

# Moon Opera



Saturday 2 – Sunday 3 October 1982, New York • Sunday 11 May 2025, London

*Moon Tent*, Rosemary Mayer  
Roof of the house of Robert Hobbs, Lansing, New York  
Saturday 2 – Sunday 3 October 1982

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A MOON TENT Rosemary Mayer

The Moon Tent came on a long round in time about light and its possible creatures.

It was a ghost tent, proliferating ghosts and the ghosts of tents in changes of light. It made the absence of bodies present in suggestions of the draping and motion of their clothing. It made irrelevant its actual support structure, turning wooden beams into the caryatids they once would have been. When the moon was up, the dressed beams changed and floated for the people drinking, eating and watching inside, the moon and its creatures.

Light, as anyone knows, is the whole show. In some places, dawn is announced when a difference is visible between black and white threads spread over the back of your hand. In each season and under the different clouds of every night or day, the light is different months and they color our vision different hues if it's June or January, if the clouds are high or low, thick or not even there.

People used to watch the sky, count the days of each moon's thickening to full and waning, or study the clouds for signs of storms or spring or winter. It mattered then for food and warmth or safety. Now it's more often mild aesthetics or old romance, to calm you or bring some excitement. If you notice, it shows your rooms or land in different colors or odd intensities you may not have looked at before. It only makes a difference if you have the time.

To watch the moon you must be able to stay up late. To notice the sun's height in the sky, how it lengthens or shortens shadows, makes different, odd quadrilaterals across the floors of your rooms, you have to have some time. Everything is different in each different light.

When people used to watch the sky and its light intensely, for clues to weather and safety, they celebrated the sure signs of different seasons, maybe to prove they knew what would happen next and thus they would be safe.

In the north of Europe on a day called Beltane in the beginning of May, huge bonfires were lit to mark the return of the sun, the god of fire. Later, scarecrows announced the growing season, flapping in wind in mimicry of human forms. In fall, after harvest, they fell apart in the fields, or maybe sometimes they were taken down so what parts had survived the summer's weather could be used again in the next spring.

Scarecrows are like the guardian deities people used to imagine, solicit, placate, but embodied in tattered forms, the last of the angels and gods of the land.

In winter in the North when the crops or hunted meat is in and stored and there's nothing to do, people amuse themselves making large or tiny figures like themselves. The Inuit made minute men from carved bones jointed with cord or sinew through thin, carefully drilled holes. Five parts—four for limbs and a longer piece for both torso and head, with three holes drilled for eyes and mouth, the nose carved from bone. Dolls for children. Still, in places with long, snow-covered winters, figures of women and men and children appear in the snow. Also sometimes animals. These disappear if the weather turns warmer and for sure they're gone by spring when they've become ghosts of the winter, absent inhabitants waiting to be reformed in the next year's snow.

Scarecrows change in the wind, stand mysterious in disappearing light or at dawn, seem other than you know they are if you pass them under the moon. Snowpeople wait, changing as they melt or freeze, bending, showing a different face or pose with every shift in the light or weather until they're gone. The minds of people now long dead were filled with creatures we would say they never really saw. Books of the dead describe the presence in different forms of the dead, of spirits or gods. It must have been in the changing light that these were seen and then described.

Imagine living, as people once did, with the bodies of all in your family who died before you buried below your floor or just outside whatever shelter you lived in. Imagine presents of food or drink or flowers or some substance considered sacred to the believed-to-be-present spirits of these people who had together produced you. The dead could live when it was thought they did. Like ghosts, flitting in somewhat human form, seen from the corner of an eye, resembling figures known in dreams. They could glitter, change colors, fade past transparency to disappear.

No one has never seen a ghost. You prefer not to remember. It's easy. They're visible only for seconds and even then they change. They live in the fall of a sleeve or skirt, the shapes in a coat laid over a chair. When the light changes, they're different or gone. Stare at something as the moon or sun rises or sets and see what you see. Any number of things or creatures like what you see in clouds

or currents in rivers, or ocean waves. They live one way for seconds or minutes, then have some other form. What you see depends on the way you think.

Buildings have any number of ghosts. Figures in pictures on walls or carved in relief or formed in the round, placed on the roof or at the entrance, or far inside like the gods in temples, saints in churches, or an aesthete's sculpted figures inside or out on the grounds. Caryatids are the ghosts who hold up the roof. They live endlessly through seasons and centuries, slowly losing the fullness of curves, the sharp turn of an elbow, still supporting even when part of the once sheltering roof, or even all of it, is gone.

Where people could barely live on what could be hunted or gathered or grown, where water is scarce, shelter was transient, tents of cloth, or woven leaves or animals' skins. Here, the tents were the ghosts, appearing and quickly gone as the group moved after its needs. Where you raised the tent, how its openings were oriented, whether you surrounded it with a protective wall of brush or bushes, depended on seasons and weather. When nothing more could be found in the place, the tent was packed and moved to assume some other embracing form in another place and season. Even the parts changed. Ropes and cords would be replaced. Holes patched in different cloth or different colors, new swatches of cloth or pieces of hide or woven mats of newly dried leaves made to replace the worn out sections.

Inside it would be dark except near the cooking fire or if there were lamps burning oil. Inside would be food and stories, what happens between people and what they see asleep or in the dark.

Tents were homes and escapes, places of some respite from the search for food and water. Like tents in our camps in the forests or mountains where we go to escape what we have to do. Imagine tents in different colors and forms on the roofs of office buildings or crowded city houses. Places where the wind blows and changes the shapes of hangings, where it would be easy to watch the moon or how shadows change in different seasons.

In old China in autumn, people used to celebrate the year's best moon, the West's Harvest Moon, with an all-night feast of food and wine, music and poems. You ate moon-shaped food and drank moon-colored wine on the roofs of buildings on hills or mountains. Anyone who could sang songs or played music or composed on the spot, poems about the moon. There are old statues of Heng-O, the moon goddess, dressed in greens and blue and silver, always dancing, with her right foot raised, holding a moon disc over her head.

To let the moon be seen, a moon tent can't have a roof. And its supports have to float, suggest the draped figures who would have been holding it up, caryatids and the dancing woman who held the moon. People must come and sit or lie down inside, drink or eat, and talk about the absent figures, the moon and its changing light, the space now filled, till morning when everything changes and the tent is dismantled, then gone like a tent moved on in the desert, melted snow figures, or last year's scarecrow.

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Dear Marie,

I wanted to share a few thoughts about Rosemary Mayer's *Moon Tent* in anticipation of its presentation in London. One of the most fascinating aspects of the installation on my rooftop in Lansing, New York, was the translucent paper she used to wrap the half-timbered structure. During the day, it resembled cumulus clouds, but under the harvest moon, it became something utterly transformational.

The paper appeared to trap the moonlight and then radiate it outward like an entirely new kind of lantern. The effect was mesmerizing. We had about 60 guests that evening, and while I had imagined people would eventually gather indoors for refreshments, most stayed on the rooftop, quietly captivated by the installation. Many remained in near silence or spoke in hushed tones, unwilling to break the spell that Rosemary's work – and the moonlight – had cast.

As I watched this unfold, I found myself thinking about the etymology of the word lunatic – the old idea that moonlight could provoke madness. However, no one was crazed that evening. On the contrary, everyone was absorbed in the strange serenity of that moment and season. It was a rare kind of communal reverie.

I hope some of that magic can be recreated in London, and that Rosemary's brilliance will continue to glow there just as her translucent paper did that October night.

Robert Hobbs, 19 April 2025

*Moon Tent for the Flower Moon*, The Estate of Rosemary Mayer in collaboration with Reto Pulfer  
Hollybush Gardens at FormaHQ, London  
Sunday 11 May 2025, 7–11pm





Rosemary Mayer's *Moon Tent* was a site specific installation and event realised on the night of the full moon in October 1982 at the home of art historian Robert Hobbs in Lansing, New York. The work consisted of wrapping an existing wooden pavilion atop Hobbs' roof with glassine paper, which interacted with the light of the setting sun and the rising moon. Guests gathered within the structure to converse, eat moon-shaped food, play music and observe the moon. The work, which lasted for one night, was part of a larger series of ephemeral outdoor installations that Mayer called 'Temporary Monuments', which explored our connections to time, place, nature and history.

In the spirit of Mayer's *Moon Tent*, an intervention into an existing rooftop structure, Hollybush Gardens collaborated with the Estate of Rosemary Mayer and artist Reto Pulfer to develop *Moon Tent for the Flower Moon*, a one night installation and event at Peveril Gardens on the roof of FormaHQ in London on 11 May 2025, the eve of the full moon known as the flower moon.

Reinterpreting *Moon Tent* and referencing Mayer's drawings of drapery, tents and banners, Pulfer created a series of braids, garlands, ghosts and shelters, which intercepted the apertures and architecture of the building and rooftop garden. In dialogue with these interventions, Marie Warsh of the Estate of Rosemary Mayer brought together sculptures called 'Florals', realised with direct reference to Mayer's drawings, made from the glassine, cellophane and coloured papers that frequented her practice. The event featured readings by Aurelia Guo, Natalie Häusler, Siobhan Liddell and Vanessa Onwumezi, with seasonal and moon-inspired food by Marco Donadon, which was shared amongst guests. Together, the installation offered an intergenerational call and response with Mayer's original *Moon Tent* across time, place and practices.

*Moon Tent for the Flower Moon* built upon earlier events to collectively realise new iterations of Mayer's ephemeral Temporary Monument installations, including a Moon Tent celebration on the rooftop of the Swiss Institute, New York on 20 October 2021, during Mayer's first survey exhibition *Ways of Attaching*, and *Connections*, a balloon installation on 11 November 2023 at the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Art in Beverly Hills, California.

*Moon Tent for the Flower Moon* was organised in conjunction with the exhibition *Make Me a Place in Time and Seasons: Works by Rosemary Mayer, 1971–1983* at Hollybush Gardens, London, 10 May – 28 June 2025.

IN CONVERSATION

Lisa Panting (LP), Reto Pulfer (RP), Jacob Robichaux (JR),  
Malin Ståhl (MS) & Marie Warsh (MW)

May 2025, Hollybush Gardens, London

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MS Mayer's drawings relating to her 'Temporary Monuments' body of work feel like ideas for events, or as though she had a plan for them to be materialised. I'm interested in the transition from an idea to its actualisation, and the act of interpretation or translation, particularly in relation to your different roles: Marie, managing the Estate of Rosemary Mayer and Jacob, at Gordon Robichaux representing the Estate.

LP In looking at Mayer's work over the last few years, I keep thinking about this bigger question about how you keep something alive. If we're thinking about the context and the relational aspect of art, the idea of bringing something into the now feels quite important. Working with you, Marie, felt like a way of activating the notion of the word estate.

MW In the course of working with the Temporary Monuments series, I've been struck by how much interest there is in thinking about these works and the potential to realise them now. I've become really interested in exploring and having conversations about why these works resonate so much at this moment in time.

The exhibition *Pleasures and Possible Celebrations: Rosemary Mayer's Temporary Monuments, 1977–1981* was held at Gordon Robichaux in 2021, during the pandemic, at a time when people had been thinking about time and memorial and grief, the Black Lives Matter protests and the removal of Confederate monuments. The work in the exhibition felt very connected to what people were thinking about at the time.

JR It was one of the powerful things that wasn't evident to me before we did the show. In general, I think the Temporary Monuments question the monolithic aspect of what a sculpture is, and suggest that sculpture can be participatory; there's a democratic accessibility to Mayer's work – it didn't require specific kinds of funding or space or resources. She often chose very accessible materials that she would buy at stores on Canal Street, or at small art shops – materials that were not precious or elevated in any way. She transformed these things, either herself or by inviting other people into this process of making the work. In that moment of 2021 around protest, her ideas about bringing other people into the actual creation and experience of the work felt especially significant.

Mayer also saw many of her drawings as an archive of ideas. This open potential, the porous space between ideas and creation is something, Lisa and Malin, that you both commented on through different discussions about Mayer's work.

LP When you were describing the conditions for her making, I was thinking about another factor, which resonates very much with that period of the pandemic and protest movements: Mayer was making work in a period, mostly before the Reagan/Thatcher years of the 1980s, when civil rights and feminist movements were very much alive as social or political movements. A lot of art making in that period was tethered, some very strongly, some more lightly, to these notions of seeking a better way of being.

MS Maybe that's why it feels so hopeful and relevant today, because there's such a lack of that.

MW Yes, I think that's what's also nice about this exhibition at Hollybush Gardens and connecting some of Mayer's drawings related to fabric sculptures, which were really an outgrowth of her involvement in the feminist art movement, to the Temporary Monuments series, which came several years later.

Her fabric sculptures, which are dedicated to women who were lost to history, represent the beginning of her thinking about memorialisation and how patriarchal values inform traditional ideas of monumentality, which she explored further in the Temporary Monuments works. She was embracing fragility, too. The work is very vulnerable in its material aspects. Of course, within the Temporary Monuments, that reinforces the conceptual nature of the project. I think this aspect of fragility and vulnerability of material, but also literally, the vulnerability of her own life – the place and the conditions she was living in to create the work.

RP I also relate to this sense of cheap materiality and fragility. It's the way I started to make work. There is a notion that when you become a proper artist, you enter the market and begin to use expensive materials. I have continued to work with inexpensive materials, and it's great to see that artists of other generations have done that.

Fragility, to me, also means that the work is present because it is fragile. It's falling apart, so it reacts to the surrounding environment. Another thing that I like about the Temporary Monuments works is that they include celebration. There's also daily life. There are natural phenomena, like the moon, the weather, or flowers. Despite this political energy, the work doesn't proclaim it to the world. It's like an invitation to the audience to think about all of these things.

LP The work is very open-ended, which made me think about Marie, as well as Reto, and maybe Jacob also – how to approach the restaging of something. I was wondering about that in relation to the *Moon Tent*, how Reto is now part of this Moon Tent iteration.

MW So much of the work that we've done with Mayer's estate has evolved through collaboration and discussion with contemporary artists, many of whom have seen the Temporary Monuments works as prompts.

This really began with the fact that my brother Max Warsh who works on the estate is an artist, and a lot of our friends who helped us a lot in the early phases of this work are artists.

The first Ghost sculpture we made was after the artist Nick Mauss said, 'I've seen some amazing photographs of these sculptures in the archive. Could you ever make these again?' In thinking about these questions we realised that Mayer's archive contained a lot of information and direction for doing this, about what materials to use, what the ultimate goal is, why she made it and why she thought it was important. It seemed like a sign that restaging these works was actually possible to consider.

MS I thought it was interesting when we talked about the Ghost, and you mentioned that the transparent material Mayer used wasn't totally transparent, but had a sort of green tint, and is no longer possible to find. I guess there is a question as to whether one should try to make a version that's as close to the original as possible in terms of materiality, or whether one focuses more on the intentionality, that it's about using material that's close to hand and easy to source. How do you approach these kinds of questions?



MW After we made a few of the Ghosts, we realised that we were not reconstructing works that Mayer made in the past. Nick Mauss used the word re-enactment, but it wasn't quite that either. We realised, more recently, that we are continuing Mayer's practice of making Ghosts, and her practice was based on and involved all of these things, and that the important part was that we are doing these same things.

Mayer was making the Ghosts in response to time and place and season, and sometimes they were site-specific. For each exhibition, we consider all of these things. We use the same materials that she used, but ones that are accessible and easy to procure. I am certainly interested in finding the materials that Mayer was using, but I don't think not having the exact materials means we can't go forward and keep making the sculptures.

MS It makes a practice very alive, doesn't it? It's an interesting role that you have in running an estate, because often that means looking after a fixed inventory of works that need to be sent here or there. But this is very involved and alive.

MW What has been fun is this way in which it also engenders a collaboration with everybody involved in making the exhibition. It's not just me sending a sculpture for you to install – I have to come, we have to have larger conversations about what the work means. For me this has been really exciting and part of what is also advancing this as a project.

LP It's almost like a practice. As though you're somehow a form of embodiment.

MW I'm often trying to grapple with what that means. Some people are like, 'Oh, yes, you're like a stand-in for the artist', while other people have even said to me, 'You're making these Ghosts, but you're not even an artist!'

I am an art historian and a writer. I don't consider myself an artist, but I grew up with Rosemary and she really did influence my intellectual trajectory and whole way of thinking about the world. I find that some of the things that I've become interested in are also really present in her work, and this convergence comes through when I am working on these projects. So they are very rewarding for me, and not only because I care about Rosemary.

LP It's also an enormous act of generosity because it's like a dedication. Without you feeling your way through her work and developing your own thinking around it, it would remain inert. It's a way of giving to the practice. If it wasn't you, then who?

RP I also feel the generosity in inviting me to participate in making the Ghost. I made a few different braids and knots, things I was working on, which we didn't plan exactly. I was trying to make or add things in the spirit of Mayer, in a way, even though she didn't do it exactly like I do it. I was conscious not to include other materials or other styles which I thought would be too much like my work, or not so much like her work.

MW I like the concept of re-enactment in some ways because it feels very active, but it also implies that you're redoing something that she did, but what is really happening is that you are doing something new while trying to channel her spirit.

RP I have a music project with my wife where we play covers, but play them very differently, which I think relates to this notion. We sing the lyrics differently, and sometimes the meaning also changes, but the original song is still preserved. Another thing related to the idea of generosity or re-enactment is that sometimes people say, 'Oh, I saw this work. It looked like your work. Somebody is copying you.'

For me, it's fine if people are inspired by what I do. People have worked with fabric for centuries. In the Stone Age, people were making fabric structures. I don't have copyright on this, and at the same time, it's interesting if things are growing and developing. With Mayer's work, I think it's really important to actually build it and see it, not just to look at photographs, but to visit the space and see the work in person.

LP Especially when there's a possibility of that because of this relationship and your experience Marie, of knowing Mayer and being related to her.

MW I know that she would be really thrilled and inspired by how many other artists now are interested in her practice. I know that she would be excited by inviting other people to think about, and even make things in her spirit, or based on her ideas.

Thinking again about the difference between the Ghosts and the *Moon Tent*. I feel like the tent is a lot more open, and the instructions for it could be a score that other people could realise. Mayer really left that possibility open with questions, such as 'Can you stay up late?' and 'Have you got the time?' – these are the main criteria.

RP And if anyone can make one, yours will look different. This is something Mayer even clarifies in writing in her notebook.

MW Yes, yours will look different. And then also, she clarifies 'can you stay up late', adding 'physically' and 'financially?' – really thinking about these limitations.

She also wonders if really anyone could make one, or if an artist would have a particular approach.

LP You mean, it would look different because the artistic voice of another person would manifest it differently in a material way?

MW Yes, and that maybe it's good for an artist to be involved – an artist is going to approach it differently.

RP It's totally normal for an artist to copy and imitate. I know, historically, one would copy a painting, which I have also done with drawings, to understand how the work is actually made. With that approach, you say, okay, what would I actually do in that spirit, and how can I still respect the initial idea?

MW I am interested in exploring the possibilities for making future Moon Tents – if we could create a set of rules or guidelines for people to follow. Of all of the Temporary Monuments, I think it is the most open and also materially flexible. When we made a new balloon work in 2023 at the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Art in Beverly Hills, California, it was fun, but quite labour-intensive and expensive. The *Snow People* are also environmentally challenging now, because you used to be able to rely on snow at a certain time of year in a lot of places, and now you can't. I think the tents are the most open to the idea that anyone could make them.

I think part of why it's so open is that Mayer is also drawing on these other traditions, historically and in other cultures, of celebrating the full moon. I like thinking about it as part of this larger tradition and this larger desire that I think we all have, especially in cities, to connect to nature and really think about our place and orientation in the world.

When we were on the roof of Forma earlier today, and Reto was using the app to figure out where the moon is going to rise, I kept thinking about how we've all been so focused on the moon since working on this project, and looking out for it.

There are so many ways that working on this draws attention to the way we think about nature and the cosmos

and also being in a city and in nature in the city. I think that was really important for Mayer and I think it is a huge part of these projects too – that coming together and looking at the moon is the essence of the work.

JR Something that comes up around the Moon Tents is about specificity. I hear what you are saying, that it is the most open. Yet, at the same time, there was so much specificity about the original *Moon Tent*, because it was responding to a very specific architecture and site. Could you talk about the place and significance of it as a site?

MW A couple of the original Temporary Monument projects were collaborations with friends who invited Mayer to their homes to do them. The original *Moon Tent* was made on the roof of the home of her friend, art historian Robert Hobbs, who was working at Cornell University in upstate New York at the time.

He lived in this really exceptional house, Villa Quadrata, which was designed and built by the well-known postmodernist architect, Simon Ungers. It was a small house with an elaborate wooden trellis structure on the roof, which was meant to be a place for hanging out.

Mayer had spent time at the house when she was a visiting artist at Cornell and had exhibited there. She saw this rooftop structure and thought, I really want to do something with this and decorate it. She had been working with glassine, and then she came up with this idea.

At the time, she was interested in tents specifically as a form and a structure, and this structure on the roof really looked like a tent. She was also really interested in the idea of the tent as an enclosure; a place of security and safety. Even if a tent doesn't have a roof, it's still a defined space. Mayer was looking a lot at garden pavilions, which are open to the sky or the landscape. She was also looking at the structures created by the indigenous peoples who lived in the marshlands of present-day Iraq, sometimes called the Marsh Arabs, and how they created various temporary structures depending on their seasonal activities.

She talks about wanting or needing to be up high, to be able to connect to the sky. She was also having Moon Tent parties, more casually, on the roof of her loft building. All of this coalesced in the *Moon Tent* project at the Hobbs house.

LP When we found the Forma location, I saw a resonance with the Hobbs house and the original *Moon Tent*, in terms of responding to a preexisting structure. At Forma, this 1960s former car garage with a rooftop garden and a series of apertures is like an open tent with a vista to watch the rising moon.

RP The Forma location reminds me of ancient, astronomical or religious sites where the structure was oriented towards the rising of a star, or of the moon, or other celestial bodies, like Stonehenge in the UK for example, but also in Egypt and Mexico. There are also structures where there is no roof, of course.

MW Yes, I think it's totally connected to all of those things.

JR What's important about all of these projects is also that Mayer was very invested in beauty. We're talking about the immaterial and these things that are more conceptual and theoretical, which I think is part of what Mayer's work is. But I also think, in relation to this idea of the frivolous, Mayer was really interested in beauty and visually embracing these things, again, like kitsch. She was fascinated with Baroque and Rococo architecture and decorative arts. In a really theatrical and quite gaudy way, that architecture was also a populist initiative of the church to bring people back during the Reformation. When you're sitting in the

church and looking at the effects of billowing plaster to make clouds and ideas of transient lightness, light coming down, you really see how it is providing a connection to some other, bigger power.

After that, people were actually very dismissive of Bernini and these different aspects of Baroque architecture and art, which were seen as populist and bad taste. I think these are things that Mayer was very interested in.

MW I think Mayer felt a little misunderstood in her time, and I think part of some of her artist statements really seemed to be about asserting both a connection to art history, which was something that was not really in favour in the early 1970s, and her real interest in beauty. She was hanging out with artists such as Adrian Piper and Vito Acconci; they and others told her that her work was too beautiful.

JR But she was also close with Ree Morton, who embraced all of these elements.

MW She talks about the florals for the Moon Tent being influenced by Morton's ideas and specifically her wall-based sculptures of flowers. I printed out one of her sculptures as part of my inspiration for the Forma installation. Morton is a great example of someone she felt a very deep kinship with.

Creating the floral sculptures for the Moon Tent at Forma relates to what we were talking about earlier, about making new iterations of her work. It doesn't seem like she ever realised these as sculptures, so I had a lot of questions about what she would have done if she had made them herself. I tried to think about interpreting her drawings of them in the context of the event that we're all working on together, and also to think about the space. For me, it has been very creative and a little bit different to making the Ghosts.

MS I also immediately thought about you, Reto because there are so many crossovers between yours and Mayer's work. You work with tents, cords, braiding, knotting and even ghosts.

RP Yes, I often make garlands for my family celebrations too, which we hang in the garden at home. I decided to include language in some of the garlands for Forma. It is basically like a digital system, you can either have a dark or a light colour, which enables you to create a pictogram or a text.

I was learning some of these techniques and then braiding this text into the garlands. There is also a tradition of this with Tibetan flags, texts and scrolls. You write something and hang it in the wind, with the idea that the words will be transmitted. It's moving, and at the same time, it's like a motto for the party because it's standing there like a text on a wall or in a house, or for a birthday party. So, there's a reference to the text hanging in the wind. The original *Moon Tent* had glassine paper wrapped around the structure and so I brought this cheesecloth – which I often use in my practice – to wrap around the distinct apertures in the Forma rooftop. And then Marie said, 'Oh, it looks like one of Mayer's drawings that is included in the exhibition'.

I'm excited about this transformation from one thing to the next. Currently, I'm working a lot with fabric structures, where one thread system transforms into the next: each time it's like a different structure, a different technical combination. I am interested in the process of transforming an original idea into my own system and structure.

It's similar to the way you would translate one language to another, adding your culture to that language,

or your way of expressing a word from another language. Eventually, somebody else would pick up that word and translate it to their language. This morphing of ideas and also materials, to me, makes a lot of sense, yes. And so, in this process, I was speaking a lot to different people, like to Laura McLean-Ferris, who curated the exhibition and the Moon Tent event at the Swiss Insitute, and to Natalie Häusler, who was part of a recent two-person exhibition with Ree Morton and read as part of the Forma event.

I also talked to artist friends who are very interested in the writing of Mayer's sister Bernadette's writing, and it was interesting to see these different aspects of, and different ideas from, people from different generations. And also a way to live on.

MW I was very touched when you told me what you had written on the garland. It says, 'Have you ever been braiding?' I really love that you're asking her a question, and that it connects to what you've made for this event. You're having a dialogue with her, responding to her questions.



RP It's true. I was looking at her work and thinking about her engagement with fabric, and that there is perhaps a similar point of departure. I turned to braiding and other textile techniques. I was wondering if she had used braiding. I guess braiding is also a beautiful metaphor, because of the way it entails bringing together strands to form a stronger structure.

JR I'm interested in how language in Mayer's drawings pulls you out of the image and into your imagination. You're suddenly having a conversation that's so direct. And the way that she integrated language into the drawings, not only as notational. She uses language and image together in a way that draws you into something deeper and richer than simply the image or language.

MW A colleague with whom I am working on another Rosemary Mayer exhibition said to me recently, 'I don't know if I've ever seen a drawing that asks you a question.'

RP With Mayer's question, I feel like she wants you to reply with a question. And the answer isn't just yes or no.





Can you stay up late?