

*Cocreation: Visual Essays on Renewal and Collaboration* by Samantha Verrone

On view at the Stonewall Gallery, Yarmouth History Center, from September 5-November 1, 2025

Collecting and reconstructing antiquated textiles was always a way to counter the waste and runaway consumption of our culture. It was not just the coveted 100 year old European linen lovingly loomed by hand or cotton dyed with indigo on the isles of Japan in a 1000 year old technique that I sought, but textiles that might otherwise end up in a landfill like old wool blankets and table linens marked with rust. Time is a significant ingredient. Exploration of how time is spent, what we give our attention to and a slow method using natural dyestuffs, hand stitchwork and varied materials form the taproot of this process.

Rust, which only appears with the passage of time, is at the heart of it. Rust is a facilitator, a catalyst. Rust dyeing is about loosening the grip of relentless productivity and efficiency and novelty. Decay itself can be beautiful. Rust is a regenerative dyestuff, using less water than traditional dyes and can be used again and again. The unique results of blending corrosion and construction, using antiquated objects, incorporating memory and nostalgia; preserving, conserving, reinterpreting, using imperfection to innovate - these are the guiding principles of rust dyeing and of slow construction. The introduction of plant dyes furthers the tension between permanence and ephemera. The marks made by botanical dyestuffs change over time, developing a unique patina. They interact with the rust to shift color and pattern. They are living color.

These improvisational assemblages are inspired by antique Japanese Boro, Korean Bojagi, and American quilting traditions. Using fragments of antique Japanese Boro cloth and quilt remnants, building them into something new, creates a connection to the artists who began the process. There is a spirit of conservancy and stewardship, a reverence for an undertaking begun long ago and now carried on - a collaboration over generations of makers.