

28.

Justine Varga

RESIDENCY

Australia Council for the Arts London
Studio Residency

Since graduating with honours from Sydney's National Art School in 2007, **Justine Varga**'s work has been defined by a maturity and laser-like vision that belies her emerging artist status. She has quickly developed a reputation for creating photographs which, through a fine calibration between an obsessive interest in the possibilities of the medium and sophisticated conceptual concerns, combine to form sublime objects. Her photographs are exquisite examples of, as **Isobel Parker Philip** notes, the place where "legibility and abstraction coalesce". There is immediacy – a visceral quality – to Varga's work, borne of her preoccupation with texture and surface, which is made even more enchanting by its highly contemplative subject matter.

In summing up Varga's practice to date, **Josephine Skinner**, curator at Varga's commercial Sydney dealer Stills Gallery, says: "Despite the early stage of her career, Justine has pushed the very idea of refining a visual language to its limits, producing an aesthetic that is both uniquely hers and is also, quite simply, beautiful."

This has been formally recognised in a number of ways. In 2011 she was the recipient of a NSW Visual Arts Fellowship for Emerging Artists; in 2012 her work was represented in MCA's Primavera exhibition; and in 2013 she was joint winner of the Josephine Ulrick & Win Shubert Photography Award.

Last year she was the recipient of the prestigious Australia Council for the Arts London Studio Residency – an opportunity Skinner sees as marking "the start of a promising international presence".

Varga herself says of the the London residency: "[It] has been the most intensely productive and inspiring period for me. To be given the opportunity to focus on my practice with many of the distractions of day-to-day responsibilities alleviated is a dream. This immersion has given me new parameters to explore within my work. I am loving every moment and the opportunity to connect with those working at the forefront of contemporary practice."

Carrie Miller

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This page:

Justine Varga, *Six Months, 2 Weeks*, 2013. C-type print, 141 x 111.5cm.

Opposite page:

Justine Varga, *Sounding Silence #1*, 2014. C-type print, 141 x 111.5cm.

COURTESY: THE ARTIST AND STILLS GALLERY, SYDNEY



