

Ai Ikeda

Les temps mutants

04/26/18 - 05/24/18

I immigrated to Canada from Japan after the Fukushima nuclear disaster of March 2011. My critical awareness of the effects of nuclear disaster heightened, and my practice shifted to address issues related to nuclear exploitation and its ecological implications.

My work depicts multifaceted dimensions of nuclear energy and culture; from ecological to psychological health, and from the environmental to the sociopolitical consequences of nuclear radiation.

Les temps mutants explores the psychological and biological aspects of mutation, focusing on changes in physical form and substance. Mutant amphibians represent the irradiated bodies in which the reproductive system is metamorphosed into the erotic. The invisible materiality (or, radioactivity) is rendered visible through a reimagination of Japanese and Western folklore. My work also engages with fantasy; I depict mutated landscapes whimsically, and in the process, reinterpret dystopian environments produced by highly destructive technology.

The works represent grotesque existences where creatures are troubled not only internally, but externally, through radioactive contamination. *Les temps mutants* emphasizes our period of rapid change where “mutation” has become a symptom of the Anthropocene. It is a time for mutants.

Ai Ikeda is a multidisciplinary visual artist from Nara, Japan. She is currently an MFA candidate in Painting and Drawing in the Studio Arts program at Concordia University. She holds a BFA in oil painting from the Kanazawa College of Art, Japan. Her work has been shown in Nara, Kanazawa, Tokyo, New York, and Montreal.

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