



Water, Earth, and Sky
2001
Silk Organza, Fabricated, Gold Leaf,
Stitched with Wire and Stiffened

KIYOMI IWATA

The ingredients that create a passionate bond between an artist and Haystack are simple and not so simple. Removed from my daily life, I was transported to a new setting that was filled with a 24-hour open studio, three (eagerly anticipated) meals, spontaneous conversations and interactions and, ultimately, many enduring friendships. This nourishing environment was fostered by generous instructors and staff. From all this arises Haystack magic.

I first arrived at Haystack in the early 1970's as a scholarship student. Driving up the bumpy dirt road that ended in the equally rocky parking lot, I gingerly unloaded myself and walked up the path to the small shed with the sign "Office". Out emerged Fran Merritt, then-director of Haystack. His welcoming smile and the combined view of the water, earth, and sky stuck me deeply – anything seemed possible. I came home with a year's worth of creative food to digest. Over the years I returned again and again, as an artist-in-residence and once even as a one-week instructor. The 1970's were very much an exploring period, leading to the 1980's where I developed and matured my art. With each return to Haystack, all the creative food I had been storing had the opportunity to germinate. And sometimes, seeds planted at Haystack bloomed later.

"Water, Earth and Sky" evolved from work I did during my artist-in-residency, a series called "Layers," which was a membrane-like silk organza wall piece. "Layers" evolved into small intimate silk organza boxes. Eventually these silk boxes became a grid-like wall piece, whose colors and juxtaposed forms recalled my very first encounter with the stark water, earth, and sky of Deer Isle.