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Kim Duck Yong: Ocean Rhapsody

Date: 29 October 2020 - 17 December 2020

Opening: 29 October 2020, 6-8 PM

Soluna Fine Art is delighted to present **Kim Duck Yong**'s first solo exhibition *Ocean Rhapsody* in Hong Kong. This exhibition showcases Kim's sixteen zen paintings that are made with the mother of pearl; depicting oceanic sceneries alone, as well as through window frames and bookshelves, Kim celebrates his Korean heritage through a contemporary approach of utilising traditional mediums. Envisaging the artist as a scholar who gazes at the ocean, the exhibited works capture the euphoric emotions in the still yet kinetic waters. *Ocean Rhapsody* will be on view from 29 October 2020 to 17 December 2020, with an opening on 29 October, 6-8 PM.

Graduated from the Department of Painting at Seoul National University, **Kim Duck Yong** integrates both traditional and contemporary practices in his work of art. He, on one hand, follows the tradition of oriental paintings by using ancient wood as his canvas, which allows the viewer to sense the warmth of nature through minor details. On the other hand, through highlighting the importance of traditional materials and painting key iconographies that echo with his heritage, Kim primarily explores the contemporary mechanics of Korea society. In other words, Kim's paintings reveal the change of time with its attribute of intergenerational transience that overarches old and new histories. With works placed in important institutional collections in South Korea such as the National Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul Museum of Art, Park Soo-Keun Museum, and Gyeonggi Museum of Art, Kim has been recognised as one of the established artists among the Korean art scene.

To demonstrate Kim's creation process, this exhibition divides into two sections across both floors in the gallery space. twelve paintings showcase on the ground floor represent the bright and glistening ocean, in combination with the pastel and colourful tones, they give out a soothing and mysterious subtle radiance. The oceans Kim depicts evoke the viewers' longing and excitement, while such euphoric experience leads them to a speculative philosophical and religious space that unfolds through time. One of Kim's signatures will be his particular choice of materials. Besides utilising Korean paper and ancient wood in which he has been collecting since the early days, Kim specifically employs mother-of-pearl in his more recent works. Such precious material is used in most of his ocean-inspired paintings, not only because such rarity is originally sourced from the sea, but it also illustrates the wonders under the calm yet energised waves, as well as the underlying existence in the deep and mysterious ocean.



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Compare to the tranquil and serene ocean-inspired paintings on the ground floor, displayed on the first floor are four vivid paintings that depict the meticulous details of the Scholar's Accoutrements (冊架圖) and illustrate the architectural concept *Borrowed Scenery* (借景). Through human languages, books possess intrinsic values of crucial ideas and thoughts that reflect human civilisation and history. Besides, the motif of scholar's accoutrements that Kim employs resemble the decorative paintings that adorned the royal court and upper-class spaces in the Joseon Dynasty. Such imageries are not only for aesthetic purposes but also symbolise the continuous pursuit of learning, writing, and yearning of knowledge; throughout time, they also become important symbols of happiness and longevity in life for the public.

Borrowed Scenery, on the other hand, is the principle of incorporating background landscapes into the composition of a garden. The landscape is always in flux due to change of weather, hence the architect has to be fully well understood that landscape serves as an active agent, not just a passive object, in garden making. In other words, both the architect and the scenery are objects and subjects in an interchangeable manner. In a similar vein, Kim blends the reading room setting with the oceanic sceneries, depicting that natural phenomena are mnemonics for knowledge that is frequently expressed in well-known classic literatures and poetries. Therefore, it can be said that Kim's works ultimately highlight the transcendental connection of nature and human (天人合一), a synergic ecology of the universe.

Despite utilising symbols and motifs that can be easily found in daily life, **Kim Duck Yong's** way of expression and emphasis on materiality guide the viewers to delve into a subtle yet tranquil time and space. The atmosphere he has created so far derives from spaces that stir up Kim's memories and desires, but also those that embed subtle teachings and meanings of the natural phenomena. This solo exhibition *Ocean Rhapsody* allows Kim to demonstrate the beauty of his Korean heritage through the use of an elegant and luxurious material, but also articulate important philosophical ideas through architecture and motifs of human knowledge.

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About Soluna Fine Art

An international forum for new ideas in Asian contemporary art, Soluna Fine Art presents an innovative program dedicated to cultivating a dialogue between artists, viewers and institutions. Embracing its prime location in the heart of Sheung Wan, Hong Kong, the gallery provides a foundation that supports the presentation of work by emerging to established Asian contemporary artists with significant global recognition. In addition to a distinguished primary program, Soluna Fine Art is proud to offer its art advisory service and works by Post-War and Contemporary artists through the gallery's exclusive network. With a great depth to knowledge and research capabilities, Soluna Fine Art offers artworks of the highest quality to Collectors, Museums and Institutions.

Gallery opening hours: Monday - Saturday, 10am - 6pm

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