

In *Like Kintsugi* (2017), Jayne Amara Ross assiduously approaches the conflicting yet entangled notions of persistence, resurrection, and perishability. Through a portrait of the day in the life of the small northwest Icelandic village, Skagastrond, she reveals a primordial and profound drama of placed-ness, community, and mythology that adheres in the spaces of the everyday.

We begin with an origin story of the founding of the village by a woman named Thordis, who buries all her gold in the nearby Spakonufell, or Prophetess Mountain. With crystalline clarity the images of this town convey the chill of the air and hardship of livelihoods that its inhabitants meet with seeming ease; but Ross' aim is a celestial scale, one that questions the spark, the flash of the everyday within the expanses of time stretched out both backward and forward without end.

Gold returns as a motif through references to the Japanese philosophy of *kintsugi*, which regards the breakage and repair of pottery (and other objects) as part of the essential life history of a thing. Often the broken shards of pottery would be welded back together with gold or other fine metals such that the traces of the break become a celebration of an event, rather than something to be hidden or obscured. Ross suggests that humanity's own persistence is built on change, breakage, and repair. What continues or persists throughout the tedium of time, is our desire to continue to play out the same dramas on "the same narrow stage." With a melancholy voice over, the narrator guides us through a web of poetry, mythology and cosmic origins: "the universe repeats itself endlessly... acting out the same scenes in eternity over and over ad infinitum."

Gazing at images of the stark, indeed sublime, Icelandic landscape one may be moved to ponder the persistence of snowed-capped peaks and tundra-like plains, yet Ross reminds us of the transience of all matter; that in the end even the mountains are not eternal; that the only constant is impermanence and ephemerality. All is perishable, "stars are born, they shine and they go out." The consistency across time and space, then, is our drive toward coherence, our desire to mend the broken pot or suture the stories together, to practice an alchemy that turns fragments of time and place into gold. Reinforced by a haunting score, Ross does just that. She weaves the fragments of image, sound, and story into an assemblage that celebrates the coalescences of meaning; the ways in which we collide with each other like celestial beings and from these collisions form vessels of meaning mended with gold.

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