**HOLLY GUINNESS**

The Imari Plate: Drawings 2022-2024 is Holly Guinness’ first exhibition of her artwork. In the past as a paper conservator, Holly has preserved many other people’s works to be showcased and now it is her turn to come out from behind the scenes and reveal to us her other talent – that being DRAWING.

There is an abundance of beauty, joy, colour, reverence and history in these 30 aerial view drawings of fruit and vegetables; all set upon 3 different plates, all treasured pieces, each holding a story and memories.

Holly’s Grandmother was born in Japan and loved collecting ceramic ware or crockery. After her death, some of her collection was gifted to Holly and sent from Honolulu to Australia. We see here one such piece (and the title of the show) a precious 17th c Japanese ‘Imari’ porcelain plate – with its distinctive blue and white pattern. Imari is a Japanese port city and in the 17thc was a great centre for trade and exchange when this plate was made and from where it takes its name. Accompanying this is another valued heirloom from Holly’s Grandmother’s collection which is a distinctive Italian plate, identifiable by its lively hand painted patterning.

The 3rd and final plate speak of another relationship - a contemporary neighbour and friend who gave Holly an English ‘Minton’ plate possessing the blue and brown designs.

These special plates have been chosen to hold carefully balanced arrangements of fruits or vegetables. They pay homage to both the art tradition of still life and the line of beauty that continues to be found in our everyday encounters.

Holly’s shopping expeditions to her local providore are not motivated by the household shopping list of consumables, but rather a well-honed eye that is carefully selecting subject matter for artistic purpose, valuing and purchasing for form and colour, texture and scale.

These considered arrangements are marvellously skilled depictions using colour pencil on paper and set out before us become a visual banquet. It is truly our pleasure and privilege to delight in these drawings and congratulate Holly Guinness on her wonderful achievement.

Jennifer Keeler-Milne

2024