

Miya Ando *Mugetsu (Invisible Moon)* – Statement

Mugetsu (Invisible Moon) 無月

The brightest full moon of the year is observed on the 15th day of the 8th month of the lunar calendar. It is called mid-autumn moon or ‘Chushu No Meigetsu’. If clouds obscure the full moon on this night, and the sky appears moonless, it is called ‘Mugetsu’ or ‘invisible moon’ which is the title of this exhibition -- a contemplation of this distinctive way of perceiving the moon and our relationship to it.

I am particularly interested in historic Japanese words such as ‘Mugetsu’ which cannot be directly translated into English, as these words represent a distinctive system of thought not present in the West. I often use two-word titles for my artworks - one Japanese word, one English word - to point out the variations in thought and perception between the two cultures which have informed me.

I consider Mu to be one of the most important words in the lexicon of Buddhism, particularly Zen Buddhism. Mu can be roughly translated as ‘nothingness’; it contains an awareness of the fundamental nature of reality -- that all constituent forms comprising the universe are temporary.

Making art is a function of thinking. These paintings are the residue of a particular thought: just because we cannot see things doesn’t mean they are not there. Just because we cannot understand things does not mean they are not comprehensible. Akin to the moon, the process of thought is one of both covering and revealing.