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Debra Smith
Seeking Balance

January 9th – February 15th, 2020

NEW YORK, NY — January 9th, 2020 — Kathryn Markel Fine Arts is pleased to present *Seeking Balance*, an exhibition of new work by Debra Smith. The show marks the artist's second solo show with the gallery.

This most recent body of work is the result of both an intuitive process, formed from years of working with historic textiles, and a mindful practice. Each work is an open expression, constructed in an extraordinary way - with hours of stitching, embedding layer upon layer of material. With the visual sensibilities of a painter, Smith manipulates stripes and forms shapes with a gestural, geometric abstraction. She intuitively pieces found silk fabrics from vintage kimonos and men's suit linings into a specific and well-developed visual language that relates more fully to drawing and painting than to the nature of textiles.

Debra Smith
Silence is Unclear, 2, 2015
Pieced vintage silk
58 x 51 in.

These materials from the intimate interiors of traditional garments carry a conceptual weight. The austere stripes of men's suit linings are similar in texture, but have a more striking presence, to the women's kimono fabric in soft, transparent shades of ivory. These contrasting elements come together to form a strong visual balance of masculine and feminine. Despite complex underlying dualities of artist and artisan, masculine and feminine, gestural and constructed, the end result is a pleasingly straight-forward visual vocabulary.

Smith's work has been exhibited across the United States over the past two decades, including Shifting Visions, Puerh (2019), Synesthesia: Collaboration of Senses, Studios INC (2019), and 40th Anniversary Exhibition, Olson-Larsen Gallery (2019). In 2012, Smith was honored as one of the Women to Watch 2012: Focus on Fiber & Textiles from The National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, DC. After living in Brooklyn, NY, for over a decade, Smith returned to her native Midwestern roots in 2004. She now lives in Kansas City, where she continues to create art from vintage textiles.

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