

ELEANOR LOUISE BUTT

Sundial (marking the passage of time)

30 July - 24 August 2014

Concerned with the ways in which people are connected to place, Eleanor Louise Butt's artistic practice can be understood as an exploration and expression of her relationship with the natural environment.

Eleanor's work is clearly informed by an intimate, bodily relationship to the materials she uses, which are all sourced directly from the landscape itself. In this vein, *Sundial (marking the passage of time)*, a framed work on paper, is created using a hand-printed black and white photograph and hand-mixed pigments she makes using clay collected from forest walks.

Inspired by Ikebana, the ancient Japanese practice of flower arrangement, landscape plays a vital role in the way Eleanor composes objects within the space, or elements within a painting. Drawing inspiration from the natural environment, she observes and tries to recreate the chance placement of objects in space; "balancing objects as a branch might hang on a cliff, or a pool of water might reflect the sky." In this way, her compositions often appear awkward and unstable, yet they possess an essential sense of balance.

The structure of Ikebana arrangements is often based on a scalene triangle, delineated by three points, which some schools of thought believe symbolise the sun, moon and earth. In this work, Eleanor similarly has created a triangular composition with the painted forms. The two cream shapes in either bottom corners mark out the bottom corners of the triangle, with the small yellow circle at the top of the rock as the third point of the triangle, and the focal point of the piece.

Eleanor's works make reference to specific elements in nature, suggested by recurring shapes and forms. The circle functions as a motif for the sun, appearing frequently as a bright yellow orb, like in a child's painting. As an immediately recognisable shape it stands out from the more organic forms, and is therefore is sometimes used strategically to balance the composition. Shadows, in the form of replicated shapes, create the idea of light and dark, and the passage of time as the shapes shift through the sky of the painting.

Eleanor's work does not seek to present a specific place and time; but an abstract landscape that can stand in for any place, and any time. Eleanor's practice is intuitive and repetitive, a sort of personal ritual, the outcome of which she describes as "a shrine of sorts to the physical experience of landscape." The placement of Eleanor's work in the middle of a busy commercial area is fitting, indicating that the only natural environment at our disposal is that which we imagine.

- Laura Couttie

Eleanor Louise Butt is an artist and curator practising in Melbourne. She graduated from the Victorian College of the Arts in 2013 with a Bachelor of Fine Art (Visual Art) degree with Honours. Eleanor has exhibited at various Melbourne galleries including c3 Contemporary Art Space, Margaret Lawrence Gallery, George Paton Gallery and DUDSPACE.

<http://eleanorlouisebutt.squarespace.com/>

Sundial (marking the passage of time), 2014
Hand mixed pigments, acrylic, hand printed
black and white photograph
\$900

(direct enquiries to laurac@seventhgallery.org)

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