

Kikki Ghezzi's recent series of work includes paintings focused on roots, branches and driftwood, and installations of delicate suspended sculpture inspired by the same earthbound forms. The installations are constructed from pale silks and stretchy fabrics, married with delicate joined wooden dowels. Forming ribs, the dowels underpin and shape draped cloth that stretches taut and smooth like skin over bones. The cloth is suspended and floating around the armature, and in places, caught and lifted. In some structures, the artist places a single piece of root inside, allowing the sheer cloth to fall lightly around the internal component.

Ghezzi assembled interior wood frames in her studios in New York and Italy, then pulled and gently twisted fabrics to cover them, allowing the wooden structure within to give inherent expression of the form. Semi-transparent material gently layered over the armature, strained between the dowels, or gathered and drooping, explores the same forms as her vibrantly colored paintings. These installations further investigate the shapes of roots removed from the canvas, liberated from the ground. Ghezzi's installations hover and float like dancers, bodies arched and twisted. Near the ceiling, they are drifting mirrored images of the shapes in her paintings, drained of color. Hanging suspended, these installations are as ephemeral and gauzy as the painted roots are substantial and crevassed. The installations demonstrate Ghezzi's reverence for the natural forms of roots and branches, which she paints in luscious, sensual still life studies. Here the root form is expressed as light and transparent, rather than solid and dimensional as they are shown in paint. Hung like spirits that are caught above the viewer, fabric envelops the armatures, creating internal spaces, and at the edges, fingers of wood emerge from inside.

Ghezzi's paintings examine curved or twisted roots and she repeats their shapes against unadorned backgrounds, placing them centrally on the canvas. The series of roots come from a spiritual place. She describes a "constant dialogue with the work, my mirror image, [that] allows me to see and connect to the roots of who I am." Through her gestural paintings, Ghezzi conveys the idea of flesh with luscious surfaces that capture light composed of layered colors.

In contrast, her installations reveal how meandering light plays on colorless, transparent surfaces. Ghostly forms hover at the ceiling, yet evoke earthbound roots, an airy reflection of what lies below. Liberated from color, and expressed as pure shapes, the simple white coverings float above our heads. Hung from the ceiling, or laid gently on the floor, they are spirits escaped from the artist's imagination, engaging the invisible aspect of her painted roots.

curated by **LISA A. BANNER**

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She works with old masters and contemporary art, and has lectured at The Frick Collection, Morgan Library, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Courtauld Institute and Meadows Museum.

# KIKKI GHEZZI



## NEW INSTALLATIONS



right: "ROOT" 2014,  
wood, elastic and fabric;  
below: "Grey and Root" 2014  
and a portrait of Kikki Ghezzi

