

Work Plan

As I was reflecting on East Asian art that it has remained in an overly conceptual and spiritual world, I naturally shifted my gaze toward myself and my surroundings. Through that approach, I have devoted myself to drawing the discourse of "everyday life" and the methodology of its formativeness in East Asian art. In response to this, Japanese art critic Toshiaki Mineaki said, "whereas drawing in the western painting is more focused on the representation of the objects being drawn, the brush strokes in East Asian painting is rather devoted to the painter's physical body and breathing. Whatever is being drawn, the breath shared between the brush stroke and the objects being drawn should be considered the most important thing in the practice; this is what Yoo Geuntaek has mastered throughout his practice of East Asian painting. He never forgets this fundamental principle, which has influenced the basis of art theory and world view in East Asian art. However, surprisingly, while most of the artists who emphasize on East Asian thought tend to stick to their representational techniques and their subjectivity, Yoo, on the other hand, possesses an intense curiosity and passion that none of the realist painters of Western painting can have. With such passion, he has been brushing on all things and phenomena visible around us."

As Mineaki puts it, I have had this question of "how can I apply the formative peculiarities and aesthetics that the materials of East Asian painting have to the present moment?" Indeed, this has been a constant question and a topic discussed in my work. Through the large-scale retrospective exhibition that I had at Tama Art University Museum in Tokyo, Japan last year, I was able to check and confirm the possibilities of aesthetics in contemporary Asian painting. It was a great opportunity for me to find out that my work that I had pursued so far could acquire a broader sense of artistic and global universality even outside of Korea. I have been working with the hope that my paintings could gain more impacts to penetrate the human senses. My recent works, in this sense, are directly involved in the physical properties of paper, and by doing so, I have been focusing on the possibilities of whether the material itself could obtain its own language. I have been working on the question of how the sense that originates from me could relate to the intersection of world and history. I ask how the world in which we live and the structure of our life relate to and penetrate each other. As an extension of such question, I plan to work on the representation of the imagination and possibilities of formativeness as regard to the division: how the spatial and temporal meaning of division is related to the space of our life. My works such as Some Library series, The Room series and the Indoor series, which I recently exhibited at Gallery Hyundai and Sungkok Art Museum, reflect such interests.

Through deconstructing the structure of Hanji and adding new forms to its surface to embody a new space, I plan to expand this technique of accumulating time on the painting surface to a more dramatic extent. Based on this expansion, I would like to induce viewers to explore the space reflecting on our ontology and our perceptions of the time we face. Furthermore, I plan to actively engage in the physical space of the exhibition space with my work, thereby maximizing the analog energy of the painting and transforming the exhibition space into a large space of contemplation.