

Harvest James Dorahy Project Space 9 October - 4 November 2012

Harvest: the duty of care

Sue Pedley is an artist whose works are attuned to the wellness of being, to what Heidegger would have called a politics of care. Within the everyday, so often taken for granted, Pedley notices, and calls to attention. In *Harvest* Pedley takes her inspiration from the community garden of her studio in Marrickville. The delicate patterns on the paper works are the direct imprints of paint on the leaves of the plants: sorrel, strawberries, sweet potatoes, morning glory, kale, squash and choko. Care, as such, takes place at the scale of being-there (*Dasein*), through a contact that connects to place, to the historical here and the now. To this assemblage of people. To *this* particular place. Grace is combined with material vigour as Pedley expands into new techniques and media: printing and folding fine Japanese papers into immaculate 'grocery sacs' (sculptural objects which are still unassumingly everyday), or deploying her grandfather's woodworking tools to gouge into the smooth wooden surfaces of found objects to bring out the abstract patterning of the grain.

This association of tools, and everyday objects, returns to a consideration of making, of working at a human scale of quiet meditation, and to the personal histories associated with such tools. The strength and vigour reflected in those marks in wood, additionally, are tempered to fit a certain utilitarian scale. The reworked 'brown paper grocery bags', the kind that once existed before ubiquitous plastic supermarket bags, are likewise utilitarian in their origins: bags that had to be strong enough to carry home bottles of sauces and oils, packets of sugar and flour. There's nothing saccharine or sweet about Pedley's reworked utilitarianism. Pedley is a respectful gleaner, respectful of the qualities of what she gleans. Traces of duty, care and work infuse and lend substance. There's a sense of work properly done, care taken. You feel good, enlivened by an undertaking that is modest, never overdone.

Anne Finnegan 2012