

Something to Grasp, Nothing to Hold

In *Something to Grasp, Nothing to Hold*, enigmatic forms appear out of a dark abyss. With no clear markers to indicate scale, density or weight, the objects hover like globs of pure matter. Loaded with a visceral sense of calm, sucking our eyes into its depths, but forcing them to remain on the surface of the image.

Here, glass is subject, object and means through which the work comes about. The fragments depicted in these black & white photographs have all gone through a slow process of transformation. Formerly constituted as a functional vessel, most likely an industrially made bottle containing a liquid of some sort, discarded once its function ceased. A cycle symptomatic of the mass-production, circulation and consumption of things.

The moment it enters the ocean, leaving the control of human agency, their function and use value dissolves. The whole gets broken into pieces, and in turn, through incessant motion, individual splinters go through a very gradual deformation. Shaped by time and nature, the glass is leached, scarred and dulled until sharp edges are rounded into smooth gem-like pebbles. Each weathered remnant is unique, its previous form latent in the fragment, but can never be put back together again.

As fossils from the recent past, each form has the look of a specimen being documented through the prism of archaeology. Through the process of gathering and recording each one finds a new wholeness in its incomplete state. Crystalline structures imbued with a contradictory sense of time, or perhaps timelessness. Their indeterminate transition from vestiges of human waste into geological artefact is both fleeting yet eternal. They reside somewhere between deep time, while also indicative of the anthropogenic epoch we currently live.

They are objects in flux, neither one thing nor the other. Transitional forms hovering between states, caught mid-cycle between man made and naturally formed, human engineering and organic adaptation, usefulness and uselessness, insignificant and monumental. If objects are imbued with meaning, then these small pebbles reflect complex cycles of production, processes of destruction and the transformation of inert material into animated matter. There is a sense of loss or things coming to an end but with the potential for new beginnings.

Mediated through the photographic image, the fragment is flattened into its pictorial condition and preserved at a certain moment. In *Something to Grasp, Nothing to Hold*, photography is used to slow down and hold still their continuous motion, however these fading, evanescent objects remain just out of reach.

This sense of withholding also underlies the gap between object and image, as the object itself is responsible for its own representation. An active agent in its own recording insofar as the object is used as a negative, literally projecting its own image onto the photographic paper. A process that gives them a distinct quality of immateriality, they are echoes of the form.

In this work there is a slippage between materiality and representation, through revealing the visible there is uncertainty about what remains concealed and inaccessible. "What is the thing that lies beneath the semblance of the thing?" As a material, glass is typically used to look through rather than at, similarly in *Something to Grasp, Nothing to Hold*, the work forms a basis to focus on other things, acting as a proxy to explore the meaning, value and future of things.