

## **Press Release: Loom In Essence 2017**

SAORI Worcester proudly announces the opening of “Loom In Essence 2017,” a group exhibition of students’ and the instructor’s work at the Sprinkler Factory Gallery, 38 Harlow Street, Worcester MA. The show runs from July 8 – 31, 2017 with the opening reception on Saturday, July 8 from 5-8pm and the closing reception on Sunday, July 30<sup>th</sup> from 1-4pm.

SAORI weaving is an improvisational, contemporary art form from Japan. Its philosophy is based on the Zen principles of spontaneity and self discovery, and it is appealing to artists because it encourages experimentation. No patterns are utilized; thus no two pieces are ever alike.

SAORI Worcester, a weaving studio was founded as the first SAORI registered studio in the United States by Mihoko Wakabayashi in 2000. Since then, Mihoko has taught SAORI weaving to hundreds of people, both at the studio and also in other locations. In the classes, people of all ages and of all abilities practice this weaving method together and so create an inclusive community and culture. Since the classes are on-going all year round and people can join at anytime, this SAORI community serves as a life-long learning school where people learn not only weaving techniques, but also ultimately inspire each other’s lives outside the studio. While there are approximately a dozen SAORI studios located throughout the US and Canada, students from around the world continue to come to the studio in Worcester to study SAORI weaving with Mihoko.

This exhibition features a variety of work woven by nearly 30 artists. There are long banners, wall hangings, scarves, pillows, wearable items, sculptures and table cloths. Some pieces are incorporated with natural objects such as bark, shells, vines, and seaweed. Other pieces are woven with fabric strips, ribbons, gimp, and paper.

Many artists are present members of SAORI Worcester and represent a wide range of experiences. For example, our oldest studio member, a gentleman in his mid eighties, and a young studio member with Downs Syndrome, will both be displaying their work in this show.

All pieces have been woven on a loom. A loom will be displayed in the gallery during the entire show for people to try out.

We welcome all to celebrate this old craft that still inspires us and nurtures our spirit, as you view this woven tapestry of our group experiences.