

## EMI OTAGURO

the reverie

November 2 - December 4, 2022



Suncatcher, 2022, gouache on pocket tissue, 8 x 13 x 1 cm

Emi Otaguro was born in 1980 in Fukuoka, Japan, and currently lives and works in Aichi. She received her B.F.A. in Painting from Tokyo Zokei University and her M.F.A. in Oil Painting from the Tokyo National University of Art and Music. Otaguro received a Japanese Government Oversea Research Program Grant from the Agency for Cultural Affairs and lived and worked in Berlin, Germany, from March 2019.

Emi has presented her work in: solo show "the reverie" at KAYOKOYUKI, Tokyo, 2022; "DOMANI: The Art of Tomorrow 2021" at The National Art Center, Tokyo, 2021; solo show "MESA" at Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, 2021; "MAT, Nagoya Studio Project vol.6" at Minatomachi POTLUCK BUILDING, Aichi, 2020; "Studio Exhibition" at Satoshi Ohno Studio, Yamanashi, 2018; "THE ECHO!" at Takasaki City Gallery, Gunma, 2016; "project N 55" at Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery, 2014; "TRICK-DIMENSION, curated by Daisuke Ohba" at tolot: heuristic SHINONOME, Toko, 2013; and "YON-SHIKI, curated by O JUN" at youkobo artspace, Tokyo, 2010. She has also received the grand prize for the Art Award Tokyo Marunouchi 2008.



Emi Otaguro has specifically selected everyday mass-produced items familiar to our daily lives, such as bubble gum, vinyl sheets, and tin as her primary materials and source for her artworks. With her productions which have consistently focused on the uncertainty of physical existence and the ambiguity of self-awareness, the various materials--as well the very act of selecting these materials--serve as a way to connect the outer world with that of the private and personal existence of a single individual.

This exhibition, the reverie, chiefly focuses around works painted on wood scraps and pocket tissues. In recognizing that wood scraps were placed in the streets in front of lumber shops everyday, Otaguro considered these uneven four sided rectangular wooden boards as "a plane which deviates from its initial purpose", and illustrated scenes which were thus slightly out of sync with the real world on to them. Unlike the grandiose ideals or the extreme fantasies some may possess, Otaguro attempts to depict the small and simple gaps in perception that may lurk in any one's mind. This trivial, yet indispensable scene of life, which reveals its vain existence, is only made possible when it is given the materiality of a specific medium which has deviated from its primary purpose.

One evening in August when I was dozing off in the washitsu (Japanese-style room) of my parents' home in Fukuoka, a breeze blew in through the open window. I felt it blowing my hair, but at the same time, noticed that the hanging scroll in the tokoma (alcove) swaying along as well.

This experience, which inspired Otaguro with the concept of the exhibition, made her lose her sense of "subject / object", and come to feel as if there was only one omnipresent dimension in which encompassed her; herself, the hanging scroll, and the space around her. Just as there are countless indescribable scenes in life and or childhood memories which are evoked by certain moments and environments, the personal, ambiguous, and uncertain narratives conceived by Otaguro may possibly align subtly with the fundamental groundings of the world.



An encounter, 2022, oil and gouache on wood, 30 x 45 x 2 cm



upper left: The moving day, 2022, oil on canvas, 53 x 45.5 cm



upper right: Untitled, 2022, gouache on paper, 21 x 29.7 cm

bottom left: sun bath, 2020, ceramic clay, 7.5 x 30.5 x 14.5 cm



bottom right: Playing in the river, 2022, oil on canvas, 24.2 x 33.3 cm

