

## Excerpts from AARC Community Art Exhibit Discussion Panel, Opening Reception July 15, 2016

Artist: Teruko Nimura  
Exhibit: The Chrysanthemum Veil

The installation *Wish Lantern Rings* is a continuation of a public art piece [Drawing Lines](#) I did with the City in February. I am reusing the *origami* lanterns made by community members of District 7 in *Drawing Lines*. Here, I am giving new iterations to the lanterns and wishes.



*Clockwise from top left: Teruko's Drawing Lines project for District 7 in February 2016; Wish Lantern Rings currently on view at the AARC Great Lawn; Wish lanterns made by community members.*

I am really interested in cultural traditions in Japan. *Wish Lantern Rings* is inspired by a Japanese Shinto ritual done in the summer months. Participants walk through a giant ring of reeds to energize their spirit and to cleanse themselves spiritually. I reinterpreted the idea of that and made two gates surrounding a tree that people can walk through. I want people to connect with nature and the community, since the lanterns were made by community members in District 7 and the AARC. I hope to add an additional sentiment to *Wish Lantern Rings* by incorporating the lanterns with people's wishes written on them.

Hand-cut paper vellums and ink is a new body of work that talks about cultural identity as an Asian American woman. I grew up in a very Caucasian area. I didn't have many Asian friends and didn't see a lot of Asian representation in the media. There was just a continuous loop of stereotypes in the media. This work is talking about that. There is a patterned-veil on top of a very traditional image of Japanese women that are reflecting upon one another. All of the subjects are either hidden in pattern or being tangled in something. I see the veil pattern as part of the idea of my confusion of Asian American identity, which I learned mostly through the media.



*On view at the AARC: Teruko Nimura, Women Covering and Discovering Herself, 2016, hand cut duralar and ink.*

The top vellum layer is half-transparent. Thus, the perception of the work changes throughout the day, depending on the light. In the daytime, the light makes the Japanese women in the back become more prevalent. At night, the pattern on top is more prevalent. So there's this changing perspective throughout the day. Also, approaching the piece, people would wonder "What am I looking at?" But as you get close, there's all these details of figures, faces, and cats. It's meant to be this multi-layer experience.