



GENERATION THE ROOTS OF MAKING IN THE ASAWA-LANIER FAMILY

“Learn something. Apply it. Pass it on so it is not forgotten.” - Ruth Asawa

The word *generation* can have several meanings:

1. all of the people born and living at about the same time
2. The production or creation of something

A generation is a group of people born and living at the same time. Generation can also mean creating and making. The work exhibited in this show represents four generations from a San Francisco family of makers.

The first generation, Ruth Asawa and Albert Lanier, showed by example how to make their home a place for the family to have the freedom to experiment. By encouraging their children to play with ideas and materials, Asawa and Lanier fostered a culture of creativity, experimentation, and lifelong learning. It was not unusual for their children and grandchildren to hear “Try it!” when they had an idea. Challenges were meant to spur solutions.

As a family, we saw that art can be made anywhere by anyone, whether in the garden, kitchen, classroom, and even in an artist’s studio. In our house, it was common to find a bag of plaster next to the flour and sugar, pliers and screwdrivers in the kitchen, and plaster face-casting taking place on the kitchen table or the living room floor.

This exhibition brings together works in wire and lithography by Ruth Asawa; paintings, drawings, and birthday envelopes by Albert Lanier; paintings and a clay platter by Paul Lanier; textile, collage, and painting by Aiko Lanier Cuneo; origami portraits, paintings, and paper construction by Lilli Lanier; and paintings by Lucia Ruth Soriano. All of these artists have worked with one another on public commissions, as teaching artists in schools, and collaborated on pieces in this show. Together, the work spans 57 years from 1965 to 2022.

We hope you enjoy how our family is joined not only in relationship, but by the curiosity and love of materials, color, and pattern.

Aiko Cuneo
Curator