Elizabeth Simonson

Switch

During the month of June as we prepare to reopen, we have invited Elizabeth Simonson to create an installation in the front room of the gallery to be viewed from all windows. Elizabeth was scheduled to be at Joan Mitchell’s artist-in-residence program in New Orleans but due to the Covid-19 pandemic the visit was postponed, which has freed her up to create her piece titled Switch. The installation, comprised of red beads, red embroidery thread, and memory wire spans the east wall of the gallery and resolves itself in the south corner. The installation will be on view June 1 through the 21st before it will be dismantled.

Before committing herself to visual art, Elizabeth was a professional dancer performing as a principal for Minnesota Dance Theatre and Feld Ballets New York. Her site-specific installations are temporal by nature, with each iteration changing slightly much like a dancer’s performance. When asked if it bothered her that her piece would be torn down, she said no—it’s just like a performance, a temporal event and like choreography it can be recreated again and again albeit with different interpretations much like a performance.

Inspired by L-systems, this piece is structured through the repetition of one unit defined as two archways connected by thread. Strung together through a collection of production rules, the piece multiplies exponentially up and down the wall creating complex geometric shapes that reference waves and suspension bridges. Like the unit, Elizabeth’s actions of threading bead after bead repeatedly, invites a state of intense mindfulness for both the artist and viewer.