

## REMINISCENT OF LONG GONE BY, SUTTON GALLERY, MELBOURNE

MAY 2018

Utako Shindo's contemplative bodies of work are quietly poetic. Her interest in the untranslatability and transformation in art is employed largely by processes known as "utsuru" in Japanese, to create drawings, prints, relief, photography and video, which often form installation work.

*Reminiscent of Long Gone By* at Sutton Gallery, Melbourne, Shindo explores untranslatable elements through cyanotype printing, plaster casts, and audio visual recording. The work is a series of traces, implying the movement and presence of objects in place and time. Shindo's body of installation work attempts to open a poetic place that encourages nuanced understandings of the world through the transference and translation between perceptions, materials, languages and images.

The gallery is bright and quiet. Shindo's work is subtle in colour, but elaborate in texture and tone.

The exhibition is welcomed by a 20minute video piece introducing the contexts of the materials, themes, and aesthetic of Shindo's work. Filmed in 2011, and then continued in 2017 and 2018, *Listening to Misterioso* is a contrast of seasons, lights and interactions in the house where the relief sculptures and cyanotypes were made. 'Misterioso,' in a musical context, means 'playing with the air of mystery.' The visuals and sounds feel exactly that; a playful and intriguing exploration of the mysterious house. Shindo explains that the difference between the footage in 2011, and 2017 is the Ume (apricot tree) that had fallen in the June of 2016, which became the inspiration for her body of work, *Reminiscent of Long Gone By*.

*Ode to the Zephyr's murmuring petal 1 and 2* hold a slow rhythm that floats the eye through tonal waves of deep blue. Remnants of the Ume, and objects of new life from the garden that grew with it, leave trails of movement and reaction. The cyanotypes are pieced together to form two large rectangles of smaller prints, like surveillance footage from multiple angles. Slow and quiet movement of the intricate patterns are immediately calming. A memorial of the fallen apricot tree, whose spirit and memory still exists in the garden, as it is succeeded by other life growing in the space.

*As it were a Meteorite of the Earth's Shadow* (1-15) blend into the whiteness of the gallery. Branches emerge in and out of white plaster resin castings. The plaster's motherly hold wraps around, above and through the broken trees, colouring them into its own stark white. Their meticulous textures trace the living and growing force of trees, stuck in motion. The branches are held in a sort of preservation, so we can remember their place in our garden.

Emily Hand

Emily Hand is an Australian art critic. She is a Bachelor of Art History and Curating student at Monash University, graduating in 2018. Emily is a regular contributor to Inner Circle Magazine in Melbourne.