

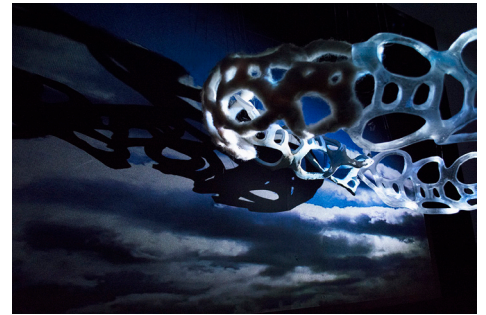
A.I.R.

Respire

Tomoko Amaki Abe

March 19 - April 18, 2021

A.I.R. Gallery is pleased to announce *Respire*, an exhibition by Tomoko Amaki Abe. *Respire* includes a new body of work in glass, ceramics, printmaking, and video that reflects on themes of deterioration and regeneration, transience and permanence.



Silver Lining - Six Pack Holders, 2021, kiln cast glass, cyanotype on porcelain, wool, film projection, 36 x 18 x 6 inches.

Our current situation has in many ways forced us to pause and take a deep breath. In this series of works, Abe pays particular attention to the shifts in perception that have taken place as a result, especially in regard to the heightened symbiotic relationship between our body and our environment.

In her *Transpermanent* series (2018), Abe layers images of leaves made with glass powder over sheets of solid glass. Sculptural leaf forms emerge from the works' surfaces. During the firing, these sculptures inspired by nature crack and fuse. The works feature two split halves separated by a crevasse; on either side of the expanse, Abe's leaves, of varying levels of transparency, rest in a state between decay and renewal.

In *Blood to Milk* (2019), two entangled branch-shaped loops, made of wood and cast glass, float in space like an ethereal nest. The seamless transition, from wood to translucent red glass to opaline and back again, references a hermetic cycle of deterioration and regeneration: the life-sustaining connection between mother and child through which the mother's blood turns to milk and provides the child with nutrients.

Silver Lining - Six Pack Holders (2021) consists of suspended chains made of materials ranging from clay and glass to wool, each a cast of plastic six pack rings in various sizes. Their entangled shape recalls the human body, contorted in pain or nestled in comfort. The work's heterogeneous materials create a seamless infinity loop, onto which is projected a video of the sun's rays piercing a sky of gray clouds.

Many of these works were inspired by the intricate interplay between ecological and human systems, evidenced in the smoke of the Australian bushfires traveling full circle around the globe to return to the continent or the world's waste, discarded into the sea, finding its way to the ocean gyre. The works in the exhibition are Abe's attempt to sketch and record ecological landscapes as they unfold in front of her eyes, capturing various departures and returns in the cycle of life.

Tomoko Amaki Abe lived in Japan, the United States, and the United Kingdom before settling in the greater New York area. Abe graduated with First Class Honours from the Bachelors program at the Edinburgh College of Art, during which she received an ERASMUS scholarship to study at the Escuela de Bellas Artes, Salamanca, Spain. Her body of work ranges from painting, paper making, ceramics, glass, and most recently mixed media installation, often drawing themes from nature—its decay and regeneration. She has been an artist in residence recipient at Bullseye Glass, New York in 2018, as well as at Urban Glass, New York in 2020. Her work has been featured by publications including *500 Raku*, *The New York Times*, and *Ceramics Art + Perception*.

A.I.R. Gallery is wheelchair accessible via ramp. There are accessible toilets in the venue. There is comfortable seating with backs. Free tap water is available. The venue is nearest to the F train at York St (0.2 miles) and the A train at High St (0.5 miles). The nearest wheelchair accessible trains are the B, Q, R at Dekalb Av (1.1 miles) and the 2, 3 at Borough Hall (0.8 miles). The roads immediately surrounding the gallery are cobblestone. The nearest accessible parking garage (for an hourly fee) is two blocks away at 100 Jay St. No ID necessary for entry. Please contact info@airgallery.org for more information.

