

POWERS / LOWENFELS GALLERY

53 STANTON STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10002

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

March 12, 2024

**POWERS & LOWENFELS PRESENT,
BADGE OF COURAGE | MARCIA GOLDENSTEIN: WOMEN IN STITCHES
& THE VERNACULAR ID BADGE: AMERICAN WORKERS IN THE AGE OF UNIONS.**

New York, NY — Steven S. Powers and Joshua Lowenfels present, Badge of Courage | Marcia Goldenstein: Women in Stitches & The Vernacular ID Badge: American Workers in the Age of Unions.

This exhibition explores labor through the physical act of creating an exhaustive series of embroideries by our artist Marcia Goldenstein, her subjects' dedications to their visions and advocacy, and an extensive collection of vintage employee identification badges.

Over the last 15 years, Goldenstein has wrought two bodies of work venerating female artists and activists. Combining her professional experience as a painter with embroidery, Marcia builds up an image, much as she would a painting—stitching colored cotton threads to create complex tonal gradients and deep textures like paint and impasto.

Like Anni Albers and Lenore Tawney, Goldenstein has taken what was once considered "women's work" and elevated it beyond craft. With the "Artist Series," Marcia represents the past by working in black and white, embroidering deceased female artists often left out of art history. The "Activist Series" uses color for women of the near past and present who use their voice, art, poetry, and politics to help make a positive and progressive change in the world.

Goldenstein has exhibited these works at multiple museums; however, this is their first gallery exhibit.

The post-it-sized embroidered portraits play well off the vernacular photography of the vintage metal and enameled badges that house portraits of the Everyman/woman workers from when a third of the country held union jobs. These unions were inextricably linked to the growth of the middle class and instrumental in advancing civil rights and policies that addressed gender-based discrimination.

The badges are surprisingly satisfying in hand—they have good weight, and one cannot help but wonder about the individuals pictured. Most of them are assuredly dead; however, several may still be alive—where are they now? What happened to the young sailor on the Pearl Harbor badge? We recognize some companies, such as Campbell Soup, Goodyear Tires, Frigidaire, and Heywood-Wakefield, but what happened to the Blood Brothers Machine Company or Frankoweave Incorporated?

These enameled badges that bear a swath of humanity serve as an ad hoc timeline of labor through The Roaring Twenties, The Great Depression, WWI - WWII, and the dawn of the Civil Rights Era.

Badge of Courage | Marcia Goldenstein: Women in Stitches & The Vernacular ID Badge: American Workers in the Age of Unions runs from April 11 - May 18, 2024 with an artist's reception and book signing on April 11, 6-8pm.

The gallery is open Thursday-Sunday 12:00-6:00 pm. To keep up to date on gallery features follow Steven S. Powers (@stevenspowers) and Joshua Lowenfels (@ployaarrtt) on Instagram.

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BADGE OF COURAGE

MARCIA GOLDENSTEIN: WOMEN IN STITCHES
& THE VERNACULAR ID BADGE: AMERICAN
WORKERS IN THE AGE OF UNIONS



Rosa | cotton thread on muslin | 2.5" x 3"



Anonymous worker | Dupont | brass, gelatin silver print
early-mid 20thC | 1.75" x 2"

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(ul) Winona LaDuke | cotton thread on muslin | 2.75" x 3.25"
 (ur) Elaine de Kooning | cotton thread on muslin | 2.6" x 3.2"
 (bl) Cindy Sherman | cotton thread on muslin | 3.5" x 4.7"
 (br) Maya Angelou | cotton thread on muslin | 2.5" x 2.75"



(ul) Anonymous worker | Blood Brothers Machine Co. | early-mid 20thC
 (ur) Anonymous worker | Mansfield Tire & Rubber Co. | early-mid 20thC
 (m) Anonymous Yeomanette | US Navy | WWI era
 (bl) Anonymous worker | Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. | early-mid 20thC
 (br) Anonymous sailor | Naval Station - Pearl Harbor | early-mid 20thC



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Bella Abzug | cotton thread on muslin | 2.75" x 3.25"
Kara Walker | cotton thread on muslin | 2.8" x 3"

