

Traversing The Fantasy: Pieces of A Woman

2022.12.16-2023.2.12

Artist: Diren Lee

Curator : Jeeun Hong

Tang Contemporary Art, Beijing Headquarters Gallery Space

Tang Contemporary Art will hold Diren Lee's solo exhibition "Traversing The Fantasy: Pieces of a Woman" at the Beijing Space from December 17, 2022 to January 18, 2023. Exploring the world of the unconscious through descriptive forms, Diren Lee presents us with more mystery in her new works through the sharing of fantasy-like dramatic elements in this exhibition where Siam is represented as a symbol of the conscious and the unconscious.

The unconscious mind is everything - Freud

A black cat with white markings, a golden koi curled into a circle, and a parrot newly introduced into the series. Existing around other characters, these animals observed in the artist's works seem to be trying to communicate with other characters in the same work. The images found in Diren Lee's works are an expression of the artist's unconscious mind. The artist, in particular, arranges unfamiliar space and time elements using the *dépaysement* technique. This gives rise to new tension between canvas and reality in an attempt to create heterogeneous space and achieve psychological and conscious liberation.

The artist creates the narrative of her work through the character Siam, who is the main character with an unconscious mind called 'Hanul'. The two different states of consciousness existing within Siam are important key elements that establish the world of Diren Lee's work, representing the artist's conscious and unconscious minds. These two states of mind recognize each other's existence, coexist, and work together to create one world.

"Until you make the unconscious conscious, it will direct your life and you will call it fate." – Carl Gustav Jung

Like a collage of images encountered in a dream, the artwork resembles a mirror that allows me to face myself in the conscious world. For images of the unconscious to be observed and explored in more detail, the artist explicitly and delicately reproduces each strand of animal fur in her work. Revealing the emotions of the character and serving as a channel that connects the artist to the character, the pupils of the eyes, in particular, accentuate the artist's current profound and mysterious painting style. Compared to the artist's previous works, the works featured in this exhibition tend to display calmer colors with lower saturation. This is a reflection of a calm confession by the artist who recognizes herself as an existence between the conscious and the unconscious. The sculptural works first presented by the artist stand on the border between two dimensions, the conscious and the unconscious. Looking at the cat-shaped sculpture that exists on the border of these two dimensions, the audience becomes a witness to the existence of the two dimensions.

Through this exhibition, Diren Lee hopes that the audience will experience the excitement of traversing between their conscious and unconscious worlds and turn around to look at themselves from a new perspective.

About Artist

Diren Lee, b.1983, South Korea

Diren Lee builds a view on the world that cannot be explained by just one series of works. By releasing new series, mixing, and rebuilding it with her previous one, she creates her own world. The inner world created to heal her pain now describes her unique characters and symbolism through the homage of classical myths and orientalism. All her works is painted on canvas with a single brush, and such process is also linked to her desire to give the characters a living and breathing vitality. Diren is loved by public and art lovers through many collaborations and design products with businesses in Korea.

Diren Lee analyzes stories of unconsciousness through dreams beyond self-consciousness, then expresses the essence of consciousness on canvas. All the characters in her dream are parts of spiritual energy. The characters are expressed as connected creatures, stressing the meaning of "one-being". Her previous works concentrate on analyzing inner scars, trying to expose and overcome her inner complex through the interpretation of dreams and unconsciousness. Her works refer to the journey of time during which she experiences mental trauma resulting from failure or humiliation and overcome emotions that led to anxiety. From this point on, her work begins to show a comfortable looking eyes and soft colors, telling the story of overcoming with the sweet and beautiful fruits that we meet after enduring suffering. She expresses her desire to convey comfort and warmth by hugging and making eye contact.

Selected exhibitions include: "Traversing The Fantasy: Pieces of A Woman", Tang Contemporary Art, Beijing, China, 2022; "Global Song", Tang Contemporary Art, Hong Kong, China, 2022; "Back to Work", Waluso Gallery, UK, 2021; "Turning Point", Gallery Doo, S. Korea, 2021; "Stay with us", Humax art room x Open gallery, S. Korea, 2020; "Fruit", L Gallery, S. Korea, 2019; "On those that disappear", MIEL Gallery, S. Korea, 2018.

She has also participated in art fairs including: Kiaf, S. Korea, 2021, Affordable Art Fair Battersea, UK, 2020, One Art Taipei, China, 2020; Affordable Art Fair Singapore, Singapore; Art Expo Malaysia, 2019, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; BAMA, Busan Annual Market of Art Busan, S. Korea, 2019; Asia Contemporary Art Show, Hong Kong, 2019; Art Expo Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 2018; Art Gyeongju, Gyeongju, S. Korea, 2016; Spoon art fair, Gallery Sein, S. Korea, 2015; Art show Busan, Busan BEXCO, S. Korea, 2015.