

REVIEW: *Massachusetts*

KALEIDOSCOPE

Belmont Gallery of Art • Belmont, MA • belmontgallery.org • Through March 27, 2015

Artist Christiane Corcelle loves to collect, whether it's bits of lace, intriguing metal parts, milk bottle caps or broken china. Here the artist and printmaker dips into one of her personal obsessions: tea. She collects wrappers, labels and, yes, even the bags themselves.

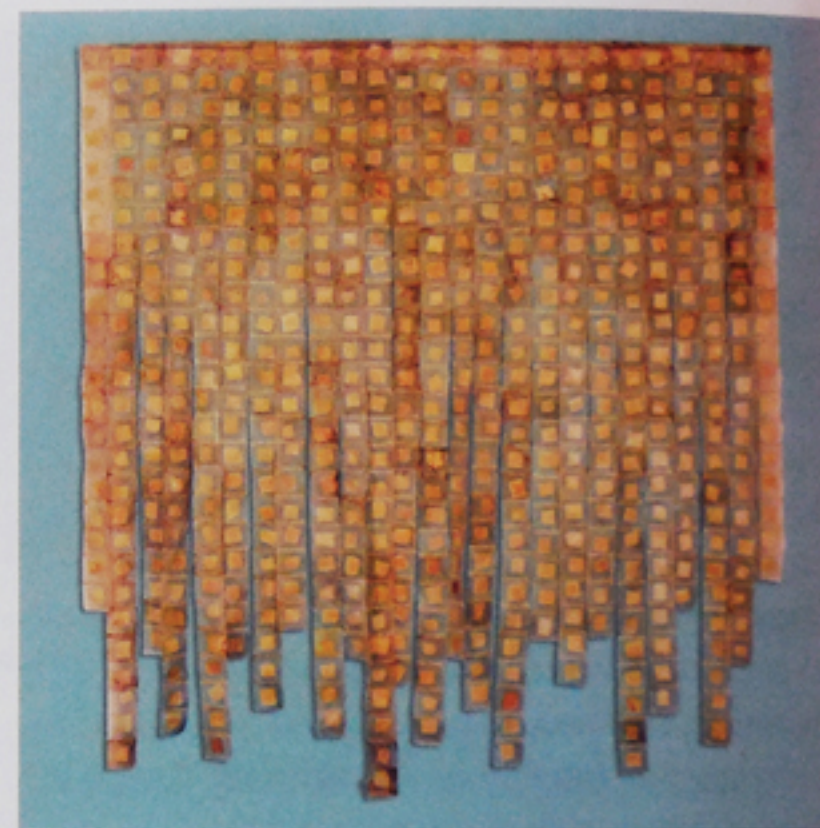
Kaleidoscope, the show's largest piece, stretches 15-feet long and is made of approximately 138 wooden panels, each covered with tea labels with their strings still attached. Corcelle groups labels by color and type—bright green, vivid red, blue, black and white. The panels covered in labels vary in sizes and thicknesses, and the strings drape over the blocks; altogether, they look somewhat like a patchwork quilt made of vividly colored blocks, threaded together and embroidered with intricate details.

Most people, until this moment, have never paused to study the paper end of the tea bag. Who knew it was so well-designed and colorful? Well, Corcelle, and she's directing us to see a type of beauty that we've perhaps ignored.

In another work, *2 & 3 Cents*, Corcelle forms something like a curtain, approximately 5-by-5 feet, from used teabags, emptied of their tea. She irons the bag material flat so the ends fuse together and form long strips, which she hand sews into one hanging textile. On one side it is monochromatic, a warm brown-yellow, the color of old wax. On the reverse, Corcelle has filled the tea pockets with vintage two- and three-cent US stamps—their muted reds and blues, partially obfuscated by the material, peek through giving viewers a moment of discovery and surprise.

Red Ticket is a similar work, yet hangs like a chandelier, and Corcelle fills the tea pockets with various found objects: string, bread wrapper tags, print scraps and, of course, the much promised red ticket. Safety pins link the bags together.

Throughout Corcelle finds beauty in the scraps that most of us regard as detritus. While this show is enjoyable on any level, it should give us all a few moments to pause, look a little



Christiane Corcelle, *2 & 3 Cents*, 2012–2013, teabags, vintage stamps, thread, 66 x 56". Photo: Joe Ofria.

closer at the objects at hand and consider ways of creatively reusing them.

—Debbie Hagan