

You never saw it

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An encounter with certain scenes in the works of the four artists provoked the idea of this exhibition. Objects, the original form of which is unfathomable, and the 'scenes' that they constitute. 'Scene' in this exhibition is interpreted as follows;

By definition, 'scene' means 'any view or situation where some action or event occurs,' which is distinguished from 'landscape.' While 'landscape' is a value-neutral term referring to the 'natural or original scenery,' 'scene' implies a specific incident or the view of something that one paid attention, either consciously or unconsciously.

What did the artist see? What was the artist's attitude like towards the object and sight before him/her? Among the many tools inside them, which did the artist choose to adopt here?

Seeing accompanies perceiving and perceiving incites thinking.¹ The interesting part here is that human ability to 'see' often fails to embrace the entirety of the object.² It may enlarge a certain part and misinterpret it as the very essence or could muddle up with one's memory, bias, wish and emotion, reconstructing the nature of the object. These result in a gap with the original being. This exhibition seeks to investigate the subjective and biased 'seeing' of the artists embodied (exposed) in their vivid visual manifestation. It confronts the object and sight the four artists explore, observes their attitude and examines the formative tool they use to bring into their work what they've seen. This offers a glimpse at the world they explore, peeking into the way they bend things and feel the shape or outline of the world as they perceive.

The scene Shin Young PARK illustrates is derived from the spatial background of the 'city.' Roads diverging into different directions, cars, buildings and trees lined up on them. Park layers upon his emotion and sensitivity towards those that are commonly seen in the city. Anxiety, pressure, curiosity and fear, these emotions have been accumulated inside the artist who has been living or more 'surviving' in the race-like everyday of the city. Embodied through the unique use of color and shade, Park pictorializes it with his strokes that disturb the concreteness of the form. With each touch of the brush, elaborately drawn forms gradually lose their shape and contour, eventually blurring the boundary between it and its background. The artist 'draws and hides'; making

¹ Lim, Shan, *The Meaning of Seeing in John Ruskin's Aesthetics*, (The Journal of the Convergence on Culture Technology, Vol. 7, No. 2, 2021), 303-308

² Lim, Chul Kyu, *The History of Eyes, Aesthetics of Eyes* (Hangilsa, 2004), 58

".. Since to perceive only means that of the part, eyes are indeed a prison. ... Perception is the history of prison and the history of thinking is the history of 'framing,' and that of 'bending,' butchering the whole to the part. ... If it were not for the fragmentation of perception, taking a part from the whole and blindly absolutizing it, or the tricks of eyes that cause it, there would have not been historical catastrophes such as the wars and/or religious clashes. As a sense, eyes are that dangerous."

what was drawn hardly recognizable, so that those that were drawn there can exist safely without being noticed or exposed to the world. Fictional elements including bizarre, lifeless animals and plants, a hesitating flying object that seems as if it is forced to make an emergency landing and dry bone chips blend into each other with unusual images extracted from printed media, settling on the surface and disappear, hide into the ground.

LEE Dong Hyuk's series of paintings delve into a scene the artist encountered during his research on abandoned churches. For several years, Lee has been visiting abandoned churches in different regions and used the senses he collected there as resources to develop artistic concepts. With this exhibition ahead, Lee visited Hyoungdo Island, Hwaseong. Looking for another church but what he found was its ruins. The reclamation project would have destroyed the marine environment of the surrounding ocean, which led to the decline of the village after which schools, hospitals, markets and churches disappeared. Though the artist failed to encounter the place he was hoping to, the direction of his 'seeing' did not change that significantly. Whether he succeeds or fails to find the place he aims to, what the artist seeks for is the mind, mentality or the fragile longings or desire of people that would have once filled the religious place which is deemed that fiery faith and will prevail. If things usually regarded immaterial could constitute a view, Lee's painting would be one of them. Ugly bare mountain ridge and the clumsy horizon that artificially filled ocean and land make up compose the ground. Something that resembles a stone tower or even just stones that were left scattered in the gloomy town being piled up like forgotten wishes constitute the scenes of the painting series. Whereas Lee has been often creating a vertical texture by adding multiple layers of paint, he slightly diverges this time, carving out and tamping, making the layer more horizontal. Perhaps, what the artist's new surface responds to is the time of Hyoungdo Island which has been destructed, filled, eroded and flattened.

Noh-wan PARK depicts things that 'failed' or 'are nothing'. Outdated commercials, crushed safety bars left on the road or flat advertising balloon. As much as they are regarded old and unnecessary, they somehow exhibit strange liveliness. They do not abide by the standards of the mainstream, but seem to go against or avoid them. In the scene in which they calmly occupy a certain spot in this world, a distinctive figurative nuance is captured which stems from the artist's intention of evading the object or narrative to become the subject of the painting. This is also why the objects are set with equal energy and measures, lacking evident borders. Rather than the representation of an object, the artist focuses on establishing his own artistic vocabulary and finding a relevant crevice amidst the past, present and future of painting so that his work can make itself into it. For this, the artist has been attempting to delude dot, line and face. If those that have been seen as prerequisites are avoided, what would be left on the surface? Using the combination of water paint and gum arabic, the artist's painting creates 'stains' rather than drawing lines or dividing surfaces. Neither the beginning nor the end of are evident in these stains, which again, disrupt the forms. While the surface collapses, a form slowly emanates from the artist's language.

HYUN Nahm creates semi-three-dimensional works based on the scenes he encountered around Gobong Mountain in Ilsan. Gobong Mountain is located in the northern region of Ilsan. The fact that the region Ilsan was named after it shows the mountain's long history, but currently it is surrounded by a typical featureless landscape of cheap and hollow city outskirts with steel towers, base station, junk dealing shops and public cemetery. The artist intentionally focuses on the socio-economic geography that cuts through the city of Ilsan which runs different from the administrative division. This gap was brought about by the imbalanced urban development policy of the 1990s which resulted in the strange cityscape where the southern part become the center of traffic and economy while the northern part become the shade of the newly-developed city. This cityscape that drew the artist's attention embraces the principle based on which this society operates. The artist discovers the liveliness of the ruins that proudly circumnavigate the rules of the mainstream at the other side of the city. Waste likely to be

found in a halted construction site ending up on the road either by human or the wind and standing there as if it is where it should be; a scarecrow confidently occupying the space, standing in the middle of a weedy field that is not cultivated anymore, as if it has never been ostracized and can be self-generating. From these scenes the artist collects the vibrancy of disorder. To boldly bring in the 'social' scenes as they are into his work, the artist adopts the techniques of relievó and combines with photography. However, in his quasi-three-dimensional work the artist does not pursue a concrete form. Continuing his exploration of physical nature and visual embodiment, the artist directs his gaze to intimate visual relation between the material and details of the scene – the grass, the texture of the surface of a construction material left after a fire or the embossment of a tombstone at the cemetery.