

# FUTURE PERFECT



Chiharu Shiota *The State of Being*, 2013, 70 x 35 x 35 cm, metal, Buddha statue, black thread installation

## The Pulse of Time: Caroline Rothwell and Chiharu Shiota

Future Perfect  
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\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\*

Future Perfect is pleased to present *The Pulse of Time*, bringing together the work of two important mid-career female artists – Caroline Rothwell (Sydney) and Chiharu Shiota (Berlin) – for the first time in Singapore.

The Mexican poet and writer Octavio Paz once remarked that ‘the work of craftsmanship is the pulse of human time’. Consistent with this idea, *The Pulse of Time* explores contemporary art’s active engagement with materiality, as an intersection of our public and private histories.

While varied in form and content, the works in *The Pulse of Time* all speak of the artist’s hand and its ability to effect transformation. Through the strategies of alteration, juxtaposition and reconfiguration, Rothwell and Shiota explore the rich emotional and psychological resonance of their materials, at times foregrounding corporeality and the body, at times reaching for the realms of myth and the imaginary.

Both sculptors draw upon materials historically associated with femininity such as clothing, textiles and the decorative arts. Their intricate and meticulously crafted sculptures both exploit the traditional qualities of these materials while also interrogating or problematising them. Rather than connotations of cosiness and domesticity, their use of textiles evokes feelings of anxiety, dislocation or unfamiliarity. Objects are entangled or imprisoned in fabrics; delicately stitched seams contrast with the sleek anonymity of mass-produced metal.

In the darkened vitrines of Chiharu Shiota, found objects bearing the imprints of memory and identity are cocooned in skeins of black woollen yarn. Deposited in unexpected contexts, these personal items – beads, a Buddha statuette – explore the psychic entanglements of loss and remembrance, dreams and reality, past and present. While the sculptures embody Shiota's desire to 'draw in the air'. Her stitched drawings exercise a more condensed and literal draughtsmanship, another chapter in her ongoing investigation into states of existential anxiety.

In *The Law of Unintended Consequences*, Caroline Rothwell imagines a series of fantastical climate machines, giving form to current thinking and developing technologies in the field of geoengineering. Cast by pouring molten metal into fabric waste moulds, the refined Baroque aesthetic of these inventions belies their more unsettling intention: large-scale human intervention into our natural environment in the interests of mankind's long-term survival. This ecological sensibility also permeates Rothwell's exquisite drawings of endangered insects, intricately rendered with single-hair brushes using the black carbon residue from exhaust fumes. With their intuitive feeling for materials, Rothwell and Shiota owe a debt to the work of second-wave feminist sculptors such as Louise Bourgeois, Eva Hesse and Annette Messager. While mindful of the politics of gender, they are, like their predecessors, more profoundly occupied with the territory of memory and identity, with heterogeneous or hybrid forms, and with the psychological possibilities imparted by different media. Redolent with ambiguity and suggestion, *The Pulse of Time* embraces an expansive notion of sculpture, while at the same time acknowledging the vital trace of the artist's hand.

Chiharu Shiota (b. 1972 in Osaka, Japan) is a Japanese sculptor, performance and installation artist who moved to Berlin in 1997 to study under the performance art maven Marina Abramović. Known for her cocoon-like environments involving found objects suspended in black woollen webs, Shiota has defined the essence of her work as 'presence in the midst of absence'. Shiota will be featured in *The Red Queen* at the Museum of Old and New Art, Hobart, Tasmania, in June this year. She currently has a solo show *Collection+ Chiharu Shiota* at the Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation, Sydney, and her installation *In Silence* will be featured at Art Basel Unlimited from 13–16 June. Recent solo exhibitions include *Where Are We Going?* at the Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art, Kagawa (2012), *Home of Memory* at La Maison Rouge, Paris (2011), and *In Silence* at the Detached Foundation, Hobart (2011).

Caroline Rothwell (b. 1967, England) is a British-Australian sculptor based in Sydney. Her drawings, sculptures and installations interrogate the troubled symbiotic relationship between humans and their natural environment. Drawing upon a diverse range of sources – scientific studies, historical archives, art history and anthropology – Rothwell extends these references into fictitious territory, developing hybrid animals and plant species which are at once both familiar and uncanny. Recent solo exhibitions include *Murray/Darling Vista* at the Shepparton Art Museum, Victoria, Australia (2012), *Blowback* at Artspace, Sydney (2008), and the public art projects *Symbiosis* in Central Park, Sydney (2012) and *Dispersed* in the Economist Plaza, London (2009).

#### \*About Future Perfect\*

Future Perfect is a contemporary art gallery located in Singapore's new art precinct, Gillman Barracks. Working with an international roster of artists, the gallery also provides research and advice for institutions and collectors, drawing on its directors' extensive experience and expertise in contemporary art from Asia, Australia and beyond. For more information or to make an appointment, contact Viviana Mejía on +65 9835 8271 or email [viviana@futureperfect.asia](mailto:viviana@futureperfect.asia)