

KUKJE GALLERY | PRESS RELEASE

Jina Park Solo Exhibition *Human Lights* at Kukje Gallery Busan

Press Conference: August 6 (Fri.), 2021, 12PM
Exhibition Dates: August 6 – September 12, 2021
Venue: Kukje Gallery Busan

Kukje Gallery is pleased to announce *Human Lights*, a solo exhibition of the Korean contemporary painter Jina Park on view at Kukje Gallery Busan from August 6 through September 12, 2021. Park employs snapshots to capture scenes of the everyday and translates them onto the canvas as paintings. Portraying the colorful expressions of exhibition installation sites, performance rehearsals, and nighttime sceneries, the platform of paintings allows the audience to look back on the otherwise unnoticed or forgotten mundane life anew. The artist's first exhibition with the gallery, *Human Lights*, presents works that demonstrate Park's experimentations of her painterly perspective on everyday scenes that she has captured using the camera as her assisting tool.

While the show is composed mainly of new works, its narrative begins with an exceptionally earlier work titled *Moontan 04* (2007). The *Moontan* series is a group of paintings portraying nocturnal picnics that had one day started with a friend's proposal to "go bathe in the moonlight" in a park. Although it is a landscape of basking in the moon, the effect of the camera's flashlight is much more evident on the canvas than that of the natural moonlight. In the scene captured with the bright flash of the camera, the figures seem much more two-dimensional and acute than in real life. The represented scene appears dramatic, as if being presented by actors on a dark theater stage. As the gaze of the audience follows the actors' movements into the nocturnal picnic scene, it eventually trails onto the flat sky serving as the backdrop of the stage, the color plane constructed by layers of overlapping brushstrokes. As such, it is through the effects of the camera and artificial light that the artist breaks free of the constraints of representation and seeks new directions for painterly expressions.

Park captures ordinary moments of the un-choreographed every day. Casual moments that are in no way significant are permanently documented by the camera. Someone's unique facial expression or another's awkward posture is captured in the process by chance. At times, the artist discovers a figure whom she had not even been aware of during the instant caught in the photograph. The camera is a means for the artist to see and perceive what she otherwise would not be able to; the camera is the artist's glasses through which she observes the world—for Park, its role extends no further. The camera serves solely to capture and document the images of these "transit moments."

Simply defining painting as "both an image and a material," Park focuses on its unique materiality. As her working process concentrates on repetitive physical contact with the canvas, the transient moment captured by chance with the camera is reconstructed on the canvas over a prolonged period of time. The fleeting moment that could have been easily bypassed, dons a new materiality and temporality. One figure may repeatedly appear in various works, while another figure may appear numerous times within a single frame. Sometimes multiple photographs are rearranged into one composition. As such, Park's paintings are the products of combining images from various timelines through her own painterly perspective.

One work installed in the center of the gallery depicts an art handler packing a work. This particular painting stems from a photograph that the artist took during her site visit to Kukje Gallery Busan last year. Although bereft of any detailed descriptions of facial features, the portrayal of the man's posture is affectionately devoted enough for any of his colleagues to recognize him at first glance. Park's paintings dearly embrace the various figures that quietly concentrate on their work in moments and sequestered corners that fancy spotlights have left behind. To those who bluntly request to be painted, the artist replies, "you need to be working (in order for me to see you as a subject attractive enough to portray)." Explaining that she wishes to paint movements that do not have intentional meaning, the artist embraces the sincere time and space of individuals who are wholly immersed in their own actions while oblivious to the attention of others.

About the Artist

Born in 1974, Jina Park graduated from Chelsea College of Arts with an MFA in Fine Art after receiving her BFA in Painting from Seoul National University. Recent major solo exhibitions include *People Gathered Under the Lights* (2018) at Hapjungjigu, Seoul; *Backstage* (2018) at Kyobo Art Space, Seoul; *Neon Grey Terminal* (2014) at HITE Collection, Seoul; and *Snaplife* (2010) at Sungkok Art Museum, Seoul. Since her participation in *NewBudMuscleStrongRecommend* (2001) at Jeongdok Public Library, Seoul, her works have been presented in numerous group exhibitions at institutions including Incheon Art Platform, Incheon (2021); Museum SAN, Wonju (2020); SeMA Storage, Seoul (2019); OCI Museum of Art, Seoul (2016, 2014); PLATEAU, Samsung Museum of Art, Seoul (2015); Plan.d, Düsseldorf (2015); National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul (2015); Arko Art Center, Seoul (2014); Doosan Gallery, New York (2013); Jeju Museum of Art, Jeju (2010); Koreanisches Kulturzentrum, Berlin (2010); Savina Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul (2009); and Gwangju Biennale, Gwangju (2008). In 2010, Park was nominated as one of the finalists for the Hermès Foundation Missulsang, and her works are in the permanent collections of the Seoul Museum of Art; Art Bank, National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul; Daegu Art Museum; and Kumho Museum of Art, Seoul. Jina Park now lives and works in Seoul.

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Jina Park (b.1974)

Moontan 04

2007

Oil on canvas

130 x 180 cm

Private Collection

Photo: Sang Tae Kim

Image provided by Kukje Gallery



Jina Park (b.1974)

Happy New Night 09

2020

Oil on linen

91 x 116 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Kukje Gallery

Photo: Chunho An

Image provided by Kukje Gallery



Jina Park (b.1974)

Happy New Night 10

2021

Oil on linen

130 x 205 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Kukje Gallery

Photo: Chunho An

Image provided by Kukje Gallery



Jina Park (b.1974)

Light Man

2021

Oil on linen

100 x 72.7 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Kukje Gallery

Photo: Kwon Oyeol

Image provided by Kukje Gallery



Jina Park (b.1974)

Stage arrangement 02

2021

Oil on linen

130 x 162 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Kukje Gallery

Photo: Chunho An

Image provided by Kukje Gallery



Jina Park (b.1974)

Public Sculpture 02

2021

Oil on linen

130 x 158 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Kukje Gallery

Photo: Chunho An

Image provided by Kukje Gallery



Jina Park (b.1974)

Packing

2021

Oil on linen

140 x 140 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Kukje Gallery

Photo: Chunho An

Image provided by Kukje Gallery



Artist portrait of Jina Park
Image provided by Kukje Gallery