

## The Tomato

Reid Shier

At first I didn't notice the young woman sitting outside. On the porch or a balcony...reading? The evening looks warm. Late summer, judging from the tomato. Its long stem isn't from a store. She has a garden. Or a friend does.

It feels like an apartment kitchen. Water pipes up to the next floor, budget bamboo blinds. A fresh summer bouquet on the table supersedes the vase of dying lilies and wilting anthurium on the corner cabinet. *Memento mori*. Purple snapdragons. Crazy reflections in each window: brown bowl with an apple/peach/nectarine...purple flower (honeysuckle?) above and in front of her.

Freshly painted robin's-egg blue walls...or so it seems. What looks like a roller sleeve in the bucket on the floor may just be a roll of string...a can of paint thinner in the right corner of the windowsill any number of liquids. Cleaning up. An almost empty bottle of Windex, paper towels, crumpled brown paper with putty trim paint in the dustpan. Is she moving out, or in? Are those incense burners? Does it smell of paint, or just the décor.

Two chairs tabled for sweeping, red fleece-jacket slung over legs...back from an errand. White linen handkerchief, old glassware in the cabinet, kitsch *Tahiti* print, surreal azure sky, ripped corner, blu-tacked to the wall. The poster was put up before the electric socket cover plate. Someone is staying. Buzzing blue light. 100 watts when it should be 40...or just a long, beautiful exposure.



Mike Grill

*Tomato*, 2008

inkjet print, 58.5 x 73.5 cm

Stephen Waddell

*Jelena*, 2014

pigment print on chalk ground on aluminum, 86.4 x 109.2 cm



