



ST PAUL St Gallery One: Things Beyond Our Control

- 1-3. Suji Park, BUK 330-399 I, II, III, 2014
- 4. Cornelia Parker, Transitional Object II, 2008
- 5. Jun Yang, A Short-Story on Forgetting and Remembering, 2007

Suji Park is represented by Ivan Anthony Gallery.

Cornelia Parker's work is presented courtesy of Frith Street Gallery. Parker is represented by Two Rooms in Auckland.

Jun Yang's work is presented courtesy of Galerie Martin Janda, Vitamin Creative Space and ShugoArts.

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Things Beyond Our Control

Suji Park, Cornelia Parker, Jun Yang

14 February – 21 March 2014 ST PAUL St Gallery One
Curated by Charlotte Huddleston

Objects are powerful. They can be containers for associations, holders of or aides to memory, things that bring us comfort by anchoring us, their physical presence connecting us to the intangible or the ephemeral. They can provide refuge from the anxiousness of things we don't know.

Jun Yang's moving image work *A Short-Story on Forgetting and Remembering* presents a narrative voice over of an insomniac city dweller in a city that is never named but inferred. The protagonist talks about his difficulties of adjusting sleep patterns and the effects of this, while also recounting a life marked by displacement and the significant memories and objects that personally, collectively and historically punctuate his relationship to place and family. The narrator is disconnected from his family's past, from a collective cultural past. His migrant parents caught between "a past too fresh and a future too distant", leaving him displaced, assembling fragments of knowledge gleaned from clues and embellished by imagination, imagery and stories received from his surroundings.¹ The work begins with memories, noting that memories can be implanted and reinforced by physical and visual evidence to become true to the subject, and ends with wood veneer as a metaphor "wrapping reality to the image we needed" speculating that if the surface fulfills a need and "the necessities of that moment, perhaps this is enough."²

The constrained and poetic potency of Cornelia Parker's work is present in *Transitional Object II* as a tension between the title, form and material of the work. Identified and named by pediatrician and psychoanalyst D.W. Winnicott, a transitional object is a security or comfort blanket used by children as a substitute for the maternal presence. *Transitional Object II* is a suspended tent made from nets anchored to the ground with bags of lead shot. The use and connotations of nets as devices to block, capture or camouflage, the sheltering function of the tent and the title's reference to a security blanket are a complicated mix of referents. Looked at one way a shelter, camouflage and comfort blanket are welcome protection and relief. Yet the open weave of the net is no shelter from the elements or from view. Equally, it could be a suspended trap, set in anticipation of capture. Parker's transitional object presents a taut line between comfort and anxiety.

Suji Park has worked into the gallery space in response to the premise of the exhibition. Park's mode of working is embedded in an affective connection with materials and the objects that she makes. Her engagement with her work and material is characteristically cyclical taking an approach that involves the "recovery, analysis and reconstitution" of her own material.³ Park's approach is instinctive and responsive to the materials that exert a force of their own during the making. *For Things Beyond Our Control* Park has introduced nostalgia by fabricating parts of her family home in Seoul from memory. The home is no longer owned by the family and has fallen into a state of disrepair. Park's *BUK 330-399* objects, named after the Seoul suburb where the house is located, are a partial reconstruction and a representation of the current ruinous state of the house.

Things Beyond Our Control intends to emphasise a relationship between comfort and anxiety mediated by connection to material objects as a way to grasp the world and centre oneself within time and place amongst change and uncertainty.

1. Jun Yang, from the screenplay for *A Short-Story on Forgetting and Remembering*, 2007.
2. Ibid.
3. Suji Park, from artist statement, 2013