

MARY ROBBINS: "LET'S TALK ART" QUESTIONS:

1.) You are an artist employing many different mediums in your work. When working, do you tend to choose the medium or the subject first?

I almost always choose the medium first.

2.) How would you describe the imagination stage of your process or a specific piece? Is there a definable quality to your process that seems to work regardless of medium, or does each present a specific demand/approach?

When creating *Captured Moments*, I studied each circle individually and stitched on the surface in different ways, depending on my intuition for the color of the circle. Some circles felt that they needed stitching that was more subtle, almost invisible, and others felt that they needed a contrasting color. A visual language of mark making began to emerge, created by the length, number, and proximity of stitches on each circle.

I feel that every type of medium I use in my artwork requires its own specific approach.

3.) In your current work *Captured Moments* you have created 198 circles. Was that an intentionally chosen number, and why?

The work having 198 circles was intentionally chosen. I wanted the height to be 2 feet tall so that the viewer could comfortably see the detail in each circle. I wanted to have an even amount of space between each circle. The length was planned to fill the wall, without being too close to the corners.

4.) The circles in the piece are both individualized, and part of a collective, harmonious whole. When the viewer engages with, or removes, the singular piece, what effect do you think it has on the overall perception of the piece?

I think that the viewer's engagement with a singular piece creates a second layer of experience. Viewing the collective upon approaching the piece allows for one type of effect. Upon closer inspection, one of the circles might become more engaging for the viewer. The overall perception of the piece would then be altered from the original interaction.

5.) Color is an important part of your aesthetic. What choices do you consider when working with colors for a specific piece?

First, I consider the overall color palette of the ink painted circles, as they are cut out. Then, I choose whether to use mixed media to complement, blend with, or contrast with the existing colors.

6.) Throughout this exhibition, circles have taken a central role. What do circles symbolize to you, and did this understanding change as you worked with them repeatedly?

In general, I feel that circles symbolize the continuous movement of our world physically, spiritually, and emotionally. To me the ink painted circles symbolize ideas, dreams, hopes, and emotions. My initial work with the circles was experimental. I felt that the circles were important to me, but I did not have a clear understanding at first of what that symbolized to me. The more I worked with the circles, they came to symbolize a contained or expressed idea, emotion, or thought.

7.) In your work *Observing Moments*, you create compositions that weave together mixed media elements in order to depict open-ended narratives that are open to interpretation. What role do you think the viewer plays when interacting with these pieces?

The viewer creates their own interpretation when interacting with each of the pieces. Their role as a viewer is to either insert themselves into the artwork as either the circle, the thread, or the stone, or to view the artwork as an observer of the overall composition.