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Miho Dohi

Hagiwara Projects / Tokyo

Sculpture is distinct from painting in that its subject matter, whatever shape it may assume, appears as a tangible existence in real space. Miho Dohi's recent body of work explores an autonomous formative language that assimilates painting's capacity for illusory representation of virtual existence while retaining a whimsical sculptural materiality.

Six of the works exhibited in the gallery are set on pedestals, and one is mounted on a wall. The wall piece, *buttai 30* (2016), is a clumsy relief from which an oval copper sheet dangles like a tongue. With cloth foliage in the background, it seems to float somewhere between sculpture and painting — an object *and* an illusion on a plane. The work *buttai 24* (2013) is a 3-D still life that resembles a flowerpot with petals of cloth. Metal plays an important role in *buttai 33* and *buttai 35* (both 2015). The former is a rudimentary abstraction with a golden-brass oval sheet clinging to a plaster base, while the latter looks like a lobster made of glossy copper plates patched with strips of light-blue-tinged cloth. Dohi's method may give an impression of awkwardness or naïveté, but the resultant shapes, which resist presumptuous interpretation or categorization, suggest the artist's deliberate choice and combination of materials.

An inscrutable microcosm lurks in *buttai 34* (2015): it's a globe of tangled golden mesh, half covered with cloth of the same color as in *buttai 35*, topped by wire circles like an antenna and rising above a golden metal platform. A ladder-like corrugated metal sheet connects the globe and the platform. Meanwhile, *buttai 38* (2016), a small hollow wooden trunk decorated with cloth and thread, reveals Dohi's affinity for wood. Her works have neither specific titles nor specific meanings. They are absolutely *buttai* — "objects" in Japanese. In making them, Dohi collects raw materials. Thus her singular practice refuses to be seen as random assemblage, avoiding any commonplace art-historical positioning.



by Satoru Nagoya