

Suda Yoshihiro

06 February – 29 March 2025
8 Bury Street SW1Y

Opening Thursday 06 February, 6-8pm



At Bury Street, unexpected life-size flora profoundly transforms the quiet gallery into a living environment.

For three decades Suda Yoshihiro's flowers have discreetly emerged from cracks and crevices, unpredictably appeared through windows, grown from the spaces around light switches and domestic fixings, and forced their way between inconspicuous fractures in architecture. Always using strong, light magnolia – or *hoo* – wood that is soft to carve, Suda imbues his sculptures with a sense of history; the magnolia tree evolved into its shape almost one hundred million years ago yet has remained mostly unchanged since. The spontaneous germination and lifelike appearance of his meticulously hand-carved and decisively painted botanical motifs demand close scrutiny. Each in-bloom creation – be it a poppy, morning glory or common clump of weeds – holds traces of Suda's careful handiwork. They are innately subjective, Suda does not create from direct observation but rather carves suddenly by combining reference materials and his own imagination, drawing from sentimental associations. The result is often mistaken for real, but Suda plants the seed of intrigue to encourage a sharper focus, as he believes an artwork only becomes an artwork once it is seen.

Faced with a bare, whitewashed wall, Suda's viewers are urged to search and be guided by their own curiosity. During this tandem experience of bewilderment and wonder, by exploring a typically dominated or overlooked space, the role of the exhibition environment in Suda's artmaking reveals itself. He creates an awareness of the gallery interior – its existence both before and after the installation, with and without it – drawing astute attention that is often reserved solely for the sculpture itself. For Suda, 'seeing' exists on a spectrum, where he considers 'not seeing' to also belong. The negative space around a sculpture is integral to its comprehension; Suda determines the location first so that each sculpture is formed with its eventual installation in mind. Much like how music relies on the silence that falls between notes, Suda creates and accentuates intentional intervals of space, fostering moments of contemplation. His work epitomises Japanese cultural aesthetics that celebrate quiet restraint and refinery, finding beauty in elevated simplicity. Suda celebrates the art of impermanence and frames nature in a static form, offering a space for quiet wonder.

By bringing the artificial to life Suda turns the entire gallery into an environment of his making. Touching on a collective tenderness for ephemeral elements in the natural world – a flower before decay, a weed before removal – Suda places equal importance on weeds and flowers, work and space, real and artificial. By altering these perspectives Suda motivates new ways of thinking, demonstrating that the small and often overlooked things in life can have transformative potential when rooted in new environments.

Suda Yoshihiro (b. 1969, Yamanashi, Japan) studied at the Tama Art University, where he obtained his BA in 1992. He currently lives and works in Tokyo, Japan. Suda has exhibited internationally with solo exhibitions including The Shoto Museum of Art, Tokyo (2024); *Suda Yoshihiro. Mite Clematis*, Vangi Sculpture Garden Museum, Shizuoka (2018); Chiba City Museum of Art (2012); *Yoshihiro Suda: In Focus*, Asia Society Museum, New York (2009); Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2004); *Focus: Yoshihiro Suda*, curated by James Rondeau, Art Institute of Chicago (2003); and *Hara Documents 6: Tree of Calm Mountains. Works by Yoshihiro Suda*, Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo (1999). Group exhibitions include *The A to Z Guide to the Former Residence of Prince Asaka*, Tokyo Metropolitan Teien Art Museum (2024); *Jardins*, Grand Palais, Galeries Nationales, Paris (2017); *The International Biennale of Contemporary Art of Cartagena de Indias*, Columbia (2014); *All Our Relations: 18th Biennale of Sydney* (2012), *Out of the Ordinary: Spectacular Craft*, V&A Museum, London (2007); *Flowers as Images: From Monet to Jeff Koons*, Luisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebaek (2004) and Fondation Beyeler, Riehen (2005); *ARS'01: Unfolding Perspective*, Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki (2001); *The Greenhouse Effect*, Serpentine Gallery, London (2000); and *The Site of Desire. Taipei Biennale*, Taipei Fine Art Museum (1998).