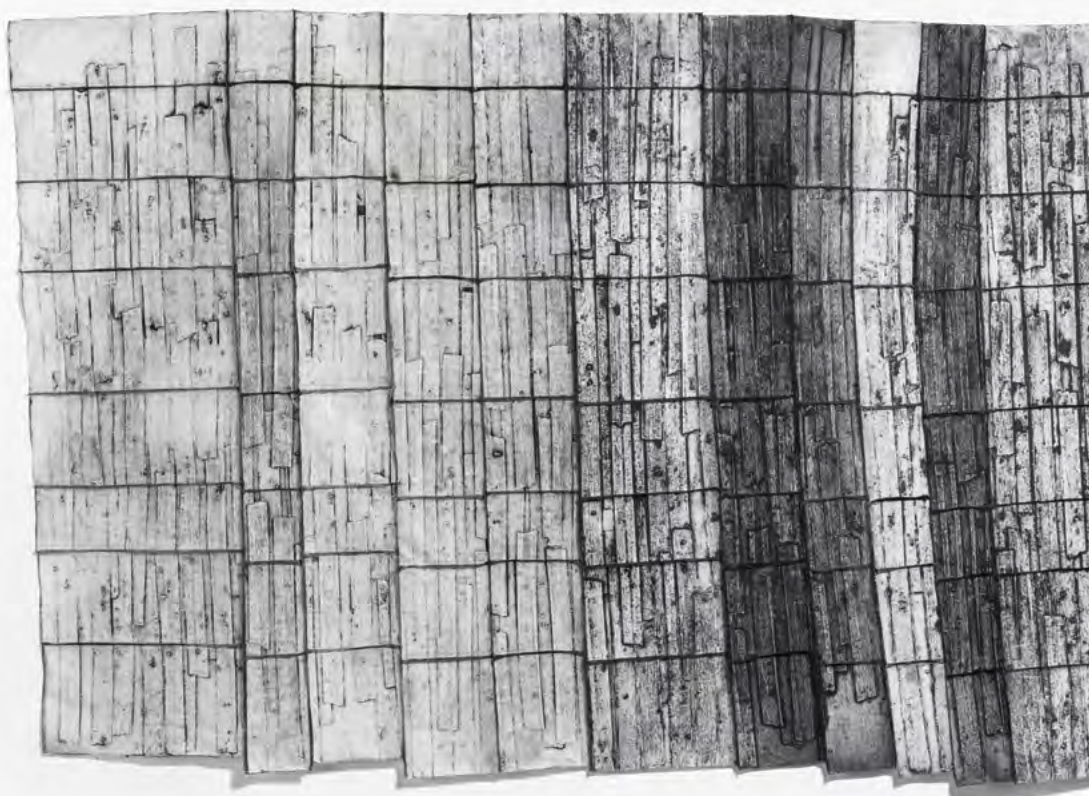
handmade cotton paper
and ink
24 x 22 inches

46

right:
Raveling, 2016

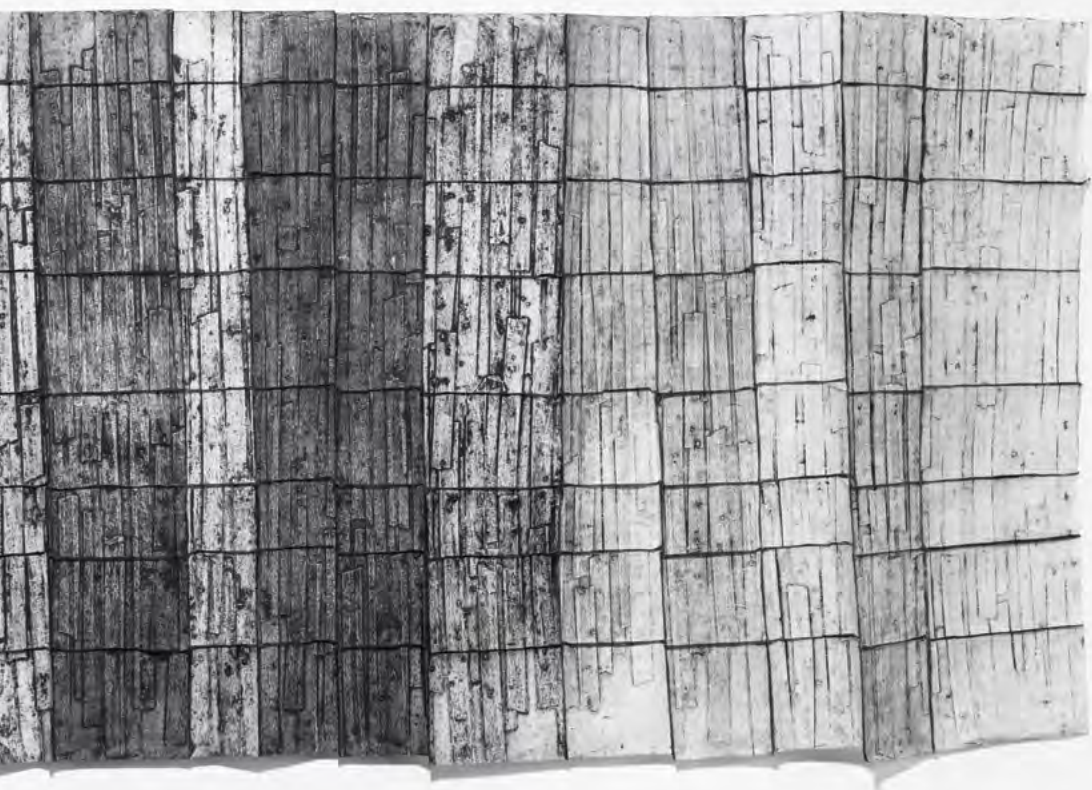
two-color lithograph on Rives
BFK paper
40 x 18 inches, CTP 4





Partitioning, 2017

collagraph prints on Kozo
paper, thread and wax
30 x 95.5 x 3 inches



Selected images by Courtney Frisse (pg. 12, 14–17), Mario Gallucci (pg. 8, 9, 32, 39, 40, 42, 44–49), Christie Hazan (pg. 24, 25), Crystal Van Wyk (pg. 10, 11, 13, 22); all other images by Dan Kvitka. Images provided courtesy of Brenda Mallory.

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Portland, OR 97209
upforgallery.com

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