

MEEKYOUNG
SHIN

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sketch

TOILET

presents

PROJECT

Through the process of replication, Korean-born artist Meekyoung Shin contemplates on the discourse of cultural translation and museology in her personal narrative. Carving out of soap to mimic artefacts ranging from classical Greek and Roman marble sculptures to collections of Chinese and Korean export porcelain, historical and aesthetic values and the value of authenticity of familiar spectacles in a traditional museum space are dismantled. The reproductions are faithful to its original, but also not quite — liberated from conventional perceptions of museum artworks.

Toilet project (2004–ongoing) features a set of soap ‘artefacts’ exhibited in museum toilets — here we are lucky to have them exhibited and available for use at sketch. Engaging the audience to wash their hands with them, the ‘relic-ification’ of cultural objects through centuries becomes observable in the span of a few weeks. The process of continual handling and polishing of the surface of soap brings to mind Oriental artifacts that become infused with oils over time to produce the mysterious sheen of antiquity. The transition of value of the sculptures reflects the contextual gap between existence and reality. Soap evokes instability and erasure, yet this temporality of the substance inherently negotiates with the complicated past that made them.

sketch

HANMIGALLERY