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**Buffalo Arts Studio presents:
Phyllis Thompson, *Evolving Memories*
January 26 – March 1, 2024
Opening Reception, Friday, January 26, 2024, 5:00 – 8:00 pm
Part of M&T Fourth Fridays at Tri-Main Center**



Buffalo Arts Studio presents Phyllis Thompson's new exhibition, *Evolving Memories*, a survey of work from Thompson's 50-year career as an artist and educator. *Evolving Memories* traces four aesthetic and conceptual threads rooted in the 1970s and 1980s that run through much of Thompson's work. The themes embedded in nearly five decades of work come from Thompson's childhood memories, experiences with family and friends, and imagined histories with ancestors the artist has only met through photographs. Thompson's memories are supported by artifacts she has collected, spaces she has lived in, and places she has visited. *Evolving Memories* is on display **January 26–March 1, 2024**, with an opening reception on **Friday, January 26, 5:00–8:00 pm**.

During the early 1970s, Thompson was also inspired by the textures and patterns she found on the surfaces of buildings, sidewalks, and streets. The prints focus on both the patterns and the imperfections found in the materials used to construct the urban landscape. Thompson zooms in on the surfaces, amplifying the flaws and

creating tension in the formal patterns that emerge. This work from the 1970s feels connected to some of her most recent print work made during Thompson's 2022 Mirabo residency. The newest work moves away from the gritty surfaces of the city and instead zooms in on surfaces found in nature during her travels across the country.

Thompson went on to explore the tension between "art" and "craft" by blurring the distinction between drawing, sewing, and weaving. This section will open the exhibition with early works, including *O'diche #15*, 1976. Similar works from this period, including *Mdido #4*, 1976, and *Mdido #5*, 1976, were acquired by the Buffalo AKG Museum in 2022. These drawings feature surfaces completely covered in disciplined, rhythmic marks, creating subtle shifts in color and value. In the 1970s, Thompson was part of the conversation in New York City of women artists questioning the accepted art world distinctions between fine artists and craftspeople and challenging this false hierarchy and its deeply gendered bias. In addition to the crayon drawings, this section includes work from the *Granny Patch* series, where Thompson adds a textile process to her work, sewing directly into the work and allowing the stitches to become a new way of drawing.

The third set of works charts a distinct shift in Thompson's mark-making. Her process remains disciplined and rhythmic in this body of work, employing stamping rather than drawing to layer color across a grid. Beginning in the 1980s, it charts Thompson's use of the circle and circular forms in many of her compositions, including a series of vegetable prints as well as monotypes titled *Transitions in Self-Awareness* produced in tandem with Leslee Stradford. The circles are full of personal significance, referencing the yo-yos Thompson's grandmother made from fabric scraps that she would stitch together to make a coverlet.

The last set of works begins around 2000 after Thompson found a box of old photographs under her mother's bed. Thompson embraced these photos and added representational imagery into her work, learning to make plates from photographs as well as from artifacts, including fabric scraps, doilies, and her beloved yo-yos. This body of work takes Thompson back to her childhood, sitting beside her grandmother and walking in the footsteps of the ancestors she never knew.

Buffalo Arts Studio is located at 2495 Main Street, Suite 500, Buffalo, NY 14214. The galleries are free and open to the public Tuesday-Friday, 11:00 am–5:00 pm, and Saturdays, 10:00 am–2:00 pm. For more information about Buffalo Arts Studio, please visit www.buffaloartsstudio.org

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High resolution images available upon request.