

# LUNGLEY

Lana Locke

Relic Garden

03/03/2023 - 15/04/2023

*Private view 02 March, 6-9pm*



Image courtesy of the artist.

Relic Garden is Lana Locke's third solo exhibition with Lungley Gallery.

Here Locke creates an apocalyptic environment of relics of human and non-human life, in a play of sculpture, installation, video and painting.

In this garden, plants are not borne of the ground, but the crucible, alchemised into bronze and aluminium, pinned, potted and placed about the barren space. Contrasting materials like plastic and plaster are forced into the mix, playing in survivalist kinship with the value-laden metal trophies.

*Three Graces* of cut and shellacked palm fons, are as mortal as they are ethereal. They dance around a dead branch that grows from a tailor's dummy mount, their monstrous bodies closer to dried out meat than any idealised female form.

Shiny, dangling, swimsuited bodices hang from above, similarly skinned from flesh, suspended in glistening inertia.

One of these bodies, *Between Labours*, takes on a narrative of domestic responsibility, its smoothness interrupted by objects of abjected labour: a prickly feather duster piercing the crotch, a child's knobbly, knocked-around garden fork spearing the arms. The swimsuit stretches in leisurely pursuit, querying its fixity of gender as shiny bioresin stiffens and slickens its bulging contours. Dried flowers spill from its pelvis, at once phallic and womb-like, in a shrivelled, futile collusion to battle mortality, as pleasure is interrupted by signals of natural demise. The piece at once invites and rejects tactile interaction: the handheld elements of labour interrupting the desire to touch, with the hand's familiarity with a less desirable, functional relationship to these tools.

Playing in the background is Locke's film, *Journeys of a Laundry Mountain* (2021), which articulates more fully some of the themes hinted at in the objects. The exploration of her own responsibility for the domestic laundry, is cut with humourous clips of found footage showing up inherited ideas around gender, whiteness, labour and cleanliness. The mountain of tangled laundry that Locke has to sort, journeys through locations where she films herself hanging out clothes, from the gentrifying area of South East London where she lives, to her parent's "junkyard and jungle" in South East Queensland. Filmed in the wake of the Australian forest fires of 2019, she explores the cultural and ecological violence of colonialism on the indigenous culture and landscape there, paralleled with the beginnings of the Covid 19 pandemic, and its origins in our encroachment on and abuse of wild territories. Highlighting the violence of heteronormative patriarchy, she concludes with a call for shared responsibility, for each other and for the planet, beyond our separated subject positions.

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Lana Locke (lives and works in London) is a cross-disciplinary artist who explores the tensions of straddling domestic and art-making spaces as an artist mother, against wider political, social and ecological contexts. She has exhibited at the ICA, Block 336, Hales Gallery and Dolph Projects in London, at Spike Island, Bristol, The Bluecoat, Liverpool, MOCA Taipei and National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts, Taiwan.

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