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Bringing a Japanese perspective to ceramics



Kenji Uranishi, “Among the clouds” (2023).

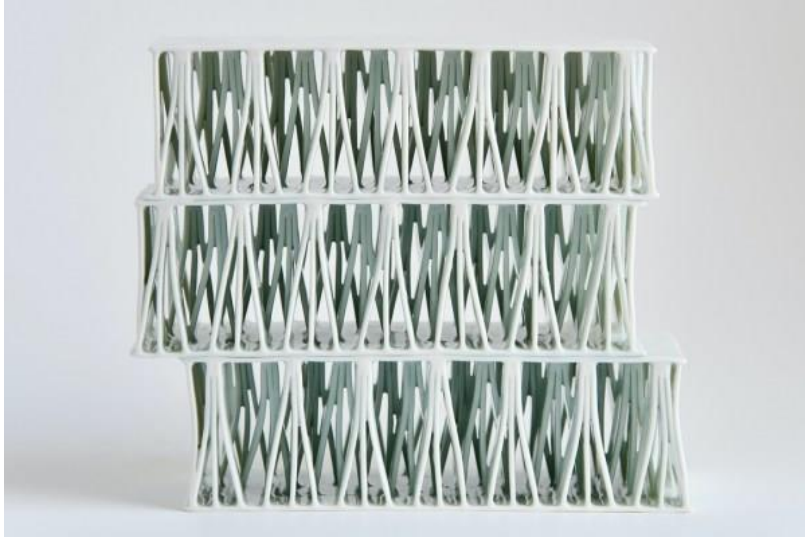
Craft / “Landing”, Kenji Uranishi. At Beaver Galleries, until April 8. Reviewed by MEREDITH HINCHLIFFE.

KENJI Uranishi has dedicated this show to his mother, and it captures a period of reflection, where he draws on the memories and moments of beauty that have shaped his life: passing moments of fleeting beauty, of patterns of light and dark, reflections and precious reminiscences.

Uranishi was born in Kyoto, Japan, and now lives in Brisbane. Before moving to Australia, he used mostly stoneware – now he works in fine, white porcelain.

He lives near mangrove swamps and finds the movement of water in the tides – fresh water meeting salt water – fascinating and calls this the “dance of water”. Roots and branches twist and turn in the water, creating spaces for water and sea creatures to pass through.

Two bodies of work are being exhibited. Rounded, ribbed forms, that evoke sea creatures or plants of seaweed – life below the water’s surface – make up one group. One can imagine them moving and swaying in the movement of water. They are made up of slip-cast and hand modelled pieces that are joined together to create complex shapes. They are glazed in clear, pale colours – blue or green. A distinct line in the ribs of Catalogue 6, “Talking in the Clouds”, has been left uncoloured, so the smooth white of the porcelain body shines through.



Kenji Uranishi, "Waterfall 8" (2022).

Objects in the second body of work are titled "Waterfall", and are reminiscent of water cascading down a rock face, with the water interrupted by rocky outcrops or vegetation. For me they also evoke the facades of tall buildings, with featureless windows and floors.

Uranishi's work is delicate, restrained and refined. It is sophisticated and thoughtful and brings a Japanese perspective to ceramics.