

EMILY HANAKO MOMOHARA

www.ehmomohara.com

Koden

After seven recent deaths of friends and family in a short period of time, I have begun to contemplate bereavement and legacy in a new way.

Through the use of tableaux and funeral home settings, I create self-portraits that represent haunting aspects of those who have passed on. Several people were family or community members who added to my Japanese American upbringing. The images I create in their memory are full of the dichotomies that life and death offer. I show the need to hang on to my loved-one's life, as well as the fleeting quality of memory and time. Strange shadows and blurred movement discuss absence and presence while light symbolizes a physical connection between heaven and earth. The chapel-like funeral homes offer a familiar and uncomfortable setting. Insects such as butterflies represent transformation and new life, as well as frailty and limited longevity

Viewers experience a moment of awareness to the legacy and emotional impact of the lives and deaths of those we love. This body of work is titled *Koden* after a Japanese tradition of gift giving to bereaving families.