Sung-Hun Kong solo exhibition

the Wind, and the Sea

Exhibition | Oct. 14, 2014 (Tue) ~ Dec. 28 (Sun)
Venue | ARARIO GALLERY, Cheonan
        43, Mannam-ro, Dongnam-gu, Cheonan, Choongchung-namdo
Exhibited Works | A total of 34 paintings, including five new large-scale paintings
Hours | 11:00-19:00

<Waves> 2014, Oil on canvas, 227.3x181.8cm

ARARIO GALLERY Cheonan presents the solo exhibition of Sung-Hun Kong(b.1965), who has been concretizing his position by adhering to traditional paintings, the most classical genre in contemporary art from October 14 to December 28. Sung-Hun Kong, an accomplished artist who depicts grand and lyrical features of the Nature on his canvas, has been selected as the "Artist of the Year" by the National Museum of Contemporary Art in 2013. His solo exhibition at ARARIO GALLERY will introduce the aesthetics of his new large-scale paintings to the viewers, and share the angst of contemporary subjects who live through the ages described in the work.
Gong Sung-Hun has a unique career, having graduated from the department of Painting at Seoul National University in 1987, studied in the Electronic Engineering Department in Seoul National University of Science and Technology, and then matriculating in the graduate program in Painting in his Alma Mater. He became an icon amongst young artist since graduation, introducing works that criticize the reality in which contemporary art is distributed as an institution in his video, multi-slide project, and various forms of installation productions. His experience in the engineering school, he notes, helped him acquire an objective standpoint that distances himself from art. However, after moving to a vinyl greenhouse nearby Byukjae crematory due to financial difficulties brought forth by the foreign exchange crisis in 1997, he had to commute for over five hours a day to Yong-in. This experience deepened his understanding of the social system that destabilizes the foundations of people’s “personal lives.”

Those who have once committed to the allure of painting cannot leave it behind, even after exploring other mediums. Gong is no exception, which is why his works since 2000 focus on traditional painting, which can project his own thoughts and feelings more effectively. The medium has changed, but his paintings still retain the strong and stimulating hues and uncanny impressions of primary colors we had seen in his earlier works. His productions in the early 2000s were centered on “dogs” or “suburban cityscapes in the night time,” which were common elements found around his studio in Byukjae. These series convey a sense of chilling uncanniness. The pieces make the viewers feel as if they are facing a wild wolf, perhaps because of the eyes of the dog glaring out of the barren and dark surroundings; meanwhile, the trimmed, slick and deep hues of the canvas catalyze a primary sensation of joy. Gong later moved his studio to Ilsan, whence he began to paint scenes in daylight. Also, of late, he has been painting landscapes in regions such as Chulwon, Ulsan, Ullungdo, and Jeju Ocean. The uncanny feeling that arises from the flashing lights and exaggerated, artificially arranged primary colors have become signature marks of his artistic portfolio.

Despite the transitions in the surficial mediums, his works are uniformly based on the reality we live in. His recent works depict “anxiety” as a common sentiment that runs through contemporary Korean society, delivered through the grandeur of Nature. His pieces capture the barrenness of winter landscape and the striking solitude of mankind. The magnificence and melancholy of the natural environment amplify the dramatic effect, colored in exaggerated hues. Gong attempts to express the desire and vanity of our species along with the sensitivity of our lives, standing at the
intersection of the common and the regular. The ‘sceneries in his works digress from the sublime in traditional Western landscapes. His works, which convert the natural environment into paintings with countless implications, and remind the viewers of the cause and effect surrounding ominous events that may happen or may have already happened in our own lives, generate a mysterious beauty coupled with the tremor that resembles one’s response to a thriller film.
Images of Key Works

<Waves> 2014, oil on canvas, 227.3x181.8cm
<White Hairs and Smoke> 2014, oil on canvas, 227.3x181.8cm
<Hibiscus and Vapor Trail> 2014, oil on canvas, 227.3x181.8cm
<Tree 1> 2014, oil on canvas, 162.2x112.1cm
<Tree 1> 2014, oil on canvas, 162.2x112.1cm
<Submerged Rock> 2014, oil on canvas, 227.3x162.1cm
<Winter Tree> 2014, acrylic on canvas, 227.3x181.8cm
<Pine Tree> 2013, oil on canvas, 227.3x181.8cm
Sung-Hun Kong

Born in 1965, Incheon. Professor of Art in the College of Art, SungKyunKwan University

Academic History
1987 B.F.A in Painting, College of Art, Seoul National University
1991 B.S in Electrical Engineering, Seoul National University of Science and Technology
1994 M.F.A in Painting, Graduate School, Seoul National University

Solo Exhibitions
2014 Rock-Throwing, Tongin Gallery, Seoul
2014 Gong Sung-hun Exhibition, Art Forum New Gate, Seoul
2014 In the Scene, Shinsegae Gallery Busan & Incheon
2013 Not so Sublime, Art Space, Seoul
2012 Waves, OCI Gallery, Seoul
2011 Unspeakable Reasons, Alternative Space Pul, Seoul
2010 Winter Journey, Shinsegae Gallery, Seoul, Busan
2009 Gong Sung-hun Exhibition, Arirang Gallery, Busan
2009 Winter Landscape, Art Forum New Gate Seoul
2008 Nature in the Neighborhood (近隣自然), Alternative Space Pul, Seoul
2007 Suburb, Leisure, Art Forum Gallery, Seoul
2005 A Night in Byeokjae, Art Forum New Gate, Seoul
2004 A Night in Byeokjae, Shinsegae Department Store Gallery, Gwangju
2003 A Night in Byeokjae, Kim Jin-hye Gallery, Seoul
2002 Night View around My Home, Aktions Galerie, Berlin
2001 A Night in Byeokjae, Kumsan Gallery, Seoul
2000 Dog, Night, Woodeuk Gallery, Seoul
1997 Struggle, Kumho Museum, Seoul
1993 Perfect Reality, A Project for Perfect Levelness (∴ Perfect Painting), Coart Gallery, Seoul

And many other group exhibitions

Works in Notable Collections
National Museum of Contemporary Art, Art Bank, Seoul Museum of Art, Gyeonggi MoMA, etc.

Images provided by: ARARIO GALLERY