

Beauty has a Price

Don't be fooled by their beauty these flowers have a deadly secret – lovely to look at but getting intimate may be bad for your health.

The idea of beauty looms large in our modern society. We are inundated with advertisements promoting enhancements that will make our life better, more fulfilling, more rewarding, more satisfying, but usually there is a price to pay – money, opportunity, alternatives. What gets stripped away in the process?

In the Japanese paper making process that I have used the bark of the Kozo plant (*Broussonetia papyrifera* - paper mulberry) has been soaked and beaten by hand (twice) to separate the hard outer layer, the mid layer and the “pure” inner fibres.

Ordinarily it is these inner fibres which are used in the final paper making process however, for this work I have chosen to work with the mid fibres and with inner fibres that have been further processed by a special machine built by renowned paper maker Mr Fujimori at the Awagami facility in Japan – a mechanical intervention.

On the one hand there is paper with imperfections (it is not as white and retains bits of the outer bark). On the other there is a perfectly white surface which perhaps changes our perception of/interaction with the image. Is it more beautiful? Are we more or less likely to accept the underlying message? What is purity? Does it matter? On what do we base our interaction with the world around us?

Inner beauty/outward imperfections, outward beauty/inner corruption?