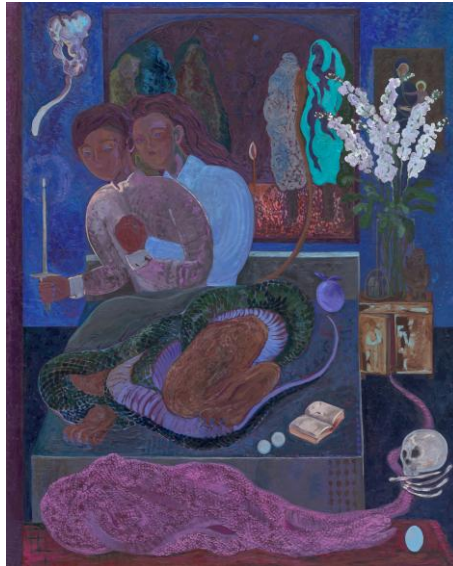


Young painters share their inner worlds

June 9, 2025 | By Park Yuna

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Kukje Gallery in Seoul displays paintings by young artists and Park Chan-kyong's curated exhibition



"Room tone_The snake shed its skin" by Mackerel Safranski (Courtesy of the artist and Kukje Gallery)

At a time when visual images overflow, produced in excess by advances in technology, painters agonize over their role and how their work is received by viewers.

Kukje Gallery brought together a group of young artists, born in the 1980s and '90s, at the exhibition "Next Painting: As We Are." The gallery refers to the six artists -- Mackerel Safranski, Kim Se-eun, Yoo Sin-ae, Lee Eun-sae, Jeon Byung-koo and Jeong Yi-ji -- as "digital natives who naturally embody the media environment," but still stick with the oldest art medium of painting.

Safranski focuses on her inner self, expressing her personal experiences with a long-term eating disorder and insomnia. Her paintings often feature a mysterious and uncanny atmosphere with thought-provoking images and narratives.

"I consider my body as a room that I am living in, which I cannot share with anyone else. I delve into images that are constantly created in myself," she said Thursday at Kukje Gallery.



"Grapes" by Lee Eun-sae (Courtesy of the artist and Kukje Gallery)

Living in the Netherlands for the past few years, where the artist faced unfamiliar situations, she realized she had tended to perceive only the surface of things without a deep understanding of or connection with them. Such "ah-ha" moments became a cue to create new paintings, the artist said.

Jeong captures the landscapes and objects she has seen in daily life, and stories about the people around her. The images of snapshots turned into her own visual language of painting with strong and rhythmic brushstrokes.



"Secco 3" by Jeong Yi-ji (Courtesy of the artist and Kukje Gallery)

Coinciding with the exhibition, another show, "A Faraway Today" takes place at the gallery's hanok space. The exhibition, curated by Park Chan-kyung, who has worked extensively as a film director, curator and writer, reflects Park's longstanding interest in tradition, folk belief and Korean modernity, collaborating with artists Kim Beom, Im Young-zoo, Cho Hyun-taek, Choe Soo-ryeon and Choi Yun.

The exhibitions run through July 20.