

OPENING

May 12th, 2022 6PM – 9PM

ERA GALLERY

May 12th – June 12th 2022

Via Palermo n. 1-5, Milan, Italy

Opening hours:

Tues – Fri: 10:30AM – 7PM

Sat: 2PM – 7PM

Tel. +39. 0236522686

Email: info@eragallery.it

www.eragallery.it

Social: [@_eragallery](#)

Miyeon Yi

SUNDAY THAT ONLY HAD AN AFTERNOON

Modern figurative painting is often riddled with contradictions. After years of abstraction, the eye wanders over a canvas with a heightened perception of color and shape, and an unusual impatience towards content. For the lover of art, the intensity or clarity, the subtlety or strength, of pictorial form give an intellectual and spiritual pleasure that no image of the world can provide. For the world is the place we intend to forget when looking at art. We are no longer interested in depictions of people close to us, the views of the spaces we inhabit, or the instruments with which we labor the world: it all seems senseless and valueless. The human figure is today the hardest thing to depict because in it we no longer see a potential for feeling and life, but rather the fear and distrust we feel towards others, and the confusion of our own existence.

Miyeon Yi's jewel-like paintings are playful and delicate portraits of a new intimacy, and dare we say, hope. They let us into their world; not as guilty voyeurs, but with openness and affection. Works like *Beauty Labor for a Zoom Call* or *Impulsive Haircut* are joyful and lightheaded moments in the life of a twenty-something girl during the pandemic, trying to keep the appearance of normalcy: dressing up for the camera, cutting her own hair, preparing... only to have her attention interrupted by a loving cat. *Are You Coming to School Today?* has the mysterious quality of a haunted house, where the interior and exterior spaces are collapsed, colorful trees replace dead furniture, and the floor comes alive into grass. The painting reflects the cat's imagination, his dreamy state as he waits desperately for someone to arrive. But it is not the threatening imagination of a surrealist work. It rather makes dreams a land of exploration, *down the rabbit hole*, which like for the tired Alice, gives to everyday renewed meaning.

With his back towards us, the cat, as well as the girl of *Impulsive Haircut*, or the little boy of *Address No Longer Exists*, serve as a stand-in for the visual experience Miyeon's paintings offer us. It is the curiosity of looking with the candid eyes of feeling, with love, confusion, longing, as we do not let ourselves look at the world in real life. The white cat as a mirror of the girl/boy is also present in *Packing is So Hard With You* or *Sunday That Only Had an Afternoon*; perky and needy, or as a silhouette of immaterial lightness. These are Yi's two modes of painting, which she varies according to whether her attention focuses on the caricaturesque aspects of posture and gesture, or on the delicate quality of line. Like the color in *Are you Coming to School Today?*,

the cat of Packing speaks to the comedy of Daumier or Winsor McCay. *Sunday that only had an Afternoon* balances the suggestion of slow movement, sketched in broad areas of irregular color, with observant and detailed lines of her plants, the patterns on fabrics and buildings and of the effects of light. Alongside her earlier work, *Her Home is in a Tea Ceremony Box*, it reminds one of the pleasure of light and color we can find on some paintings by Bonnard or Vuillard, but without the fin-de-siècle anxiety, and a more feminine touch.

Miyeon's paintings bring new life to the figures of everyday life. They are like a clearing, a light-filled space, for enjoyment, delight and contemplation. In them, we see ourselves as we are, or perhaps better, replenished by the vital power of color and light. They are the gift of a "golden afternoon" for those of us seeking solace amid unrest and confusion.

– *Courtesy of Gabriel Almeida.*

Almeida is a writer and critic based in New York. He is one of the principal editors of Caesura magazine and serves as the Curatorial Project Assistant for the 2022 Whitney Biennial.

BIOGRAPHY

Miyeon Yi (born in 1995, Seoul, South Korea) is an artist living and working in London, UK. She obtained her Bachelor of Fine Arts at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL, USA (2013-2017), and is pursuing her master's degree on painting at the Royal College of Art, London (2021-2023). This is her first solo exhibition in Italy with ERA Gallery and she will be exhibiting at the Ojiri Gallery (London) this summer 2022. Her works has been in group shows in USA, UK and France.

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2022 Ojiri Gallery, London, UK, 2022 July 1st, (upcoming)

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2022 August 1st-6th, No Place Like Home, Fitzrovia Gallery, London, UK
- 2022 May 17th, Return to Flesh, The Room London Gallery, London, UK
- 2022 May 9th, Two Doors, House of St.Barnabas, London, UK
- 2022 March 17th-20th, It's All Fun Until..., Safehouse 182, London, UK
- 2022 March 10th-April 8th, A Room of Her Own, Irving Contemporary, Oxford, UK
- 2022 March 1st- 5th, RAW, Soho Revue, London, UK
- 2022 January 28th-February 4th, WIP SHOW (online), Royal College of Art, London, UK
- 2021 Coping in Colour, Kate Howe Studios, London, UK
- 2021 The Arts - Group Exhibition, Gallery Le BoCAL, Toulouse, France
- 2021 WOORI Festival, Salle Jean Mermoz, Toulouse, France
- 2020 MICA X GWU Corcoran Students Exhibition, Consulate General of the Republic of Korea, Washington DC
- 2020 Pitch & Pulse, Broadmead, Cockeysville, MD
- 2019 Incubate This, Leidy Gallery at Fred Lazarus IV Center, Baltimore, MD
- 2017 SAIC BFA Thesis Show, Sullivan Galleries, Chicago, IL
- 2016 In Between and Elsewhere, No Nation-Art Gallery and Tangential Lab, Chicago, IL