

PRESS RELEASE

Kara Tanaka
A Sad Bit of Fruit, Pickled in the Vinegar of Grief

24th October 2010 – 31st January 2011



The interrogation of human body's fate strongly marks the artistic practice of Kara Tanaka, a twenty-seven-year-old American artist who lives and works in Los Angeles, now having her first exhibition in Europe. The body's loss, the artist assumes, in a future society will allow the vital energies to shift from the fulfillment of physical needs to other goals: the exploration of the cosmos, a new philosophy of nature and of human existence.

The absent bodies in the embalming tables of *A Sad Bit of Fruit, Pickled in the Vinegar of Grief*, the work she has created for this exhibition, imply a rejection of the desire for immortality, whose widespread presence has permeated Western culture, that the artist sees is in a state of decline and deep crisis. There is no symptom, in fact, more characteristic of the desire for immortality, expressed by humans since the earliest forms of civilization, than the cult of the preservation of the body for the hereafter.

It is not surprising if the withering of this desire is accompanied today by a growing obsolescence of the metaphysical tension in art. Just as metaphysics, for millennia, has invaded and permeated the iconography of the body, deifying it, so art explores now the iconography of its eventual loss. In *A Sad Bit of Fruit, Pickled in the Vinegar of Grief*, Kara Tanaka posits a *physical* way out of the conflict that human beings endures between body and consciousness, foreseeing the disappearance of the former and the emigration of the latter beyond the boundaries of the social—into a cosmos that technology, with the constant acceleration of scientific progress, brings ever closer to us. Tanaka thinks of the present as the future's past, humans beginning to renounce the body and the earth in order to turn into pure consciousness.

Therefore her work constitutes a meditation, informed by both technology and philosophy, on the disappearance of the body once desired immortal, in favor of a voyage of consciousness into further realities. In *A Sad Bit of Fruit*, the body is contemplated as absence through its dissolution represented by the fluids running in the lateral gutters of the embalming tables. The work's thirteen tables, identical in their facture, have been made in fiberglass and then spray-enameled with epoxy resin; their back side is covered in canvas, which implies the absence of painting; while the red brackets in anodized aluminum that hold them to the wall counterpoint the virtual blood on the tables' front side. The tables jut out from the wall, their inclination determined by the bulky brackets that hook the tables to the wall with a symmetrical progression from the sides to the center. The reflection on the wall of these supporting structures creates a diffused red halo around them, that echoes the red pigment running inside the tables' gutters.

The focal point of Tanaka's embalmer's stones is the chrome-plated drain, through which the body's fluids are expelled: it becomes a metaphor for the passage from being to non-being, or rather from body to pure consciousness. Tanaka's drains are the conclusive act of the intellectual construction that the work sets in motion.

The exhibition is accompanied by a book published by Gli Ori, with a text by Mario Diacono.

With this exhibition Collezione Maramotti continues its activity taking place in the space dedicated to specific projects, which houses art pieces made specifically by guest artists. The pieces become then part of the permanent Collection in order to merge together acquisition practices for the expansion of the collection with the practice of public viewing.

Pattern room, as this dedicated space is called, was at one time – when the building was a manufacturing plant - the place where models and prototypes were designed. Therefore the dimension of project designing and experimentation merge together as the true vocation of this space, in a continuum between past and present.

Private view: 23rd October 2010 h. 6.00 pm in the presence of the artist.

The exhibition, with free admittance, may be visited from 24th October 2010 to 31st January 2011 in the opening hours of the permanent collection.

Thursday and Friday 2.30 – 6.30 pm

Saturday and Sunday 9.30 am-12.30 and 3.00-6.00 pm

Closed: 25th and 26th December, 1st and 6th January

Info

Collezione Maramotti

Via Fratelli Cervi 66

42124 Reggio Emilia - Italy

tel. +39 0522 382484

info@collezione maramotti.org

www.collezione maramotti.org