

GALLERY4A

White Picket Fences in the Clear Light of Day Cast Black Lines

SANGEETA SANDRASEGAR

7 NOVEMBER – 12 DECEMBER 2009

For her solo exhibition at Gallery 4A, Sangeeta Sandrasegar presents a series of ornately crafted silhouettes that mythologise culturally proscribed forms of identity.

Using a storytelling idiom, Sangeeta Sandrasegar's practice represents the experiences of marginalised subjects, such as women and ethnic minorities, through the motif of shadow. Drawing upon contemporary narratives, her work invites us to consider how stories are used to frame both the beauty and the brutality of the contemporary world.

The exhibition will also premiere a new series of acrylic sculptures. Winding their way through the gallery, these sculptures will introduce a physical aspect to the exhibition's meditation on marginality and borders. By weaving together theory with artistic motifs and techniques inspired by a variety of cultures, *White Picket Fences in the Clear Light of Day Cast Black Lines* demonstrates that political statements need not be made at the expense of poetry.

'The Shadow Class', uses contemporary manifestations of slavery to investigate marginal identity in a world that is supposed to have left slavery behind. The series consists of a set of silhouettes of the artist posing in suggestive and symbolic ways. Small ornaments adorn the works, constructing narrative identities of a female 'shadow class' – slaves, prostitutes, and the economically dispossessed.

Sandrasegar's self-portrait, 'Untitled (Self-Portrait of Prudence)', uses the constraints of her characteristic silhouette technique to probe self-constructions of identity. The image uses an outline of Sandrasegar styled after the cardinal virtue of Prudence. Conventionally, Prudence is depicted gazing into a mirror, symbolising knowledge of self, and with a snake entwined around one arm to symbolise caution and self-control. Born under the Chinese zodiac sign of the snake, Sandrasegar uses 'Prudence' to twist new meanings into this imagery, demonstrating the power of myths in the construction of self-identity.

'Take Away That Monster'/That Face that Makes Men Stone, Whoever She is', contemporises the myth of Medusa. Originally installed in The Old Wentworth Gaol as part of an exhibition exploring prisons and post-prison 're-socialisation', her Medusa's prison is social as much as physical. The installation depicts a particular episode in the myth of Medusa. Her violent death led to the birth of the mythic giant, Chrysaor, and the winged horse, Pegasus. In the context of inequality and the social fragmentation it produces, 'Take Away That Monster'/That Face that Makes Men Stone, Whoever She is' comments upon the perpetual cycle of violence that incarceration engenders.

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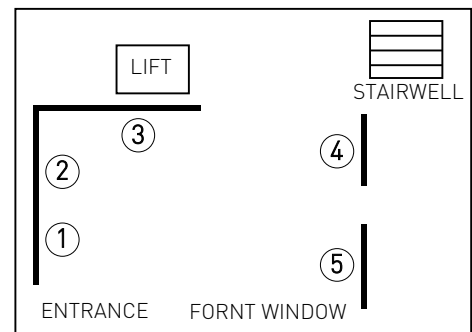
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'White Picket Fences in the Clear Light of Day Cast Black Lines' draws upon shadows to explore the theme of borders and marginality. Made up of acrylic sculptures cutting through the gallery space, forcing us to move around her sculpture, Sandrasegar uses space to represent the social strictures that condition identity. This process of navigation also suggests the complex paths that lead to the construction of individual identities.

ROOMSHEET

Ground floor

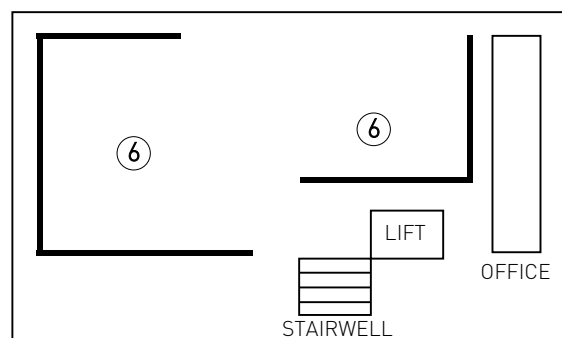
- ① *The Shadow Class -- Untitled (sex worker), 2007-08*
felt, hosiery, plastic beads and cotton
- ② *The Shadow Class -- Untitled (domestic), 2007-08*
felt, cotton, glass beads and plastic beads
- ③ *Take away that monster/That face that makes men stone, whoever she is), 2009*
felt, cotton thread, glass beads, sequins
- ④ *Untitled (Self-Portrait of Prudence), 2008*
felt and sequins
- ⑤ *The Shadow Class -- Untitled (carpet weaver), 2007-08*
felt, cotton, sequins and glass beads



Ground floor

First floor

- ⑥ *White picket fences in the clear light of day cast black lines, 2009*
Acrylic



First floor