

The Folly of Colour

Nuha Saad works with optimism and a modernist inheritance turning to colour and abstraction in a time of uncertainty and upheaval. Saad's work identifies with both western art education and an eastern sensibility. The works exhibited in, "The Folly of Colour" demonstrate the feeling of being in-between different cultural experiences. In each work Eastern forms bump up against the hard geometries of minimalist and formalist tendencies alike, but in a gentle way. One side supports the other, completes it, balances it, formally.

The parallel constructions built like porticos, with seemingly precarious geometries, are supported by their mirror reflection. Simultaneously colour balances and undermines the form; as the viewer's eye flicks from the coloured to the unpainted wooden surface. While on painted colonial columns colour is used as camouflage (tone here seems to reflect something of the fading light on the veranda) a sun-bleached cartoon of once grand ideals, wealth and promise that are now pushed aside. Caught between the bland beige ordinariness of today's home beautiful, these works remind us of both the colonial past of heritage facades and eastern ornament.

Saad's seemingly wobbly minimalism is one where colour and tone usually used to describe shape, destabilises the structure and form of individual sculptural works. A three-dimensional optical illusion. The scale of the works causes a phenomenological reading that draws on one's sense of clumsiness and overload, while Saad's gravity defying stacks are magically assembled like house of cards.

Michele Beevors
Principal Lecturer: Sculpture and Ceramics
Dunedin School of Art
Otago Polytechnic.