

sculpture

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NEW YORK: AIKO HACHISUKA – ELEVEN RIVINGTON

By Bansie Vasvani



In Aiko Hachisuka's second solo exhibition at Eleven Rivington, fabric sculptures beckoned with stalagmite forms and brightly printed surfaces. Continuing her neatly sewn patchworks of mostly outerwear and jackets, these seemingly static cylinders belie an eerie world of body forms that leave traces of their presence through substantial absence. Using this mechanism, Hachisuka's work deftly explores the deeper implications of transience and imperfection within the Japanese philosophy of Wabi-sabi.

In *Slow Turn* (2015), filled-out sleeves, inflated button-down corduroy jackets, and thick woven shirts intertwine like a heap of supine human figures flung together. A sense of movement and malleability seeps through as a brown and green striped jacket jockeys for space with a blue-hooded coat and

sculpture

an olive green shirt. Evocative of human beings tussling for elbow room, these absentee figures come alive despite their lack of complete representation. While they appear playful and humorous, seeming to duck their heads and conceal their identities, Hachisuka's long-limbed apparitions also raise concerns about human dispensability, disappearance, and loss.

Both funny and strangely morbid, her work is pervaded by the tug of opposites, the energy of yin and yang. The elephant tusk-like formation that characterizes *Tallboy* (2015) and other sculptures opens the works up to additional interpretations, as strange, yet vaguely recognizable forms provoke the imagination. Each meticulously constructed piece is a celebration and intimation of the complexity of existence. And with every carapace of the human form, appearing in numerous positions and contortions, one is reminded of the fragility and impermanence of human life.

Tactility is of utmost importance in Hachisuka's sculptures. Prominently displayed zippers, button-down sweaters, askew collars, and precariously tilted hoods conjure people of all ages and characteristics. These subtle protrusions add an important dimension to the sculptures by introducing elements of mystery and impenetrability to otherwise ordinary clothes; they recall the immediacy and presence of former owners, as well as their painful absence.

Unlike the exuberant color palette of Hachisuka's previous work, these new soft sculptures present relatively subdued, though occasionally still brightly patterned hues that lean toward a preponderance of black, blue, and brown. Painstakingly erected on circular pedestals swathed in upholstery fabric, Hachisuka's sculptures balance grace, beauty, and harmony with accident and imperfection. Akin in some ways to Shinique Smith's bound sculptures made of discarded belongings (referred to as "cubes of consciousness" by one writer), Hachisuka's accumulations are formally composed and constructed at different heights so that viewers can confront them head on. At once whimsical and serious, these sculptures have a depth of meaning that becomes palpable the longer one engages with them.