



Breathing Island

PRESS RELEASE

BAE YOON HWAN

“Breathing Island”

2017. 12. 20 - 2018. 1. 27

Opening Reception : 2017. 12. 20, 6 PM

Gallery Baton is delighted to announce Bae Yoon Hwan(b.1983)’s solo exhibition, ‘Breathing Island’, from 20th December 2017 to 27th January 2018 in Apgujeong, Seoul. This exhibition will unveil new large scale paintings by Bae who has dedicated himself to producing drawings in order to investigate and extend meanings and possibilities of paintings despite the overflow of contemporary art’s media and modes.

In this exhibition, Bae Yoon Hwan reveals his outsized piece, ‘Breathing Island’ containing numerous drawings achieved by the automatic painting technique—a means of expressing the subconscious. He perceives his canvas as a certain living organism which is prepared to embrace pictures. He unfolds his imagination, desire and profound questions about life as a painter and an individual onto multiple sized canvases. He catches his countless reflections and sentiments to build them up on the canvases; the canvases then completely absorb them and generate entirely new configurations.

Bae freely crosses restricted canvas frames by selecting arbitrary images that he comes across in his imagination and filling up the vacant plane with the imageries. Consequently, his work conveying all scattered fragments which limit the artist himself becomes an island breathing without any restraints. Approximately thirty canvases holding the spectrum of his thinking consist of various pictures and distinct materials including oil pastels and acrylics. Although images and colours of the work seem to be remote from each other, they reach a climax of the figural landscape when they are organically connected.

Bae Yoon Hwan found a similarity in Cosimo who is a main character of Italo Calvino (1923~1985)’s novel, *Il Barone Rampante*(The Baron in the Trees). To disobey his father who compels him to have an aristocratic and authoritative life, Cosimo climbs up a tree and decides never to come down again. For Cosimo, the tree signifies a mediator allowing him to observe his world in an appropriate distance rather than a place where he would withdraw himself from the reality. In this context, Cosimo’s tree parallels Bae Yoon Hwan’s island. Bae’s island stands for everything encircles him; it is not only his studio where dozens of canvases are placed and a unknown space where he could arrive after escaping from confinement, but also his own life. Bae attempts to define the meaning of the island and to embody every single fictive element of the island.

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65, Apgujeong-ro 29-gil, Gangnam-gu, Seoul, Korea, 06005 +82 2 597 5701 info@gallerybaton.com www.gallerybaton.com

He maintains the depicting style of arraying his eccentric reveries, whereas he excludes most of apprehension and concern that tightly bind him in the process of creation. While he empties piled layers of collective emotions, sentiments from the present and the past intersect. He attaches and segregates all aspects recklessly intruding upon inside of his head.

Bae once mentioned, "Each canvas is an island absorbing thoughts and also a boat carrying them and wandering aimlessly. While the island is breathing, creatures are constantly emerging." Thus, he has achieved delivering dynamic energy into a complicated structure of narrative by presenting a great number of paintings possessing a sense of freedom to such an extent that the artist himself can not predict the outcome.

Bae Yoon Hwan completed BA in Fine Art at Seowon University and MFA in Fine art at Kyungwon University. He has presented his body of art at leading establishments such as Chapter II, Seoul Art Center Hangaram Museum, Gyeongnam Art Museum, Daegu Art Museum, Ilmin Museum of Art, Soma Museum, Doosan Gallery Seoul and OCI Museum, including solo exhibitions at Spacemom Museum of Art and Insa Art Space. He was also selected as a resident artist of Beijing colArt Studio, Chapter II Residency and Cheongju Art Studio. In addition, his several activities in diverse fields such as attending KIAF Art Seoul or winning Cheongju Fine Arts Association's merging Artists Award clearly show that he continues enlarging his artistic territory.

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