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Review: Gary Carsley: Sciencefictive

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Gary Carsley, *Astria Portia 1*, 2013

Coincidences and relationships connect like a web in **Gary Carsley's** new exhibition 'Sciencefictive' (2014) at the Institute of Modern Art in Brisbane. Here, East meets West, exterior meets interior, art meets science, global meets local, and natural meets constructed. Carsley's immersive work spreads out across two galleries, the walls punctuated by 'Moongates'. Rendered in a combination of textures and colours, including wood panelling, linoleum and marble, these 'moongate' apertures open onto natural vistas for an effect that is simultaneously familiar and alien.

In fact, the Moongates provide views onto gardens from around the world – from Brisbane and New York to Taipei, London and Singapore – transforming the galleries into an enormous *mappa mundi*.

Wallpapered silhouettes of outdoor sculptures (among them the *Laocoön*) fill the walls between the Moongates, and IKEA furniture, resurfaced with rich patterns and prints, has been placed throughout the space. Carsley's interior garden even features a reflective pool (a common element of landscape design) – here, an amorphous, organic mirror that seeps out across the floor from underneath a Moongate.

'Sciencefictive' invites contemplation, and a sense of quiet wonder and stillness pervades the inner spaces of the galleries. Indeed, it is hard to resist the urge to rest a moment on one

of the seats, in order to fully appreciate the subtle interaction between the Moongates, with their global views, and the patterned silhouettes of sculptures.

Carsley has brought the architectural landscape traditions of Chinese and western cultures together, just as he has also combined interior and exterior. Chinese Moongates (used traditionally in Chinese gardens to enable swift movement between different styles of gardens) are mixed with totems of western interior culture (the IKEA stools and chairs). 'Sciencefictive' creates a space in which the possibilities and opportunities for connection and collaboration are seemingly infinite.

Gary Carsley: Sciencefictive, Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane, 31 May – 26 July 2014.