



# Ōranges & other offerings

OUTER  
SPACE

Reina Brigette Takeuchi

22 April - 13 May 2023

'Ōranges and other offerings' delineates the bonds and distances existing between families, both blood and chosen. As the first institutional solo exhibition by Japanese-Australian artist Reina Brigette Takeuchi, the exhibition takes inspiration from her father's eco-farm in Tokyo entitled Field of Dreams. Her father, Yukifumi Takeuchi, embarked on the creation of an eco-farm during the pandemic for his own wellbeing and to grapple with the implications of living in perpetual environmental crisis. Through ritualistic gestures and time-based media, Reina uses an auto-ethnographic approach to represent familial storytelling; both real and false memories. Through collaborations with family and friends, including her friend and collaborator Lucia Tường Vy Nguyễn, oranges and oceans become metaphors for diasporic existences, transience, and gaps between spaces; otherwise known as 間 [ma] in Japanese. 'Ōranges and other offerings' is a space to recollect memories and examine the complexities of the Nikkei experience through community and familial knowledge. Exposing the isolated experience of diasporic peoples during Covid, 'Ōranges and other offerings' explores how transformation can occur for one's wellbeing and one's environment through the cultivation of nature and familial love.

The process of making an artwork, as I've witnessed in Reina Takeuchi is a sort of chaotic consciousness. For many artists, to dig an artwork from the ground is hard work, backbreaking, hand-tearing labor. And once done, they can't be entirely sure what they've unearthed, where it came from, or who might recognize it as belonging to them. In my experience, artists don't necessarily work to arrive at the truth, or to tell the story of their lives or to free themselves from secrets. Rather, they create to decipher a lived situation, an event, a relationship.

Takeuchi's latest exhibition, 'Ōranges & other offerings', is an introspective journey into the roots of her identity, a reflection on the complex layers of her personal history, relationships, and cultural heritage. The exhibition serves as a metaphor for the cyclical nature of growth and transformation. Housed within are three moving image works that are deeply personal, weaving together fragments of everyday life, footage of the artist in motion, and a medley of soundscapes, including narration in her mother tongue and poetry.

'Field of Dreams' is inspired by her father's eco-farm in Tokyo and explores family dynamics, post-Covid well-being, and ecology. While the work begins with the specificity of Takeuchi's own experience as a daughter, choreographer, artist, and curator, it is a broader reflection on existential questions about our existence and the people we love. 'Between Oceans' explores the body's physical absorption of time, memories, water, and connections to land and ancestry. The film features Takeuchi and her mother, switching between Japanese and English, sharing stories and memories of times with her father, commenting on intimacy and familial love. 'Shadow', a collaborative work with Lucia Tường Vy Nguyễn, features the artists in movement. Takeuchi dances and Nguyễn boxes; their bodies mirroring, brushing, holding and shadowing each other, making comment on friendship and movement practices.

Takeuchi builds a world in which she inhabits, moves and dances through. While autobiographical, the videos move beyond mere snapshots into her life. They present fragmented glimpses into the complexity of her Asian-Australian identity, the physical and language separations within her personal relationships and her interest in ecology and nature. However, a decipherable narrative arc is not offered or evident. This is her intention: to make works which leave behind the Western dominant expectations of explaining and knowing everything. Life after all does not work like this; it is messy, complex and often unpredictable.

For artists, the final work often serves as an answer to questions that they never knew to ask. Reina Takeuchi's 'Ōranges & other offerings', is a testament to this. Through her encounters with the world around her, she has caught glimpses of beauty, insight, and meaning, which she has skillfully translated into her art. The exhibition is not simply an arrangement of artworks, but a journey of discovery, a celebration of creativity, and an open embrace of ambiguity, multiplicity, and openness. It is a chronicle of searching and finding that invites you, the reader, to join her.

– Micheal Do, 2023

The artist's father, Yukifumi Takeuchi, featured in 'Field of Dreams', is a Tokyo-based diplomatic correspondent who has worked at the frontline of Japanese media for over 40 years. Please refer to one of his latest articles, translated around the world.

Please see below an interview facilitated by Yukifumi Takeuchi with the Afghani ambassador to Japan. <https://www.nippon.com/en/in-depth/d00880/>

To see more of Lucia Tường Vy Nguyễn's projects, please refer to this link: <http://msha.ke/luciavyn>

Reina Brigette Takeuchi is a Japanese Australian artist-researcher, dance maker and curator who has lived and worked across Japan, India, Thailand, and Australia. She explores how sensorial experience can be enhanced through ritualistic performance, interactive installations, and time-based media. Reina's work utilises choreographic processes and the transitory qualities of sound and action to meditate on transculturation, diasporic existences and her experiences living peripatetically across East and Southeast Asia during her youth. These processes allow for a clarity of somatic contemplation for the artist, and in turn, she explores the potential for this sensitivity to be shared with the viewer. Her practice spans across visual arts, choreography, curatorial projects, written publications, and creative facilitation. She has exhibited internationally and has performed for Ars Electronica Festival, Liveworks Festival of Experimental Art, SomoS Art House, Berlin, and the Museum of Contemporary Art's Late program. She is currently a PhD candidate at QUT, focusing on Asian Australian performance for her research project Countermoves of the Transcultural. She is currently based between Gubbi Gubbi Country / Sunshine Coast and Sydney / Warrane.

Lucia Tường Vy Nguyễn is a Vietnamese Australian writer exploring the intersection of Southeast Asian folklore, ludic violence and global technoculture. Her writing has been featured in publications such as Kill Your Darlings, Art Collector and LIMINAL's non-fiction anthology, Against Disappearance (Pantera Press, 2022). With her collaborator and friend Reina Takeuchi, she has exhibited at SomoS Art House Berlin, and co-written an essay for Going Down Swinging which won the Non-Fiction category for the 2022 Woollahra Digital Literary Award. She is invigorated by the opportunity to play and dream within, around, or even outside capitalist structures of "work".

Micheal Do is a curator, programmer and writer working across Australia, New Zealand and Asia. His curatorial focus lies in developing thematic and immersive exhibitions that extrapolate research and artistic practices into contemporary contexts. He is curator, contemporary art at the Sydney Opera House, Australia.

This exhibition has been produced on the stolen lands of: the Gadigal and Bidjigal people of the Eora Nation; the Awabakal people; and the Yuggera and Turrbal peoples. We would like to pay our respects to the elders of these Nations—past, present, and emerging—and to any other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people encountering this work and their transgenerational connections to these lands.

This Acknowledgement of Land highlights colonialism as an ongoing process and how non-white, non-Indigenous people continue to contribute to and benefit from it. We hope to acknowledge the theft and violence inherent to our settlement of these lands.