

# MATERIAL TRANSFORMATION

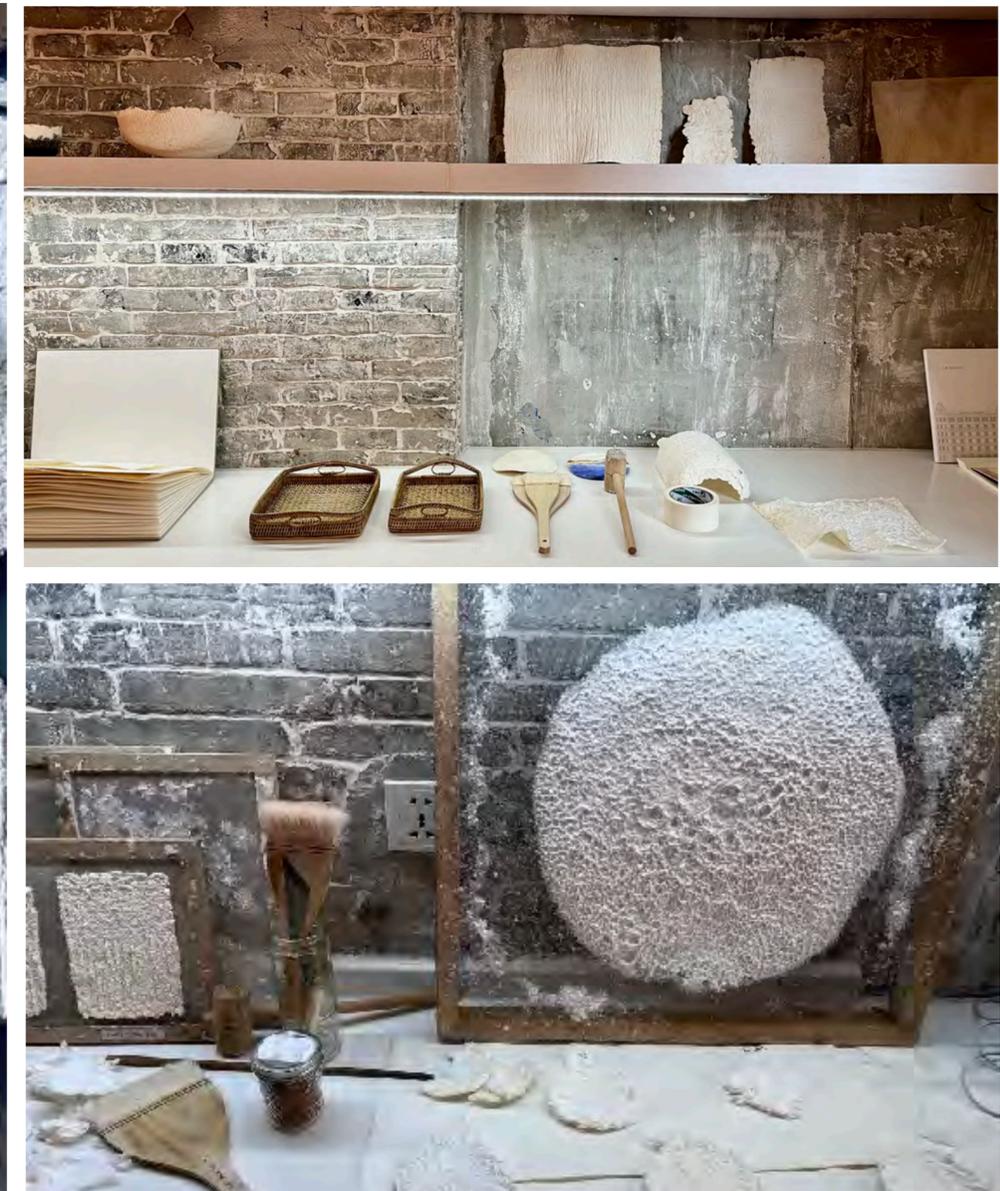
*Sabrina J*



ART+  
SHANGHAI GALLERY

Sabrina was born in Reunion Island but grew up in France. She studied Applied Arts in Paris and has since lived in Paris, London, Ho Chi Minh City and now Shanghai for the last 9 years.

Throughout her career she's been deeply involved in art, interior design, product design and fashion as a Creative Director. As her roles have evolved, she has worked with fine craftsmen and women across a range of different materials with a keen interest in sourcing materials and artefacts steeped in cultures from around the world. The one constant has been her fascination with weaving styles together, combining different materials and textures, mixing cultural influences, whether this be through design, fashion or art. Material associations, textures, and hybrid cultural references have been part of her creative identity as both a designer and an artist.





Her work has a strong textural component to it with a deep appreciation of established crafts like ceramics, weaving, painting and embroidery, each with their own codes and norms of craft excellence. Her work blends traditional techniques with unsuspecting materials that can form intriguing combinations that reframe how we might consider materiality and traditional versus contemporary aesthetics.

Today, Sabrina's work blurs the lines between hand-crafted and machine-driven techniques where the viewer is incited to engage with and evolve the art work in a state of constant change in her fragmented constellations series. Her continued exploration of stitching and thread have found ways into hand-crafted papers as well as ceramics and abstract canvases.

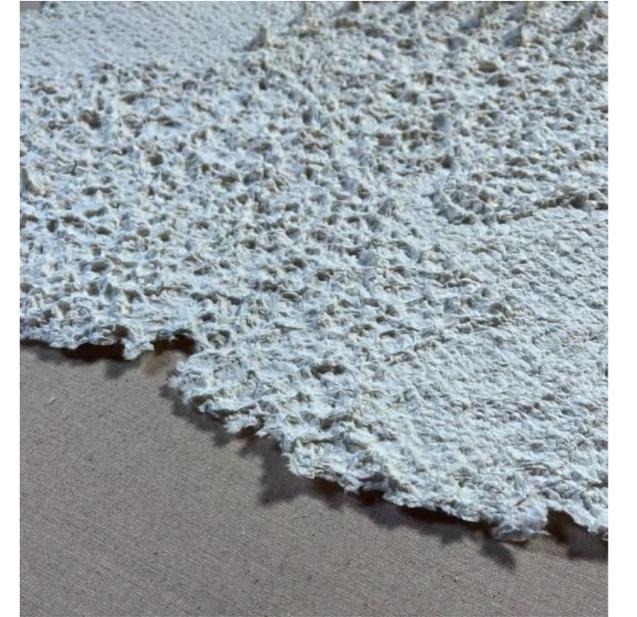
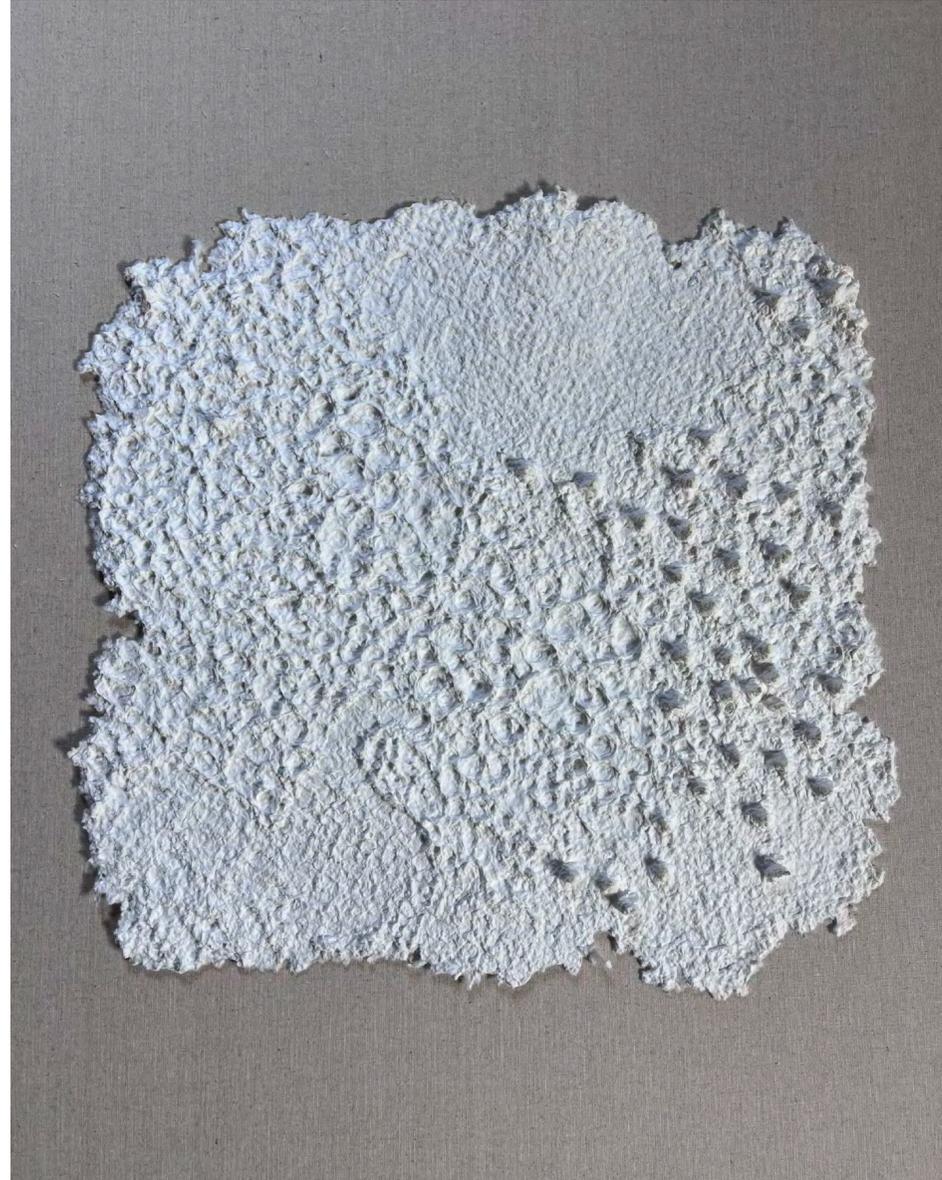
Across much of her process-driven work there is a sub-text of control. Investigating what can be controlled, who should control it and where control becomes a hinderance to the journey some of the materials need to go on changing over time. In one extreme this is apparent in her fragmented constellations series and far more challenged in her hand crafted papers where heat and humidity evolve the work.

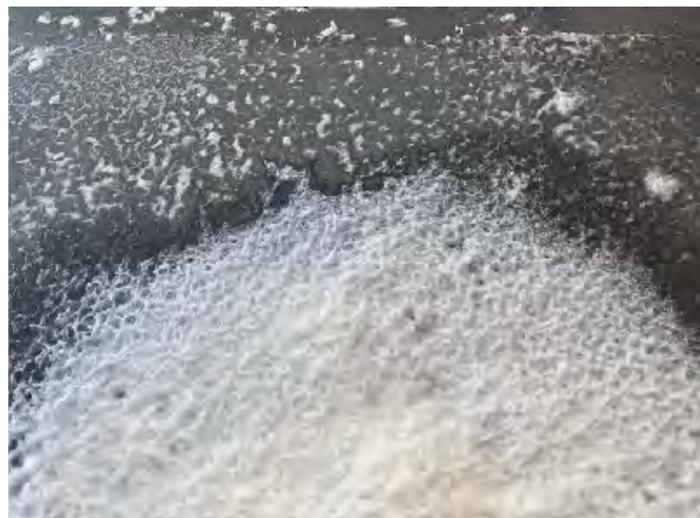


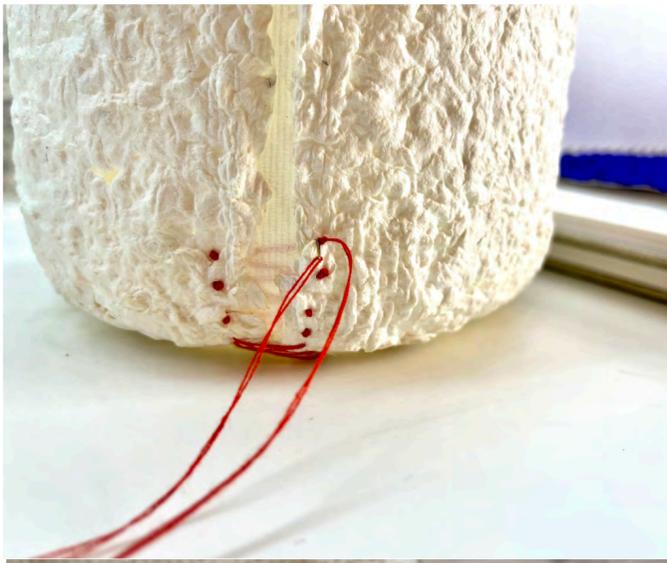
## MATERIAL TRANSFORMATION

In this collection I aim to juxtapose the fragility and potential of hand-crafted paper as stand-alone 3D objects using traditional techniques of soaking and meshing pulp fibres with water. In it's humble self-effacing pragmatism, paper has served as a platform of expression for others. In this work I want to give paper the confidence to transform it's materiality: becoming honest in its textures, brave in it's pursuit of unconventional forms, temperamental and unpredictable in its reaction to heat and humidity, delicate in its play with light and translucency yet beautiful in its raw material expression.

Sifting pulp fibres through gauze mounted frames with running water is a traditional technique for hand-crafted paper that creates resilient material structure with distinct surface textures. I'm fascinated by the gentle and at times aggressive evolution these handcrafted paper works go on during the drying process. The material adopts a life of its own; writhing, twisting and warping as it reacts and responds to heat and humid conditions. As the paper dries, I give direction to the forms and folds much like working fabric but ultimately the process is about guiding without fully controlling the outcome and finding the right balance between patience, delicacy while being forceful with the changing state of the hand-crafted paper. As the paper twists, turns and cracks, I am constantly required to evolve my next intervention. When, where and how to integrate other elements, to repair or embrace the imperfection.





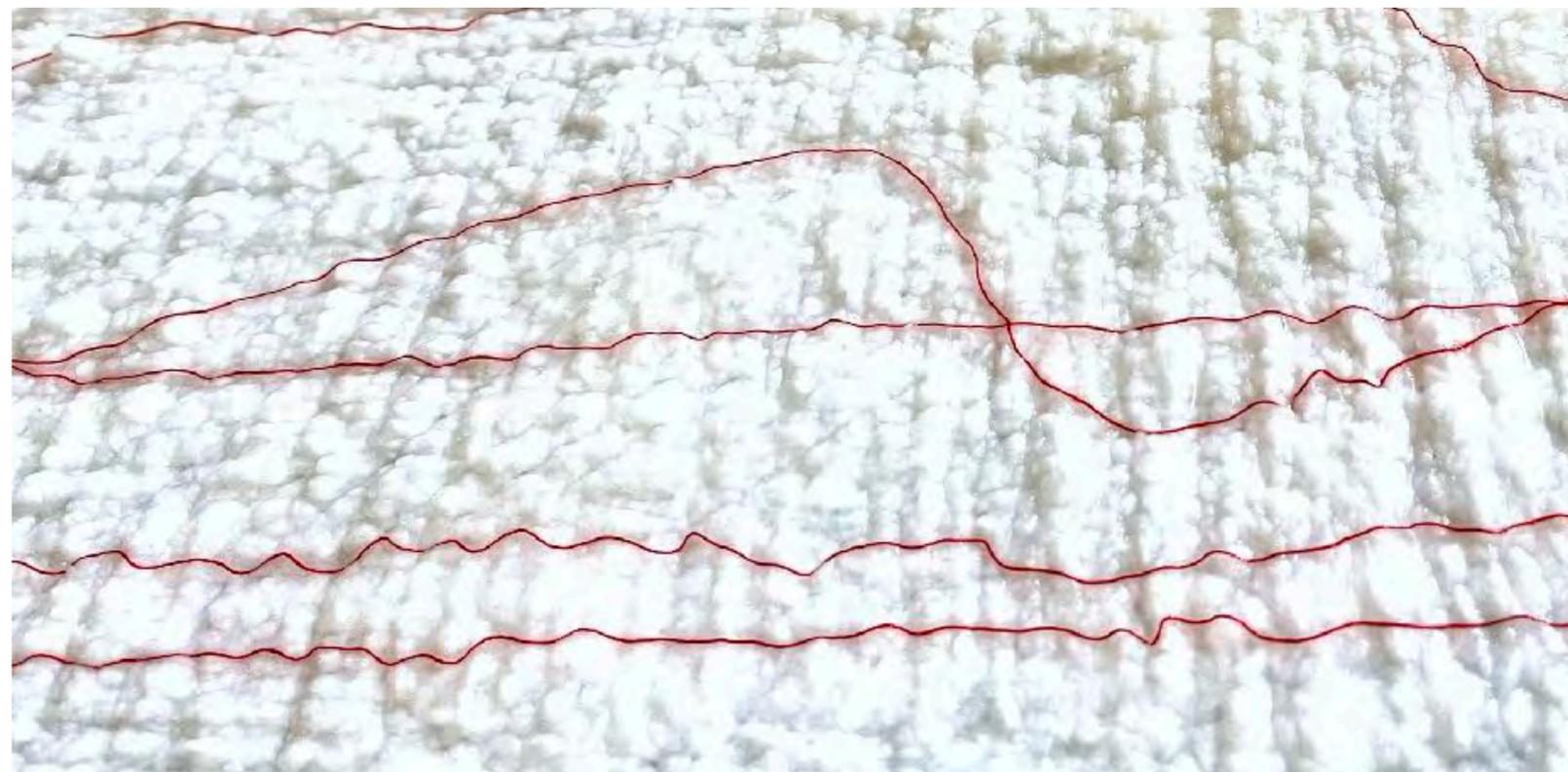


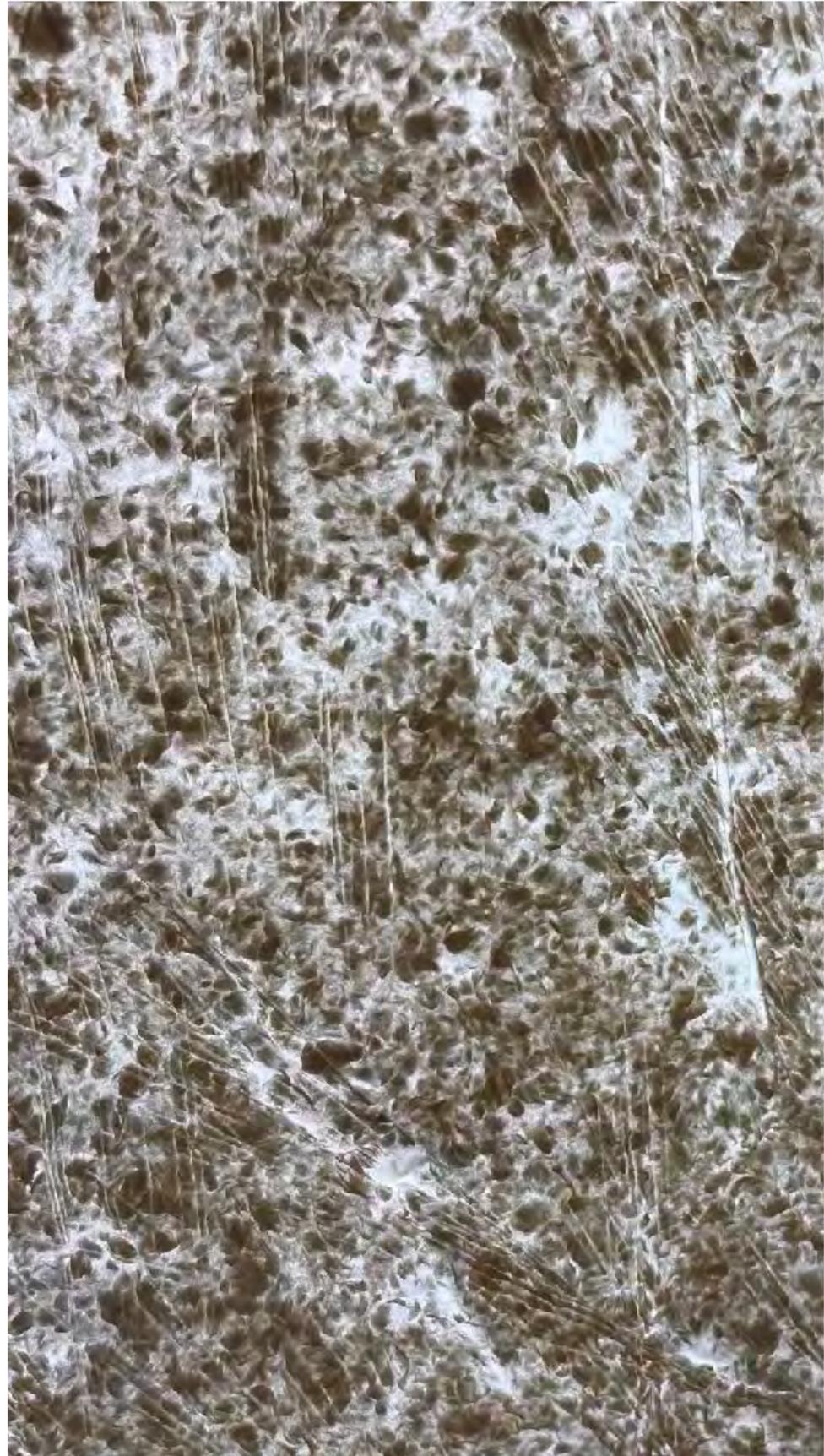
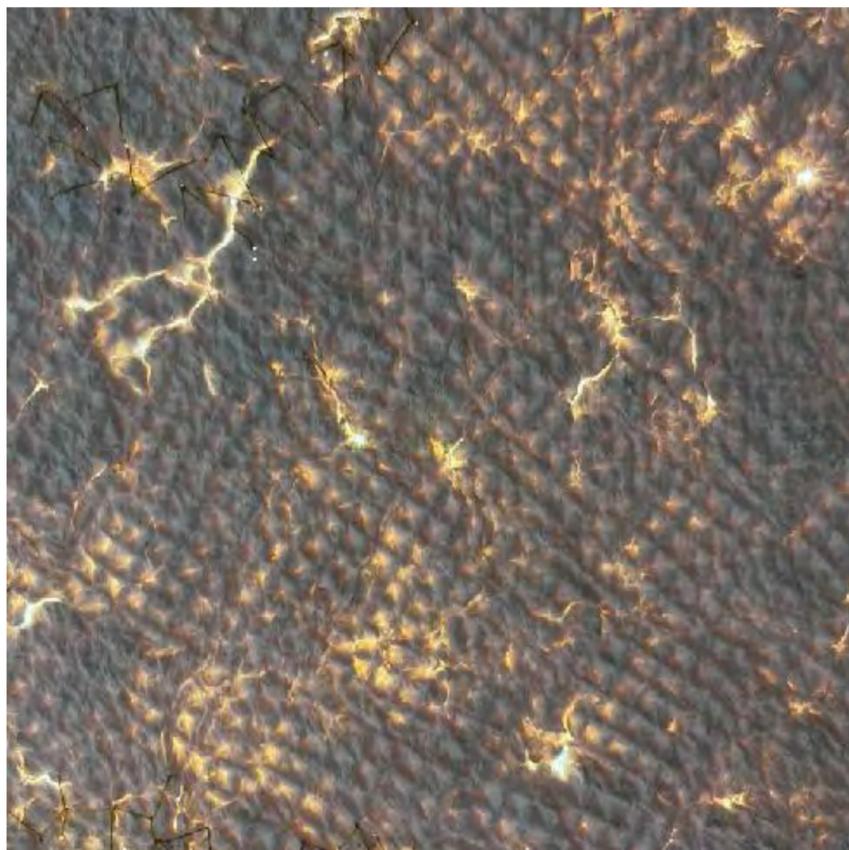


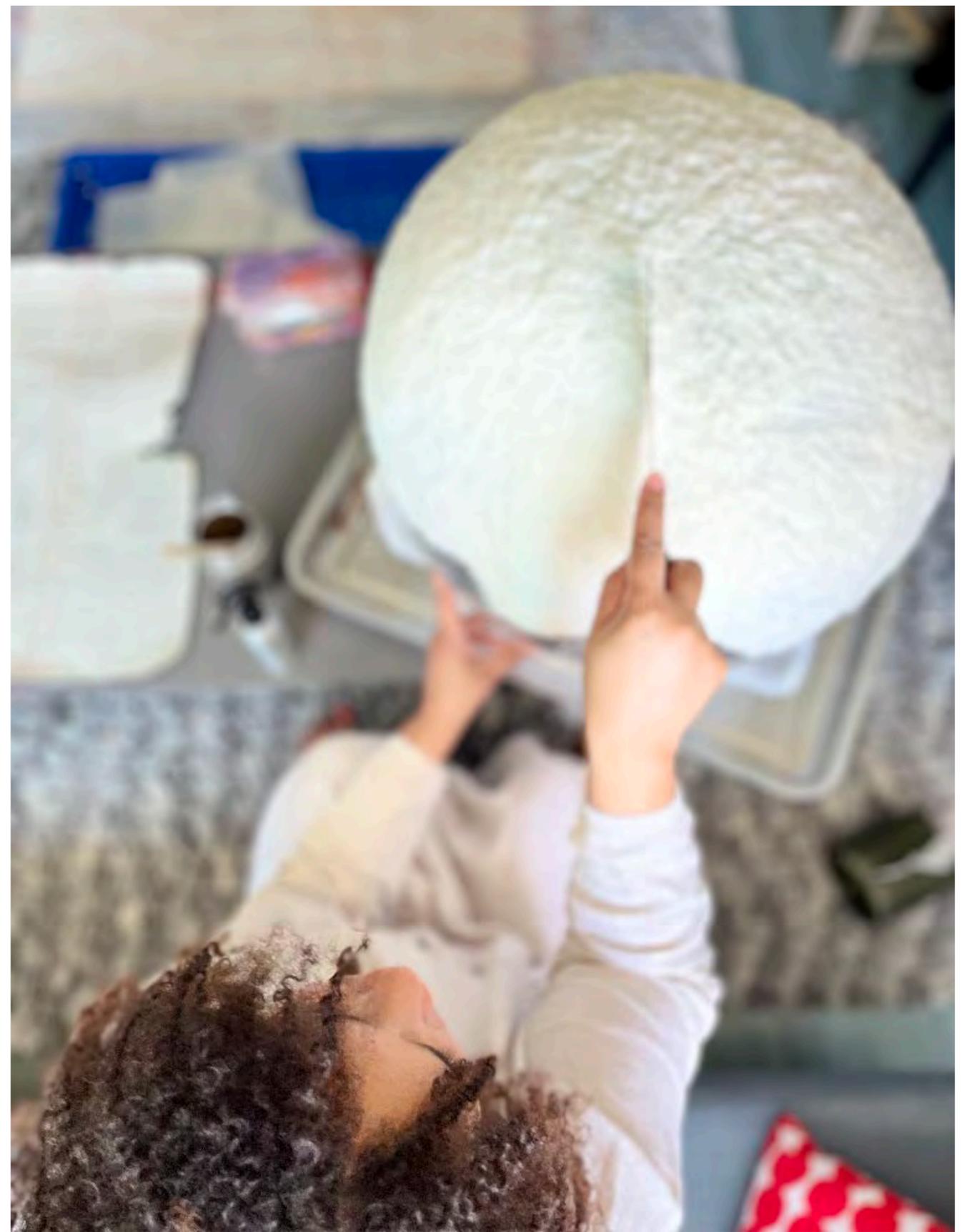
Some of these pieces are integrating red thread. The concept of “red thread” embedded in these has connotations of narrative journeys and stories over time. Materially these red threads are also twisting, turning and warping with many imperfections as the paper surfaces changes over time, much like stories themselves. Perfect stories are not interesting nor are they real.

There is something in this work that inspires me about topography or changing landscapes and how fragility and transformation go hand in hand. The red threads evoke the gridded lines and streets that are connecting different fragments of a place together. Much of Shanghai is fragile and changing and there is an importance in holding onto those stories of place despite the gentle or accelerated cultural and urban transformation.









## FRAGMENTED CONSTELLATIONS

In this body of work, the frames are a living, moving, evolving piece of art whereby participants can take ownership of the work and create a multitude of configurations. The series is tactile and requires a participatory interaction with owner of the work.

In this work the exploratory process should be celebrated as the creative work. As far as artistic vulnerability goes, the feeling and decision making process of tentatively exploring various textures, materials and compositions riddles the artist with questions and doubt. As I embark on exploring various forms of expression one of my main anxieties or driving forces is the idea of the fixed canvas whereby the work reaches a point of no return. In my early exploration, what initially felt like a pragmatic methodology as a way to explore different options took on the form of a delightful process. All the questions that an artist constantly asks oneself formed an intentional reframing of the creative process, where the viewer — not the artist, can add, subtract, replace and recompose at will with no sense of permanence but always with a strong aesthetic sensibility rooted in constant change.

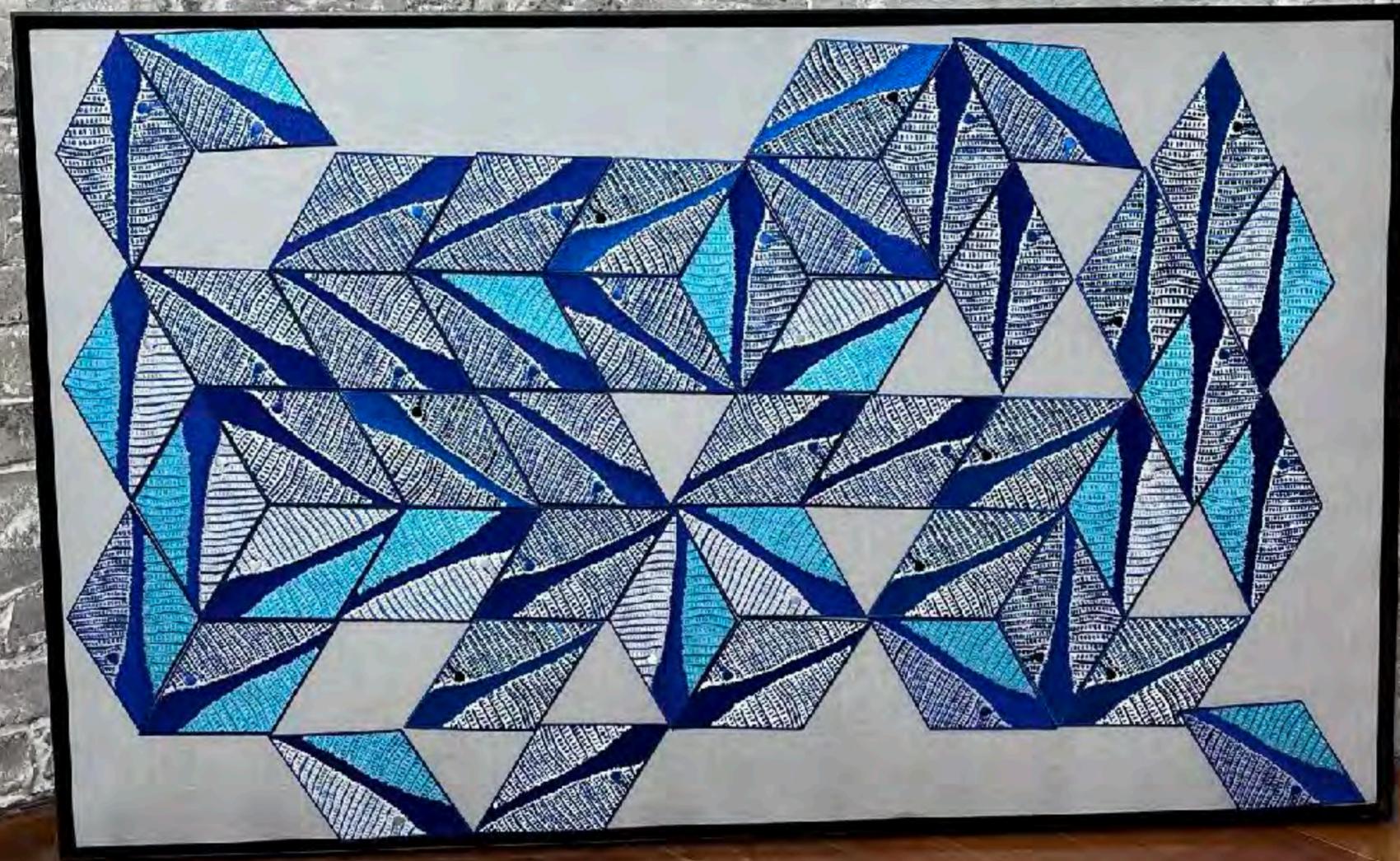


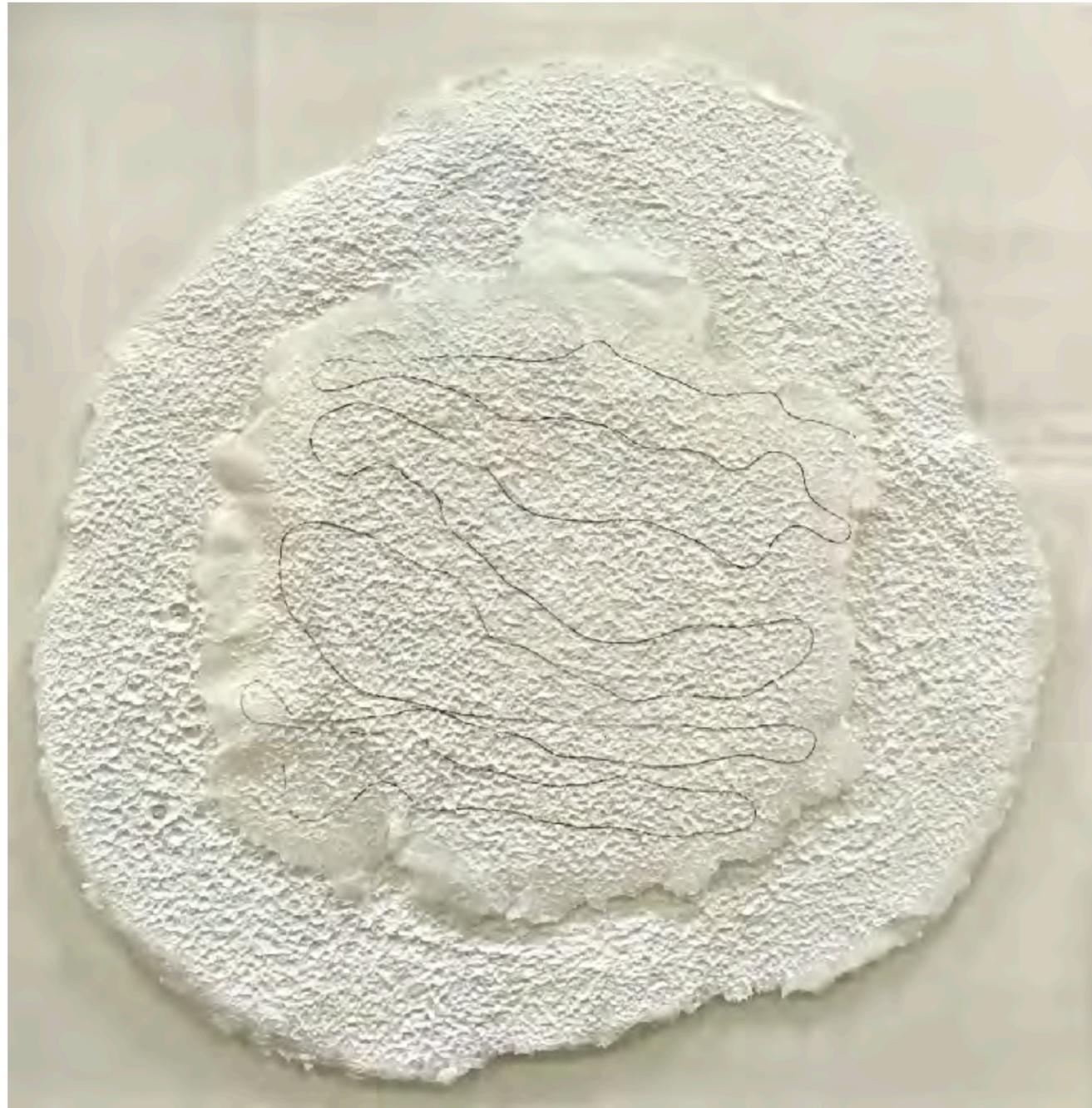
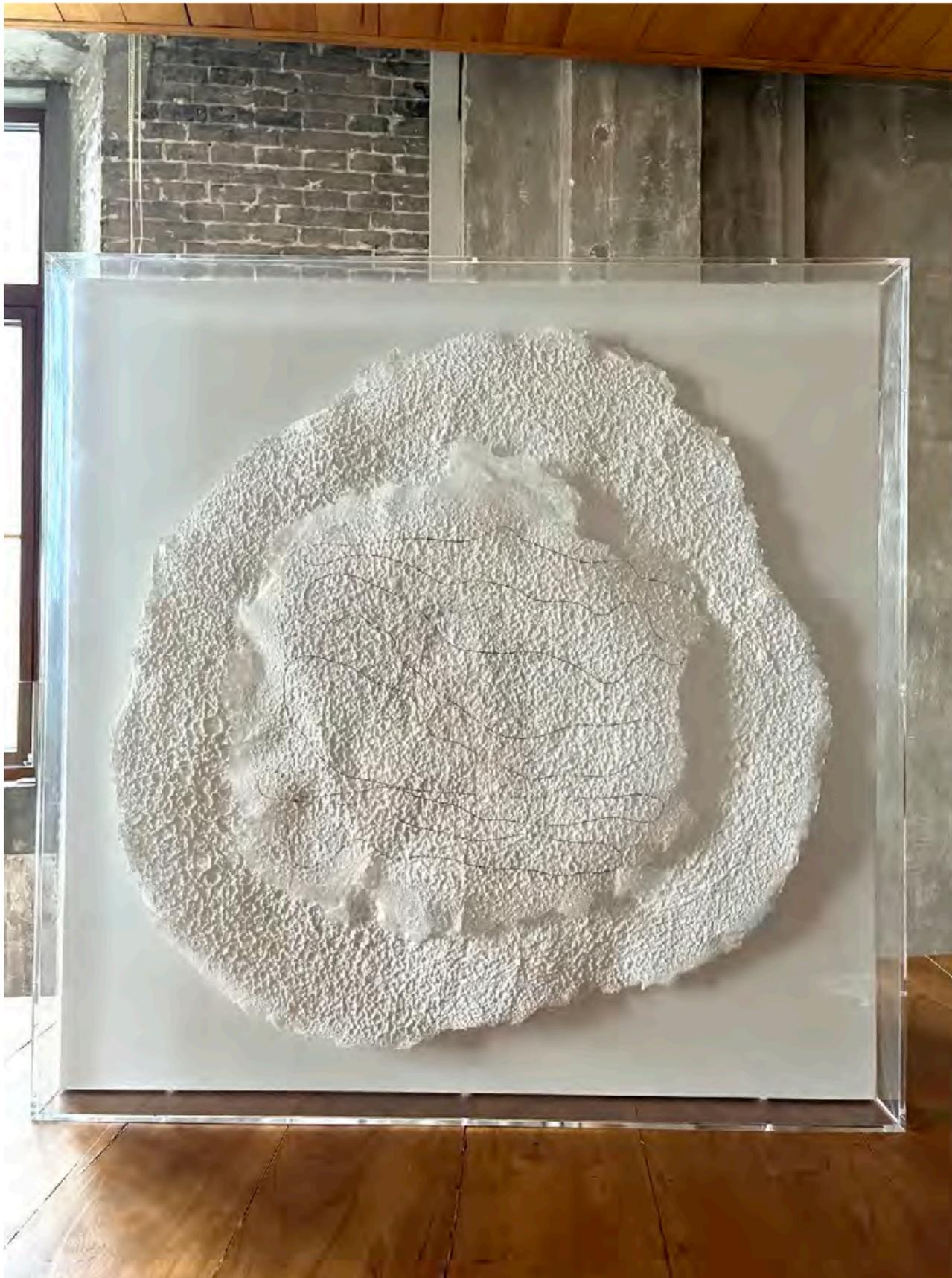


Each work should never be still, it should evolve and as the viewer sees fit. In this collection, I want to explore the notion of taking ownership of a piece of art, where each piece has a story or expressive voice though a constellation of vignettes. The story and interpretation is in the eye of the beholder whereby the work can shift from structured to abstract. The user is constantly faced with intriguing choices around asymmetry or symmetry positive and negative space, composition, harmony or fragmentation.

Each frame has a different visual vocabulary within which a collection of movable vignettes have an emphasis on a chosen craft expression whether that be ethnic fabric prints, photographed terrains and landscapes cropped for abstraction, collage dreamscapes, ink paintings or embroidery.

Inspired by this rich craft of embroidery, steeped in Asian heritage, my creative journey with embroidery was born out of curiosity to understand and reimagine a traditional craft that has also suffered from commoditisation and a cheapening of the process through mass production and mechanisation.





**Title:** "Vague memories"

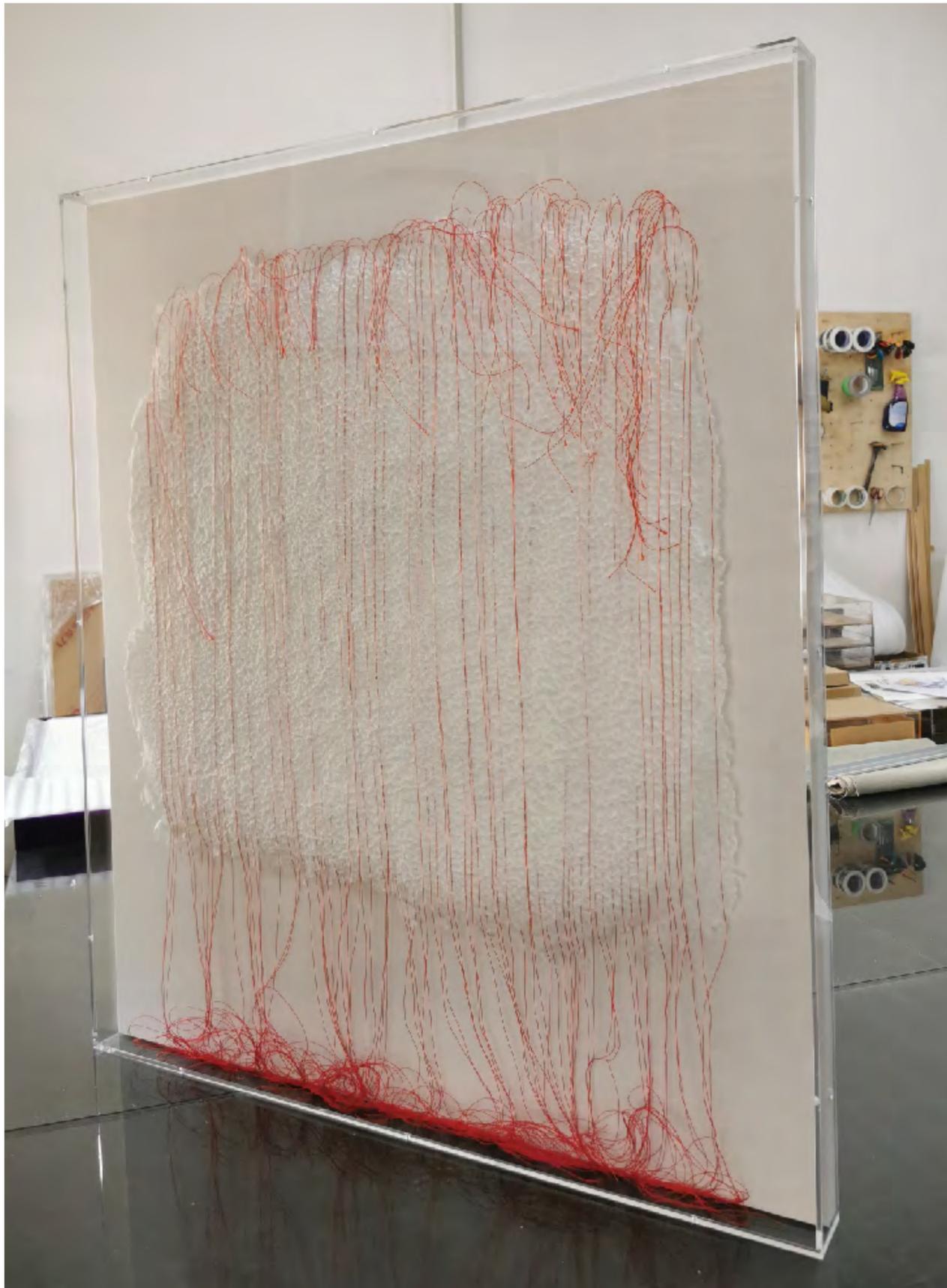
**Year Created:** 2022

**Dimensions:** 85cm x 85cm

**Material:** Hand-crafted pulp fibres with embedded red thread in acrylic box frame.

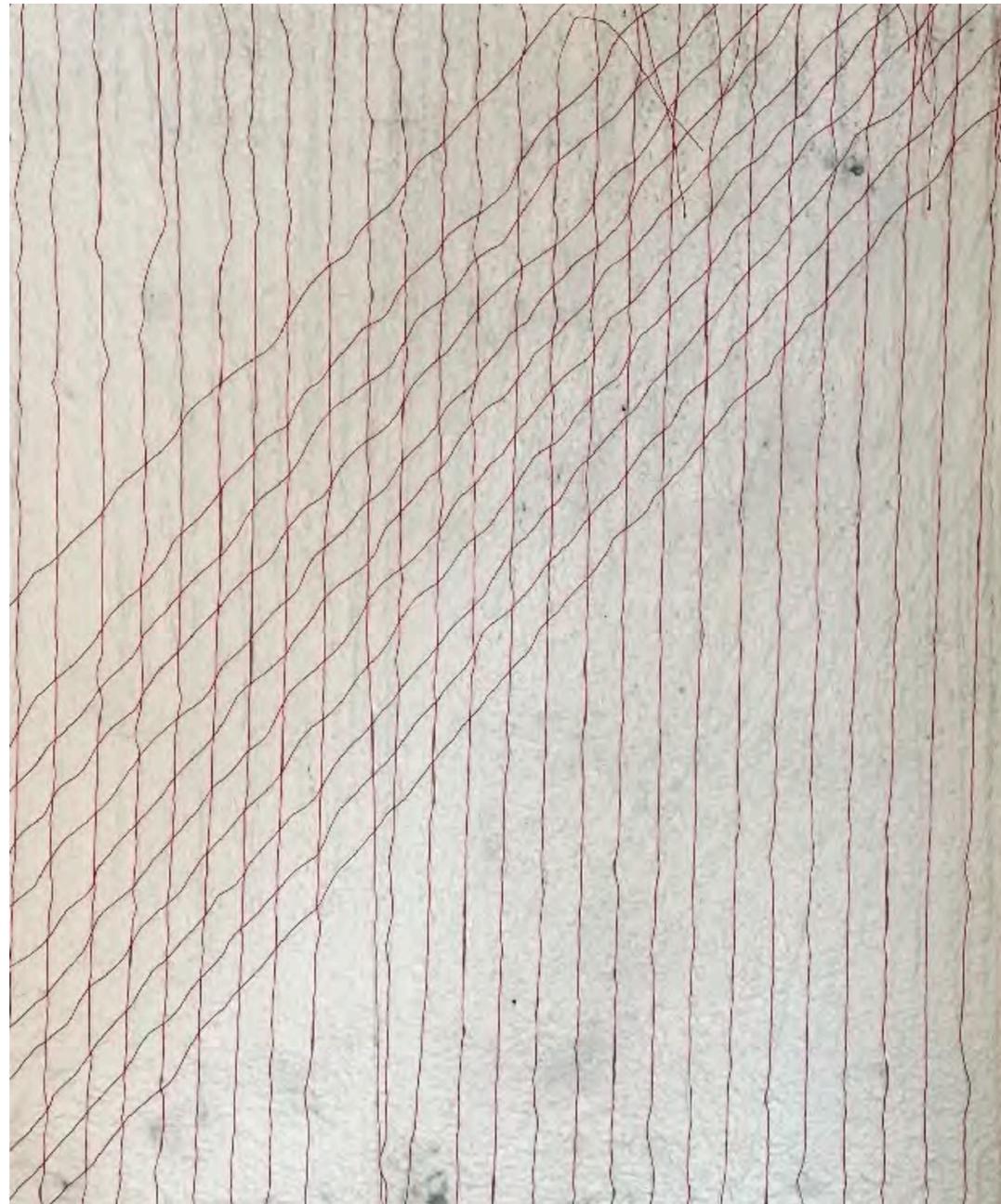
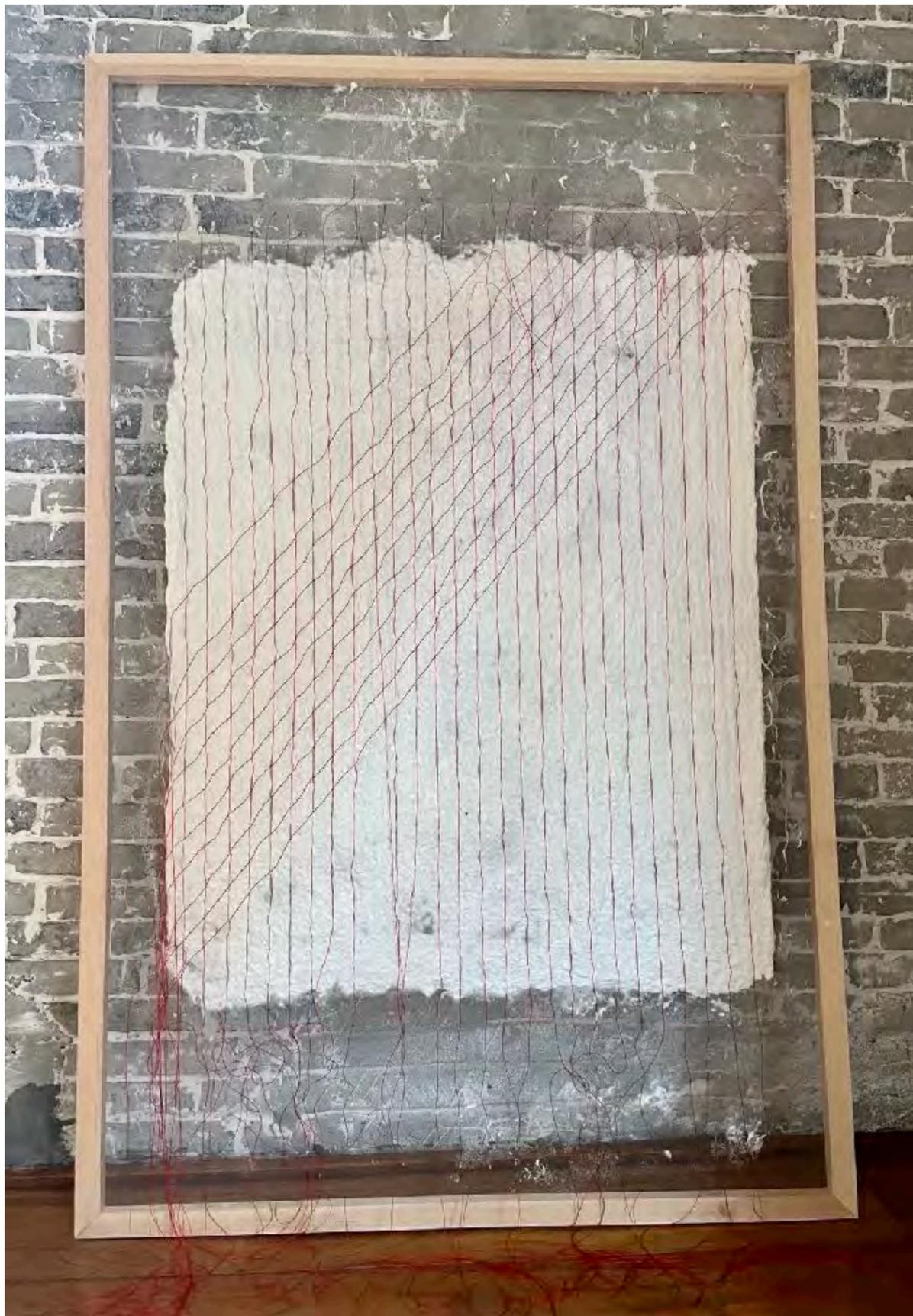
**Price:** 48,000 RMB

[www.artplussanghai.com](http://www.artplussanghai.com)



**Title:** "Our past is messy yet beautiful"  
**Year Created:** 2022  
**Dimensions:** 100cm x 85cm  
**Material:** Hand-crafted pulp fibres with embedded red thread in acrylic box frame.

**Price:** 60,000 RMB  
[www.artplussanghai.com](http://www.artplussanghai.com)



**Title:** “We are just different”

**Year Created:** 2022

**Dimensions:** 90cm x 140cm

**Material:** Hand-crafted pulp fibres with embedded red thread on stretched gauze and wooden frame

**Price:** 55,000 RMB

[www.artplussanghai.com](http://www.artplussanghai.com)



**Title:** “We are mere molecules”

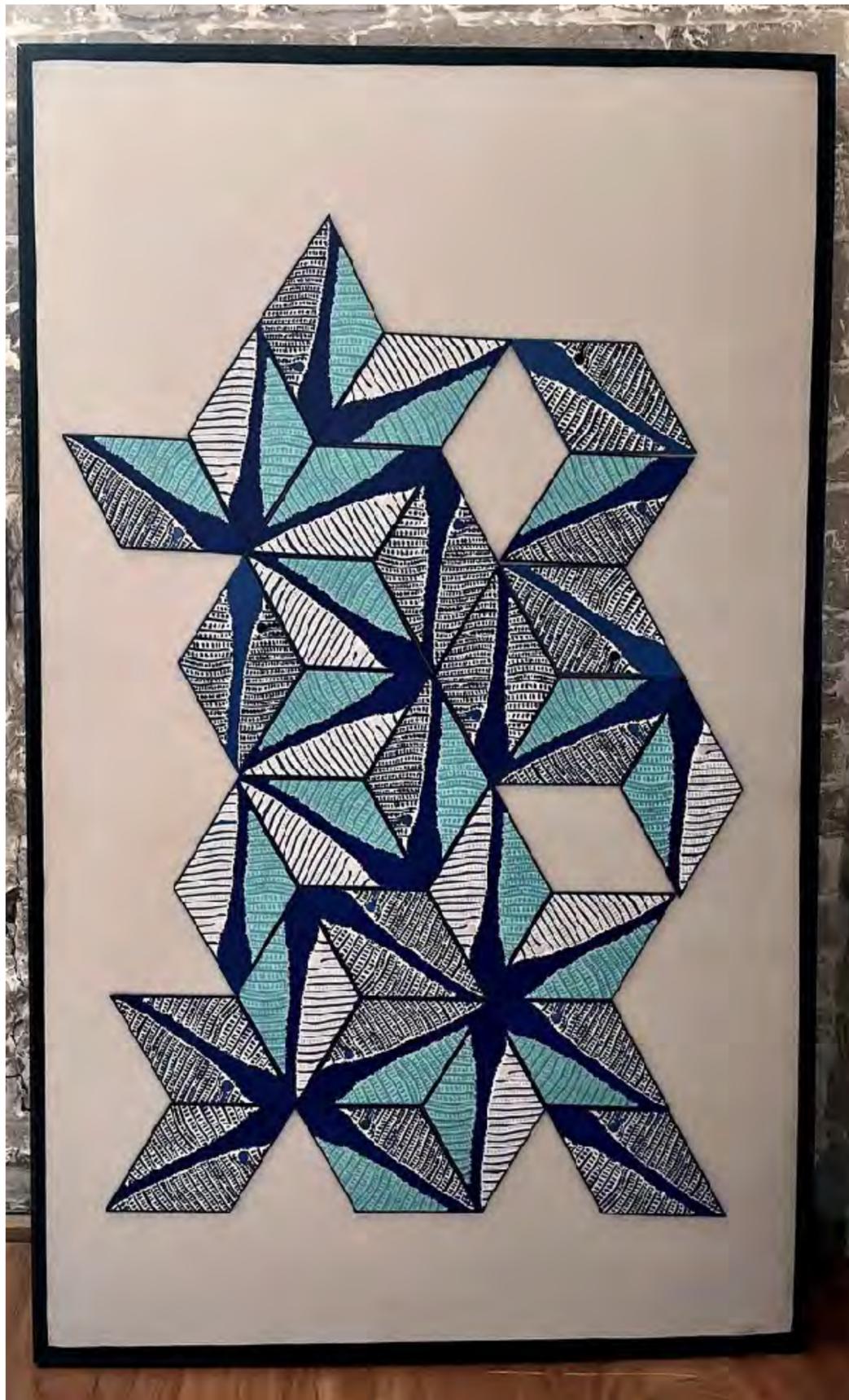
**Year Created:** 2019

**Dimensions:** 66cm x 102cm

**Material:** mountain scape pattern printed on canvas and bonded to magnetic disks. The disks are placed on a frame made from linen stretched over a framed metallic surface.

**Price:** 50,000 RMB

[www.artplushanghai.com](http://www.artplushanghai.com)



**Title:** “Refracted Deep Sea”

**Year Created:** 2019

**Dimensions:** 62x103

**Material:** Hand painted forms using Chinese ink translated into embroidered forms which are attached to magnetic disks. The disks are placed on a frame made from linen stretched over a framed metallic surface.

**Price:** 60,000 RMB

[www.artplussanghai.com](http://www.artplussanghai.com)

EMAIL

PRESS: gallery@artplusshanghai.com  
GENERAL: contact@artplusshanghai.com

PHONE

+86 21 6333 7223

GALLERY ADDRESS

No.99 East Beijing Road, Unit L207,  
Huangpu District  
Shanghai 200002  
China

OPEN HOURS

10.30 am - 6.30 pm  
Tuesday - Sunday  
Other times by appointment

电子邮件

媒体专用: gallery@artplusshanghai.com  
综合联络: contact@artplusshanghai.com

电话

+86 21 6333 7223

地址

黄浦区北京东路99号L209  
益丰外滩源  
上海市 200002  
中国

营业时间

10.30 am - 6.30 pm  
周二 - 周日  
其他时间参观, 请预约

"Paint Under the Hammer" by  
Yu Hong, Xue, & Nishida, & Bao Chao, Liu Lian  
January 20th - February 27th, 2012

"天意难违"  
双人展 叶红杏 周川 姚盛  
2012年1月20日至2012年2月27日

ART+  
SHANGHAI GALLERY  
艺术+ 上海画廊