

Marian Bijlenga

An Autobiographical Archive

Marian Bijlenga has meticulously re-formed a series of miniature works, especially for this book. Each replicates a work, or a series of works, reflecting 30 years of her artistic career.

Marian Bijlenga
Miniatures

Foreword



If Dutch artists and architects have for a century been noted with Minimal Abstraction, Bijlenga is certainly among them – never more than this volume.

At the turn of the Millennium, I wrote: It is fortunate that Bijlenga's work is collected into monographs and shown in series. Just as each of her works is composed through the repetition of like forms, her expression builds on seeing a succession of pieces.

Most certainly Bijlenga's statement is her own. Her creation of shadow-making silhouettes, the organic forms has qualities in common with Japanese stencils. Her images may be similar to calligraphy, but are made with needle and knotted cords. Her forms are organic, living, sometimes like leaves arranged in whorls by air movements. Others suggest nature under a microscope or far distant galaxies. These are free associations – the stuff of milkweed and midsummer night's dreams.

See here her wonderful expression written both small and large. In itself, each miniature is a tender poem crafted in its own language. Collected together and spanning thirty years, we find ourselves holding a vast Rosetta Stone, uniting and unlocking these complex, unspoken communications.

Brava!

Jack Lenor Larsen

New York, May 2015



**Dots connected by lines:
the work of Marian Bijlenga**

“A lot of things you do,
you already know; I like to do
things that surprise me”¹

With her acute sensibility and focused eye, Marian Bijlenga finds dots waiting to be connected everywhere and anywhere, for example termite holes in wooden buildings. Or in trace elements: pinholes on a wall which had been used by her teacher to stretch his work over a lifetime of studio practice. Her most recent series of works began with the dots she discovered in a newly restored 17th century Chinese wallpaper. Whatever the starting point, the final pieces are always a combination of rigorous discipline and an overarching desire to let things 'become', an approach that is also reflected in her career, which has been remarkable in its success (rigour) and its longevity (allowing things to 'become').

Her first exhibition was at the age of 14, and she continued to make artworks throughout her university studies of Pedagogy before graduating from the Art Academy at 28. At the age of 30 she moved into the studio she still occupies, and steadily built her practice over the next 14 years when, in 1996, she was invited to exhibit at the Kyoto Museum of Modern Art. It was here that the gallerist Joanne Rapp saw her work and decided to show it in the USA which resulted in it being seen and bought by no other than Jack Lenor Larsen, who has continued to follow her career. Her CV demonstrates the breadth of the appeal of her achievement, and the volume of her output. Her impeccable and beautifully presented archive is a record of the connections and developments of her work from the very first to the latest. Year-books with images and samples of all works completed within that year are supported by compilation pieces created from elements of those completed works. Now, especially created for this book, she has meticulously re-formed a series of miniature works, each replicating a piece, or series of pieces, from each year of her practice – everything documented: autobiography as archive.

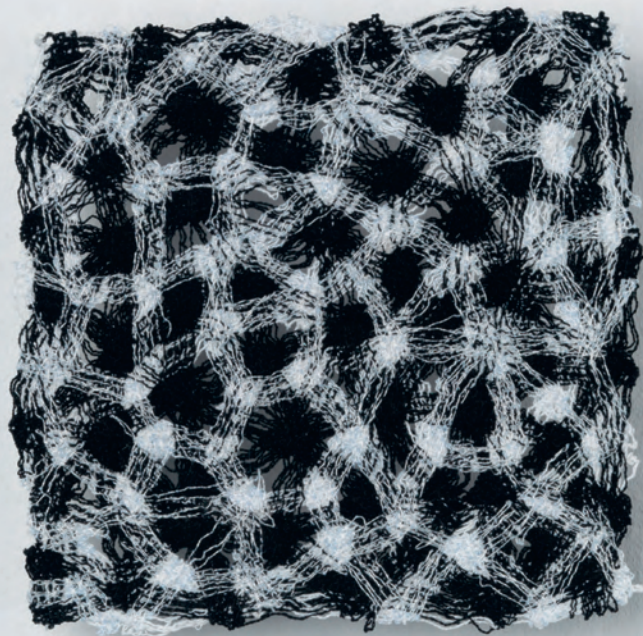
Marian Bijlenga's archive very much represents an accumulation of evidence, a presentation and a refinement of a history for future use. However, the recording of the information contained within any archive is dependent on the standpoint of the holder and recorder of the archive. Inevitably, some elements will not be recorded, leaving an absence between the documented facts.²

These 'presences' and 'absences', and the context in which they are understood are elements acknowledged during the processes of creating and assembling Marian Bijlenga's works, during which she cuts around the shapes and places them in a relationship with other shapes. This can be

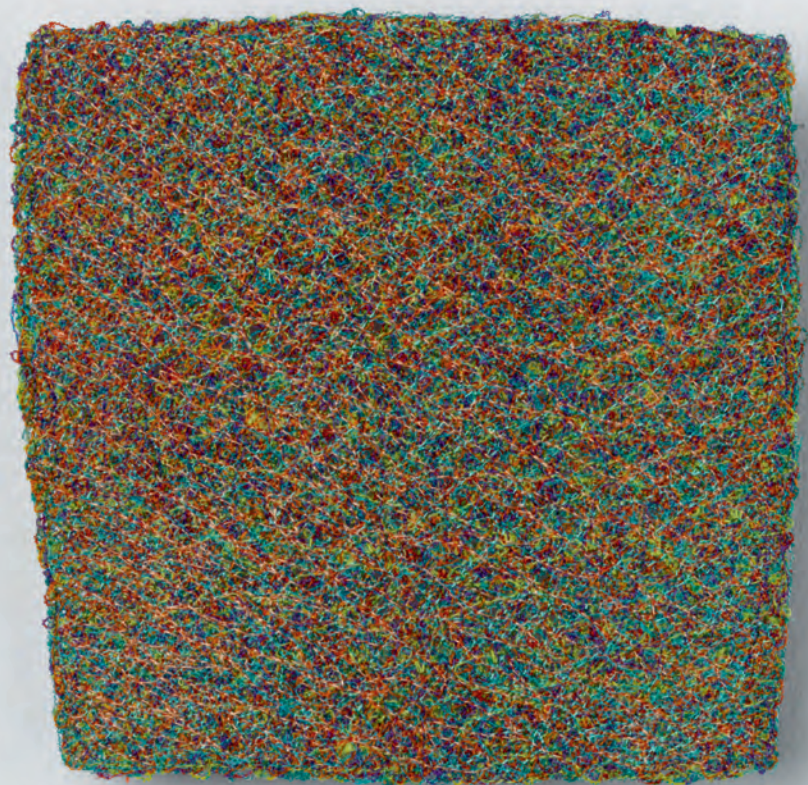
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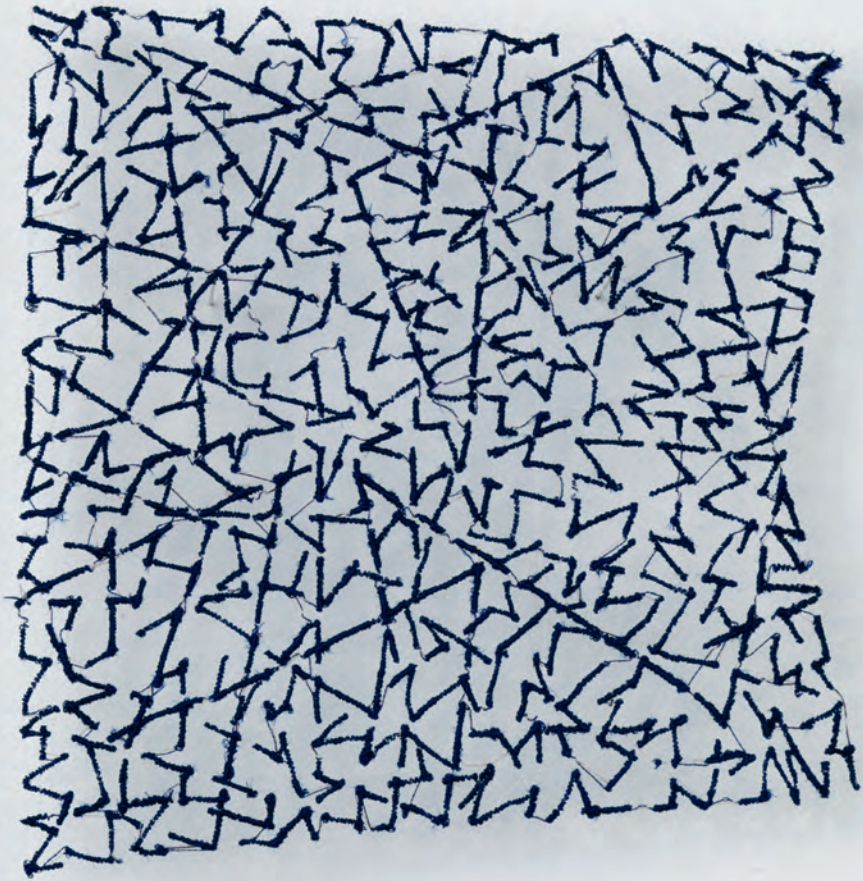
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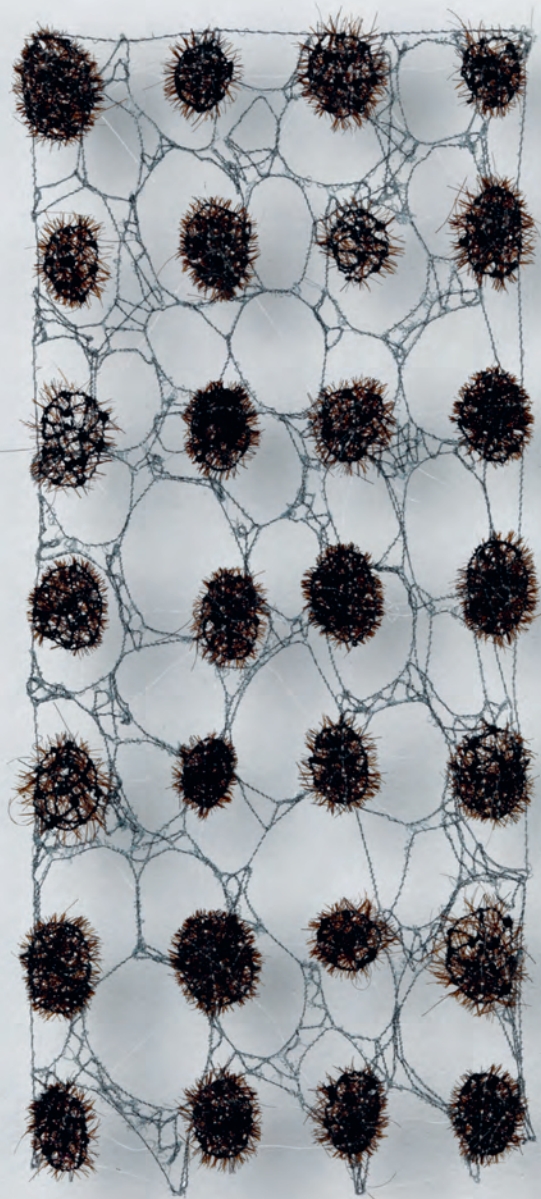
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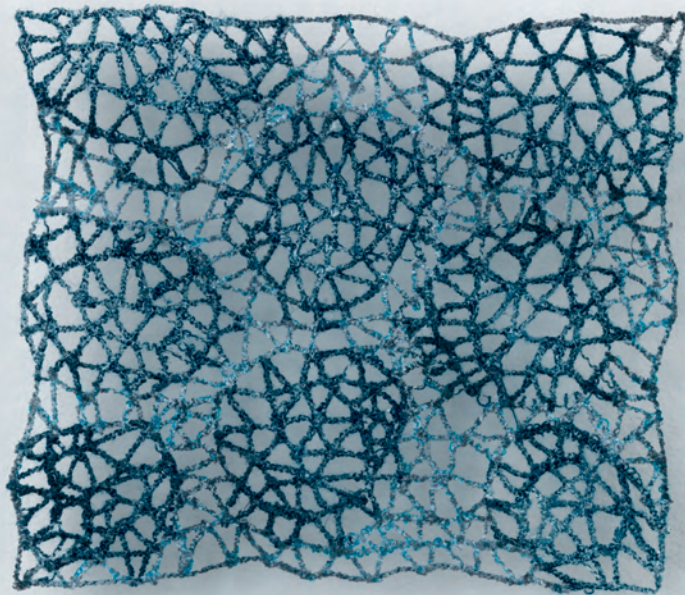
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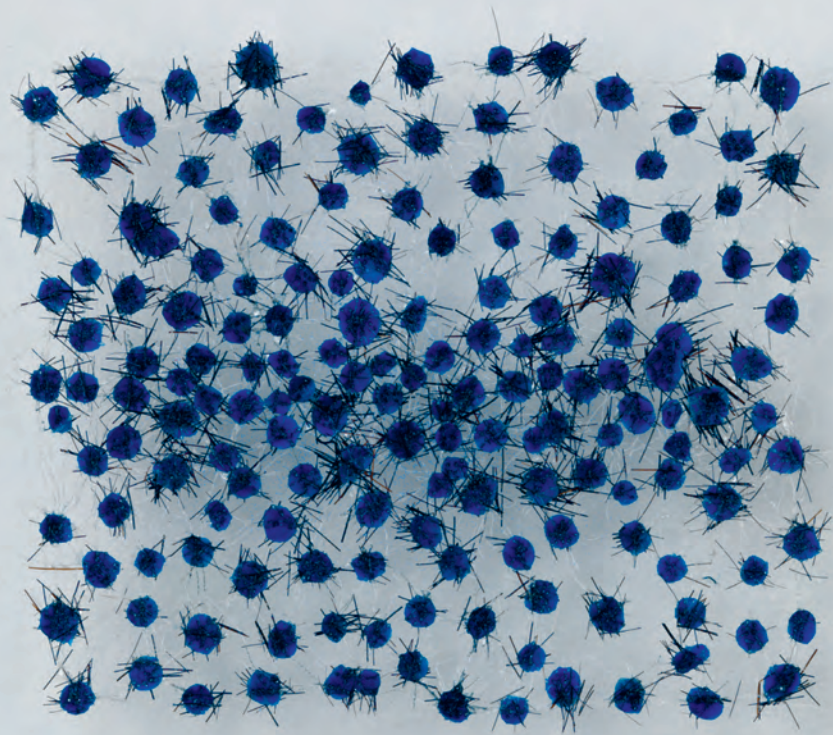
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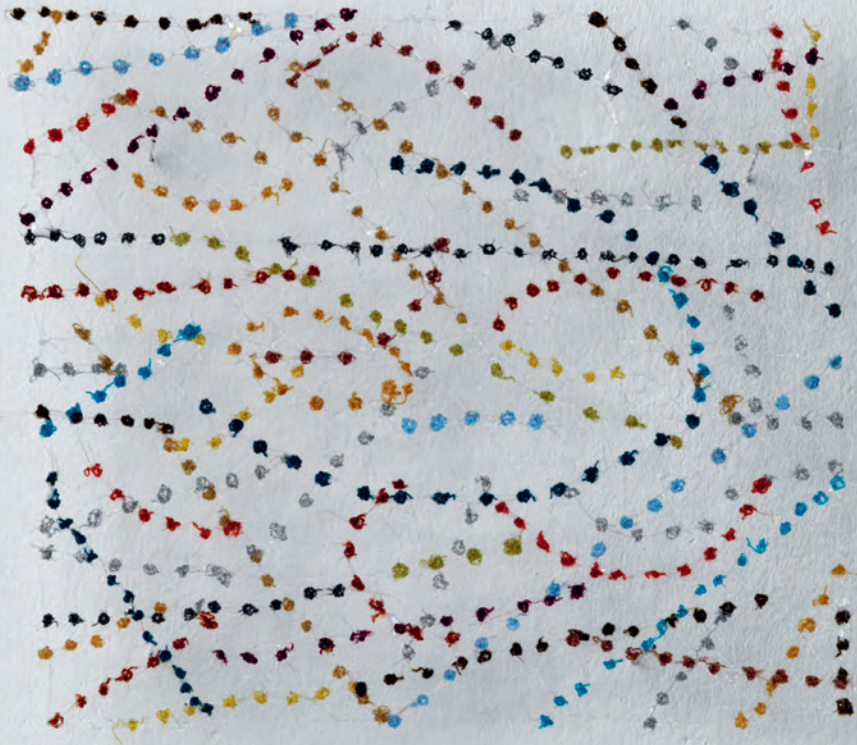
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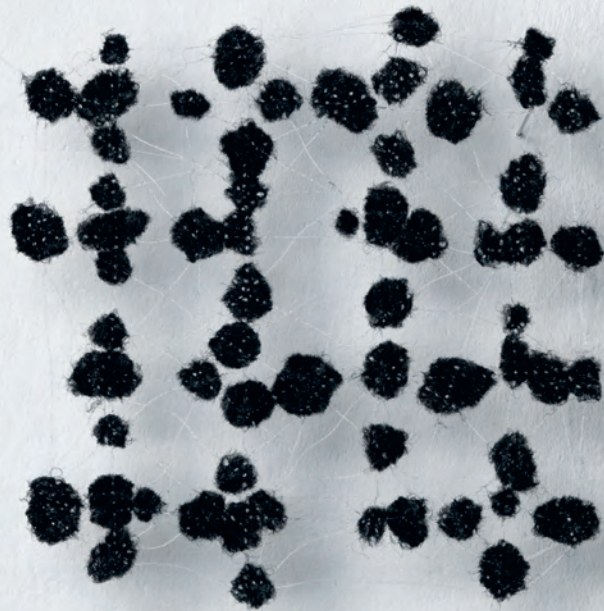
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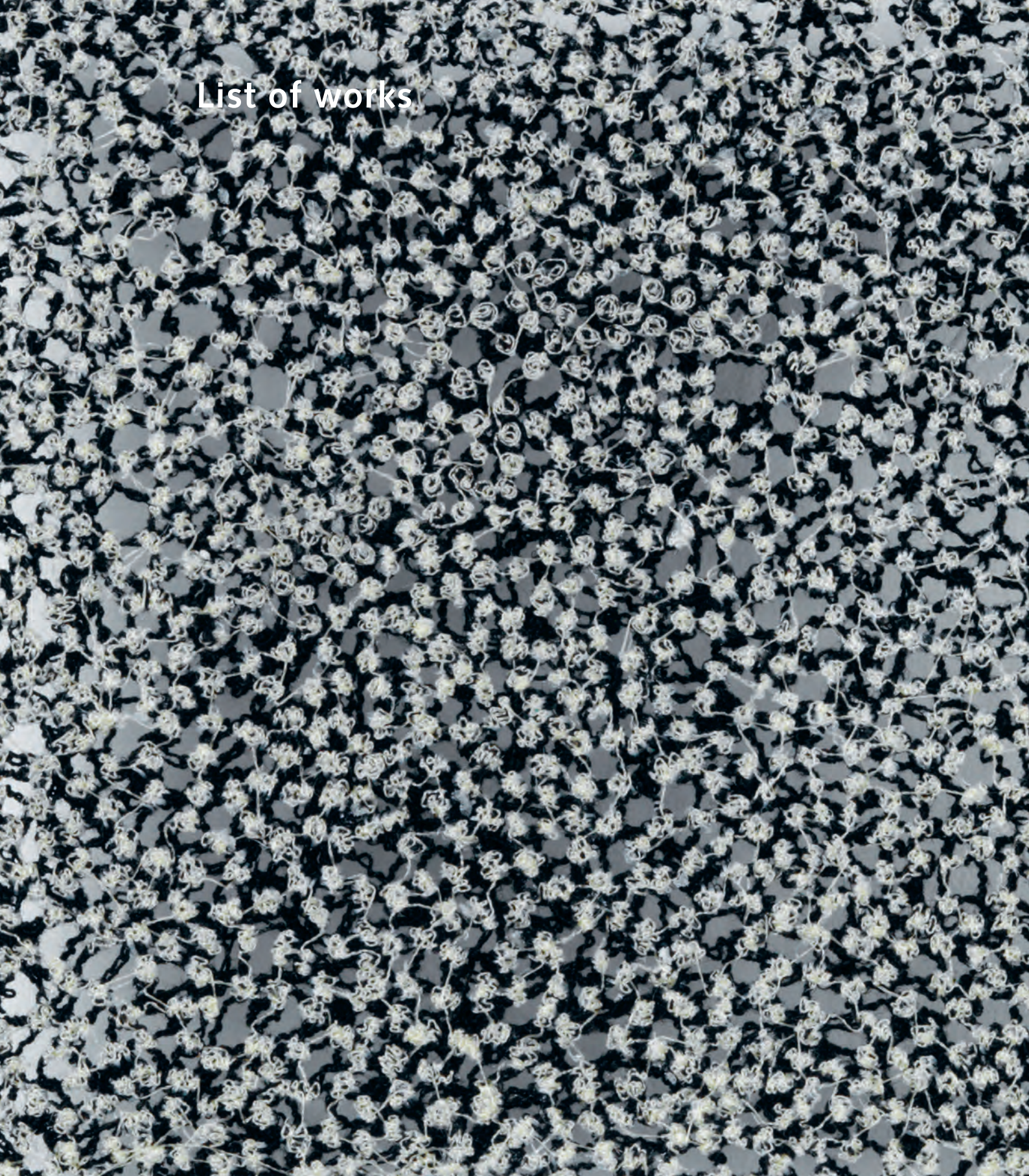
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Handwritten Chinese characters in seal script, arranged in a dense, roughly square grid. The characters are highly stylized and difficult to decipher without specialized knowledge.

List of works



01



M 2014, 9 x 9 cm
R Untitled 1981, 38 x 38 cm,
cotton, acrylic, glued

02



M 2013, 8,5 x 8,5 cm
R Untitled 1982, 100 x 100 cm,
cotton, glued

03



M 2013, 8 x 7,3 cm
R Untitled 1982, 90 x 90 cm,
cotton, glued
*Collection - Stedelijk Museum,
Amsterdam*

04



M 2013, 8,7 x 8,3 cm
R Untitled 1982, 100 x 100 cm,
cotton, acrylic, glued

05



M 2012, 11 x 11 cm
R Untitled 1983, 150 x 150 cm,
cotton, glued
*Collection - Her Royal Highness
Princess Beatrix*

06



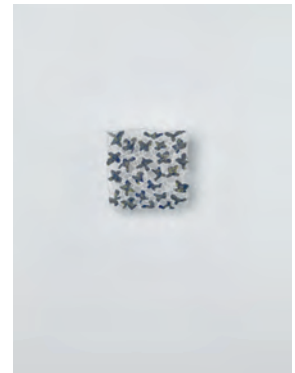
M 2013, 11 x 11 cm
R Untitled 1983, 150 x 150 cm,
cotton, glued
*Former collection - ABN AMRO,
Amsterdam
Private collection, NL*

07



M 2013, 8,5 x 8,5 cm
R Untitled 1983, 100 x 100 cm,
cotton, paper, glued

08



M 2014, 8 x 7,5 cm
R Series from 1983, ca. 60 x 60 cm,
cotton, paper, glued
Private collections, NL

09



M 2013, 13,5 x 14 cm
R Untitled 1984, 150 x 150 cm,
cotton, glued
*Collection - Rijksdienst Beeldende
Kunst, Den Haag*

10



M 2013, 12,5 x 7,5 cm
R Untitled 1984, 150 x 75 cm,
cotton, glued
Private collection, NL

11



M 2013, 12,5 x 8,5 cm
R Untitled 1984, 150 x 75 cm,
cotton, glued
*Collection - Benno Premela,
Centraal Museum, Utrecht*

12



M 2013, 11,5 x 4 cm
R Untitled 1984, 150 x 55 cm,
cotton, glued
Private collection, NL

13



M 2013, 10 x 10 cm
R Untitled 1985, 150 x 150 cm,
cotton, glued

14



M 2013, 14 x 13,5 cm
R Untitled 1985, 150 x 150 cm,
cotton, paper, glued
Collection - Stedelijk Museum,
Amsterdam

15



M 2013, 15,5 x 15 cm
R Untitled 1985, 150 x 150 cm,
cotton, paper, glued
Collection - Stedelijk Museum,
Amsterdam

16



M 2013, 15 x 15 cm
R Untitled 1985, 150 x 150 cm,
cotton, paper, glued
Private collection, NL

17



M 2013, 7,5 x 7,5 cm
R Untitled 1986, 100 x 100 cm,
cotton, glued, stitched, knotted

18



M 2013, 9 x 10 cm
R Untitled 1986, 120 x 130 cm,
cotton, glued, stitched, knotted
Collection - Textile Museum, Tilburg

19



M 2013, 7,5 x 7,5 cm
R Untitled 1988, 9 parts,
each 75 x 75 cm,
cotton, glued, stitched
Collection - Textile Museum, Tilburg

20



M 2013, 20 x 9 cm
R Lap 1991, 270 x 120 cm,
horsehair, knotted, stitched
Collection - Stedelijk Museum,
Amsterdam

21



M 2013, 10,5 x 11,5 cm
R Untitled 1991, ca. 120 x 140 cm,
horsehair, fabric, stitched
Private collection, USA

22



M 2013, 10 x 9 cm
R Untitled 1991, 95 x 95 cm,
horsehair, fabric, stitched
Collection - Benno Premesla,
Centraal Museum, Utrecht

23



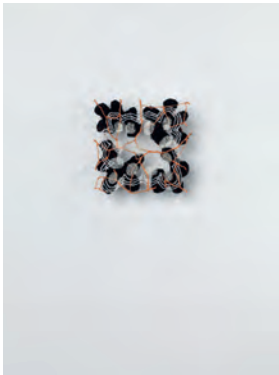
M 2014, 10 x 10 cm
R Untitled 1991, 95 x 95 cm,
horsehair, viscose, stitched
Collection - Textile Museum, Tilburg

24



M 2013, 7 x 12 cm
R Untitled 1993, 90 x 180 cm,
horsehair, fabric, stitched
Collection - Stedelijk Museum,
Amsterdam

25



M 2013, 10 x 10 cm
R Untitled 1993, 130 x 130 cm,
horsehair, fabric, stitched

26



M 2013, 8 x 8,5 cm
R Untitled 1994, 70 x 70 cm,
horsehair, fabric, stitched
*Collection - Stedelijk Museum,
Amsterdam*

27



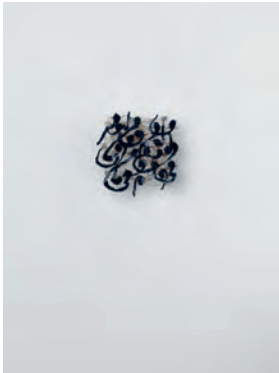
M 2012, 11 x 9 cm
R Untitled 1994, 115 x 105 cm,
horsehair, fabric, stitched
Private collection, NL

28



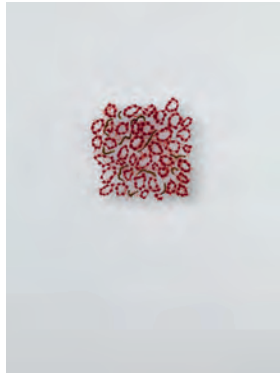
M 2013, 11,5 x 9 cm
R Untitled 1994, 175 x 115 cm,
horsehair, fabric, stitched
Private collection, NL

29



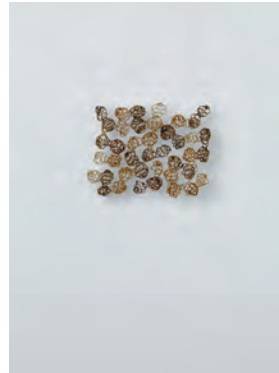
M 2014, 8,5 x 8,5 cm
R Untitled 1994, 40 x 40 cm,
horsehair, fabric, stitched
Private collection, NL

30



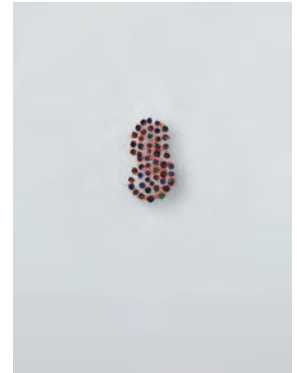
M 2014, 11 x 10,5 cm
R Untitled 1997, 130 x 130 cm,
horsehair, fabric, stitched
Private collection, NL

31



M 2014, 10 x 13 cm
R Untitled 1997, 170 x 180 cm,
horsehair, stitched
Private collection, USA

32



M 2014, 9 x 5 cm
R Untitled 1998, 60 x 30 cm,
horsehair, fabric, stitched
Private collections, NL, USA

33



M 2013, 11 x 10,5 cm
R Untitled 1998, 155 x 150 cm,
horsehair, fabric, stitched
Private collection, USA

34



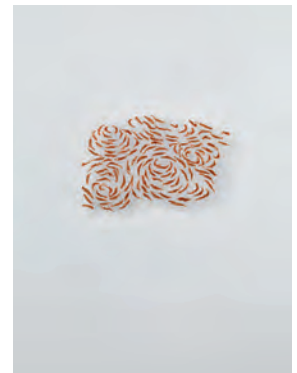
M 2012, 11 x 11 cm
R Premesla Present 1998, 58 x 58 cm,
horsehair, fabric, stitched
Private collections, NL

35



M 2012, 18 x 17,5 cm
R Untitled 1998, 255 x 260 cm,
horsehair, fabric, stitched
*Collection - Stedelijk Museum,
Amsterdam*

36



M 2014, 10 x 16 cm
R Untitled 1998, 160 x 255 cm,
horsehair, fabric, stitched
Private collection, USA



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