

Press Release

Banana and I

ARARIO COLLECTION EXHIBITION

Period | Mar. 7 (Thu) 2013 ~ May 26 (Sun)

Location | Arario Gallery Cheonan

Exhibit Items | Approx. 20 pieces including Paintings, Sculptures, including Installations

Artists | 18 artists including Andy Warhol, Subodh Gupta, Agus Suwage, Mariano Ching, Michael Joo, Kang Hyung Koo, and Dongwook Lee

Arario Gallery Cheonan introduces a group exhibition entitled <ARARIO COLLECTION EXHIBITION : Banana and I> from March 7 to May 26 2013, as its first spring event. "Banana and I" is based on Arario Gallery's colorful collections, which have been presenting the newest trends in the global art world including Korea, China, Southeast Asia, India and Europe. The exhibition features 20 works by artists from India and Southeast Asia including Subodh Gupta, Agus Suwage and Mariano Ching; American and European artists including Andy Warhol, Damien Hirst, Thomas Ruff, and David Schnell; Chinese artists such as Ji Dachun, and Yuan Yuan; and artists from Korea, including Kang Hyung Koo, Dongwook Lee and Myung-jin Song. In particular, the exhibition will present the gallery's most recent collection, including works by Agus Suwage, Mariano Ching and Myung-jin Song.

The unique title of the exhibition, "Banana and I," refers to the fixed meaning of the word banana. Through this word, which points to a tropical fruit, we are instantly reminded of the shape, taste and other properties of the banana. It is difficult to associate anything other than the yellow color, soft texture, tropical origin, sweet taste, long shape, and soft and the squishy touch with a banana. Our preconceived notion of all objects and actions related to art includes fixed stereotypes like the images and feelings that connect to the imagery of this particular fruit, such as the unity of the artist and the art work, elegance, expensiveness, significance, genius and creativity. Dismissing such preconceptions as mere products of the mass's demand for simplicity and entertainment or the lack of information or knowledge only petrifies the distance between the realm of art and the viewers. The attitudes of those who are tied to the process of collecting, exhibiting and distributing artistic objects and actions are in fact often based on pre-fixed understandings. We already know how artists, their works and exhibitions are conveniently introduced based on the simplest categories, such as region, age group, materials or subject matters. This exhibition aims to step out of such categorizations based on region, age or topic, and invite the viewers to feel a sense of incongruity in facing the objects about which we hold a preexisting notion.

The exhibition encompasses a wide variety of works by artists from diverse regions and age groups. Discovering individual correlations among the works would be a rather difficult task. However, gazing at the collections Arario has compiled over a period of two decades, the viewers may find the vestiges of "the intersection of life and death," a key topic in contemporary art. The banana, which begins to develop dark spots all over its yellow peel when left out in room temperature for extended hours, effectively visualizes the traces time leaves behind in its swiftly flowing current. In this exhibition, thematizing the temporality of life and death in its eternal yet fragmented cycle, represents topics such as childhood, vestiges of old glory, dreams of a future never to come and the consequent despair, and life as a projection of death in the form of specific objects' surfaces and allocations, incorporates these motifs in the macroscopic system of history and society, and mixes them into the textures of daily life and physical sensations.

In encountering each work in the exhibition, the viewers will be able to project themselves on to the banana as an object of art, reflecting their individual states of mind, dreams, and hopes. We hope the exhibition will provide our viewers with an opportunity to discover lost times, countless conflicting concepts that comprise the self, an alternate ego.

Artists and Works

Agus Suwage. Born (1959), lives and works at Yogyakarta.



Pemandangan Duniawi (Worldly Landscape) 2012, oil paint, asphaltum on zinc, 183x457cm

Agus Suwage, an Indonesian artist, created a unique surface texture in his work presented in this exhibition, by oxidizing and scratching a zinc board covered with oil painting. The characters featured in the painting are all pioneers of their times who reclaimed their own paths in resistance to existing doctrines, and they could also be understood as testimonies to the artist's continuing interest in the motif of "death" in that they are all figures from the past. Also, Suwage's works often contain a recurring motif, that of a stairs with simplified lines in the background; the stairs first emerged in his 1994 work "Jalan Kebenaran- Way of Truth," and can also be found in "Pemandangan Duniawi #1- Worldly Landscape(Title Identical to the Exhibited Piece)" produced in the following year (they symbolize a given person's life.) Also, the overall structure connects back to "Aku Ingin Hidup Seribu Tahun Lagi - I Want to Live another Thousand Years" (which features other celebrities such as Saddam Hussein, Carl Marx and Sister Theresa), which he introduced at his solo exhibition I/Con in 2007.

Education: 1986 graphic design major, Bandung Institute of Technology, Bandung, Indonesia

Notable Solo Exhibitions: 2007 I/CON, Nadi Gallery, Jakarta

2005 Pause / Re-Play, Galeri Soemardja, Institut Teknologi Bandung, Bandung, Indonesia

2004 Fabulous Fable, Art Singapore, The Contemporary Asian Art Fair, SunTec, Singapore

Atul Dodiya. Born (1959), lives and works at Mumbai 1959.



Fallen Leaves - A Stroll (set of eight), 2006, mixed media, size variable

Dodiya's works deal with mix-culture and cross-genre approaches to art, elements that are shared among us contemporary unbeknownst. This mysterious piece, comprising various subject matters that appear to be completely disparate, actively catalyzes the viewers' imagination. "Fallen Leaves a Stroll" uses the Stream of Consciousness technique (a narrative method of randomly following a character's internal thoughts, feelings and reveries rather than adhering to a temporal, location order or linear structure); the characters and objects drawn onto the leaves are slices of our lives that permeate our consciousness. These fragments suddenly rise out from the depth of our minds and briefly stay on the surface of our consciousness, like falling leaves, but they easily blow away in a light breeze. The characters in the leaves do not share any grounds of commonality. A wide range of figures, from political icons to normal people, are haphazardly mixed in.

Education: 1982 Bachelor of Fine Arts, Sir J.J. School of Art, Bombay

Notable Solo Exhibitions: 2004 Faculty of Fine arts, Vadodara, India

2003 Walsh Gallery, Chicago

Bose Pacia Modern, New York

2002 *Expacio Uno*, Reina Sofia Museum, Madrid

Mariano Ching. Born in Manila (1971).



Portrait Series: Dog-Faced Boy, 2011, acrylic on canvas, 150x150cm

Ching is a Pilipino artist who depicts dreamy yet uncanny utopian worlds using various mediums. Ching's Self Portrait Series, presented in the exhibition, were influenced by Richard Phillips who is known for his photorealistic work (U.S.) and Diane Arbus's photographs. The celebrities featured in their works exhibit a void and futile mentality in contrast to their perfect adornments. Ching, inspired by these works, transformed the figures in the portraits into monstrous hybrids of man and beast. Through this process, the artist is humorously expressing the dual psychology found in those who agonize and deteriorate in the complex web of reality, yet still hold on to their dreams.

Education: 2004 Printmaking , Kyoto Arts University, Kyoto, Japan

1998 B.F.A., University of the Philippines - Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines

Notable Solo Exhibitions: 2013 (upcoming) Lost Days, Silverlens, Makati, the Philippines

2011 Even Bad Days Are Good, SLab Gallery, Makati, the Philippines

Michael Joo. Born, lives and works in New York (1966).



Relationalized, 2007, Hand-built plastic, bamboo, aluminum, wood, glass, 138x138x102cm

Michael Joo has solidly established his reputation through numerous solo and group exhibitions around the world, including the exhibit at the Korean Section at the 1001 Venice Biennale, the Serpentine Gallery in the U.K., White Cube Gallery, Whitney Biennale, and Gwangju Biennale. As a Korean American, Joo grew up on the Midwest in the States, majored in Biology as an undergrad and studied classic art at Yale. With this background, he ceaselessly explores his own identity, focusing on the diverse experiences of cultural disparity. He accurately captures the points where nature and science, east and west, religion and ethics, the internal and external, material and philosophy; he is well known for his works that urge the viewers to rethink the concept of identity. Through Joo's works, which present transformed versions of familiar objects and their reinterpretations, the viewers will be able to experience a fusion of the artist's unique aesthetic take at defamiliarization and philosophical reflection.

Education: 1989 BFA from Washington University, St Louis,

1991 MFA Yale School of Art, Yale University, New Haven

Notable Solo Exhibitions: 2010 Galerie Marabini, Bologna,

Myung-jin Song. Born (1973), works and lives in Seoul



Munggae Mungga_몽개몽개, 2001, Acrylic on canvas, 194x390cm

This gigantic piece, nearly four meters wide, was produced in 2001, the very year of the WTC attack on September 11. Myung-jin Song. is known for his green works that express techniques developed to depict 3 dimensional objects on flat canvases in a most bold and theoretical fashion. This particular piece is one of his most important early works that become the foundation of his haptic approach, along with “Kuruck Kuruck 꾸럭꾸럭” and “Sulgum Sulgum 슬금슬금.” His early works, which all use onomatopoeia or mimetic words for their titles, connect the role of these terms to the limitations of mass media in order to effectively convey realistic phenomena. Terrible tragedies happening all over the world are presented in surprisingly vivid HD screens, but the viewers’ gazes are in fact growing more objectified and numb. The artist reminds us that these distanced perspectives overlap with the viewers’ gaze towards the grey, “realistic yet not quite real” smoke filling the canvas.

Education: 2000, graduated from Hongik School of Graduate Studies, Dept. of Art

Notable Solo Exhibitions; 2012 Gallery Ihn Undone

2010 Being in Folding, Ctrl Gallery, Houston

2009 Fishing on the flat, Gallery Artside, Beijing

Fishing on the flat, Sungkok Museum, Seoul

2007 Green Home The National Art Studio, Goyang

Bharti Kher. Born (1968) in London, currently lives and works in Delhi



Indra's Net Mirror 1, 2010, Bindis on mirror, wooden frame, 192x109x6.4cm

Bharti Kher utilizes daily experiences of Indian life and reorganizes them in various artistic contexts in his works. The piece presented in the exhibition makes use of the Bindi, an ornament married Indian women wear between their eyes. Indra's Net, also featured in the title, refers to a giant net that hangs in India's mythic deity Indra. This net infinitely expands into the cosmos, and each intersection on the net holds a jewel. The precious stones reflect on another, and those who gaze into the net are exposed to hundreds and thousands of shimmering light fragments. The Bindis, scattered on the mirror surface, compactly alludes to the life of Indian women who would gaze into the mirror and attach the Bindi on their faces each morning. Religion, myth and art, from the artist's perspective, are illusions consisting of individual human narratives. Life, looked upon from one step away, emits beautiful, brilliant rays.

Notable Solo Exhibitions: 2013 Nature Morte, 'Bind the Dream State to your Waking Life', New Delhi
2012 Parasol Unit Foundation for Contemporary Art, London
Hauser & Wirth, 'The hot winds that blow from the West', New York

Vanessa Beecroft. Born in Genova (1969), lives and works in LA.



The Sister Project, 2000-2001, Cibachrome prints set of 12 prints, Edition 1/6, 88.9x162.54 cm

"The Sister Project", introduced in this exhibition, is part of the Calendar Project which aligns four basic seasonal colors (Spring-link, summer-beige, fall-brown, winter-white) based on their subtle tones and changes in the lighting. Despite the vulgarity of the format, calendars featuring pin-up girls in nude, the expressionless countenance of the main character Jennifer nullifies the male desire for the female body. Exposed female bodies generally exist in order to be seen, whether it be in high-brow art or in mass media, but Beecroft's models are not there to entertain, despite the exhibitionist circumstances. The work triggers the viewers' voyeuristic desire and fantasy, countering and catalyzing their preconceived notion of exhibitionist nude, and draw out a sense of shame.

Education: 1987 Civico Liceo Artistico Nicole Barabino Architettura, Genoa, Italy

1988 Accademia Ligustica Di Belle Arti Pittura, Genoa, Italy

1988 Accademia Di Belle Arti Di Brera Scenografia, Milan, Italy

Notable Solo Exhibitions: 2010 Carrara, Italy, VB67, Studio Nicoli. Sept 4th

Naples, Italy, VB66, Mercato Ittico. Feb 15th

2009 Milan, Italy, VB65, PAC Padiglione d'Arte Contemporanea, March 16th

Yuan Yuan Born (1973) in Zhejiang, China.



Swimming Pool, 2011, Oil on canvas, 280x180 cm

Yuan Yuan's works focus on architectural elements, and the resultant works tend to be grand in size yet remind the viewers of past, faded glory. An empty grand hall in a big mansion, a theater where performances no longer take place, and a swimming pool with no swimmers crowding the scene all carry nostalgic memories of the people who would have once filled their space with warmth, laughter and stories. However, these memories are ambiguous. They could also be, instead of a past, a yet to arrive future or discarded dreams. This vague landscape of illusion originates from sorrow in the present, the loss of something fundamental.

Education: 2008 MFA, China Academy of Art Oil Painting Department, Hángzhōu

1996 BFA, China Academy of Art Oil Painting Department, Hángzhōu

Notable Solo Exhibitions: 2010 Nanjing Biennale, Nanjing

Daily, Qìnghe Art Museum, Nanjing

Do you see what I mean, Fabien Frys Fine Art, Los Angeles

Home-stay, OsageGallery, Shanghai

Inquiries

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Gallery Info

Arario Gallery, 354-1, Shinbu-dong, Dongnam-gu, Cheonan, Chungnam

T) 551-5100 F) 551-5102

Visitor Information

Mon –Sun: 11am – 7pm (Last entry by 6:30)

2pm and 4pm on weekends: Docent Exhibition Briefing

Entrance fee: Adult 3,000 won/ Student 2,000 won

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