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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Immersive Photography Exhibit Opens at UHart Gallery**

(West Hartford) – An immersive photography exhibit—where photos cover every square inch of wall space and lie under your feet with each step you take—is open now through Dec. 10 at the University of Hartford’s Joseloff Gallery.

The work is by award-winning Japanese photographer Komatsu Hiroko, who also spent two weeks in residency at UHart’s Hartford Art School to build the exhibit and hold workshops with students. One piece featured in the show was completed by Komatsu and UHart’s senior photography majors: a 100-foot-long photo that took six hours and large horse troughs to develop in the HAS darkroom.

The public is invited to view the exhibit at the gallery on campus for free Monday-Thursday, 12-6 p.m., and Friday-Saturday, 1-5 p.m. For more information, visit [hartford.edu/galleries](http://hartford.edu/galleries).

Carrie Cushman, the Edith Dale Monson Director and Curator of the Galleries at HAS, will also introduce the works on view in the exhibition and discuss Komatsu’s place in the world of contemporary art Nov. 3, at 5 p.m. at the Joseloff Gallery.

**“Komatsu Hiroko: Second Decade”** is the artist’s first large-scale exhibition in the U.S. and also includes handmade artist books, photograms, and work on 8mm film, all in black and white. Her work depicts the environmental chaos and excessive waste that take over sites of industry in her home city of Tokyo. The show’s layout reflects that as well; large, uncut rolls of photographs hang from the ceiling, creating a “photo forest,” while other prints obscured by plastic wrap stretch over boxes.

Born in Kanagawa, Japan, in 1969, Komatsu began her career as an experimental noise musician and only started working with photography in the mid-2000s after participating in a darkroom workshop led by the accomplished photographer Kanemura Osamu, her now partner. Feeling that she needed to “catch up,” from 2010 to 2011 she rented the space of a former real estate office in Tokyo and gave herself the challenge of producing one new exhibition per month.

And so was born her singular installation method, in which black-and-white analog photographs of different sizes coat the environment so that visitors walk on, move through, and become completely enveloped in the materials of photography.

“While traditional exhibition displays encourage visitors to ‘read’ individually framed images in succession, that becomes impossible here,” says Cushman. “The viewer is continually pulled back to the totality of the environment, where they are forced to rely on senses other than vision to learn from the space.”

The theme of knowledge production and acquisition—and what might be taken for granted in those processes—runs through the other works on display in the exhibition. Lines of text are meticulously cut out of books and contained in glass bottles; *frottage* rubbings and their photogrammed counterparts distort notions of photographic evidence; and documentary videos of musical concerts are soundless. All were created since 2020, the start of Komatsu’s second decade as a committed photographer.

The artist books in the exhibition are on loan from dieFirma in New York, where they are available for purchase. The immersive photographic installation in the exhibition travels to the Joseloff from the Davis Museum at Wellesley College, where it was on display earlier this year in the exhibition *Komatsu Hiroko: Creative Destruction*. An online catalogue for the Davis Museum exhibition, supported by a grant from the Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission and edited by Cushman, can be found here: <https://simplebooklet.com/creativestruction>. For more information on Komatsu, visit <https://komatsu-hiroko.com>.

**“Komatsu Hiroko: Second Decade”** is generously sponsored the Joseloff Gallery Programs Fund and the Edith Dale Monson Director Curator Fund held by Hartford Art School Endowment, Inc.

### About Joseloff Gallery

*The mission of the Joseloff Gallery is to enhance the studio programs at the University of Hartford through the creation of exhibitions focusing on a wide range of contemporary art in all media. In doing so, its programs utilize the entire University community and foster a greater understanding and enjoyment of contemporary art throughout the region. The Joseloff Gallery exhibition program is designed to explore concepts, issues, and directions in contemporary art, while reinforcing the power, richness, and diversity of visual language.*

### About the University of Hartford

*Spread across seven dynamic schools and colleges, the University of Hartford has been guiding the purpose and passion of students for over six decades. On our 350-acre campus alongside Connecticut's capital city, approximately 4,000 undergraduate and 1,900 graduate students representing 49 states and 44 countries come together for a common purpose: to collaborate across different disciplines, diversify perspectives, and broaden worldviews. We're a four-year private university focused on advancing the public good through meaningful connections within our communities. Our unique approach to comprehensive education gives us the critical perspectives that lead to impact change, regionally and beyond. With degree programs spanning the arts, humanities, business, engineering and technology, education, and health professions, we focus on doing the work that matters.*