

DEREK ELLER GALLERY



Jiha Moon

Stranger Yellow

January 6 - February 5, 2022

Opening Reception: Thursday, January 6, 6-8 pm

Derek Eller Gallery is pleased to present a solo exhibition of new paintings and ceramic sculptures by Atlanta-based artist Jiha Moon. Working with a palette of super-saturated yellows, oranges, magentas and blues against contrasting dark Hanji (Korean mulberry paper) and brown stoneware, Moon mixes ingredients from Asian tradition and folklore, Western contemporary art, and global popular culture to create a vibrant and personal visual language in both two and three dimensions.

Throughout many of the works in this exhibition, Moon incorporates a particular shade of “Stranger Yellow” which she describes as a “mysterious, luscious, yet cautiously high-key color that stands out”. Born in Korea in 1973, Moon has lived in the United States for over twenty years, and this color speaks to her notions of the visibility of the Asian community in America, as well as her own identity as an Asian American artist. The Stranger Yellow manifests itself in myriad ways: as an enlarged Pop brushstroke reminiscent of Lichtenstein, as a banana referencing the pejorative term for an assimilated Asian American, as the flowing blonde hair of a Western princess or Goldilocks, and as the contours of sun-dappled mountains and ocean waves evocative of Asian hanging scrolls.

The centerpiece of the exhibition, a ten-foot diptych entitled *Yellowwave (Stranger Yellow)*, contains many of these moves and more. Simultaneously chaotic and meditative, the painting pictures a large fluid landscape of swooping yellow in which twisted and patterned fortune cookies mingle with flowers and creatures from Korean folk art. A Blue Willow pattern motif (coopted from China by 18th Century Western design) occurs throughout.

In a seamless cross-pollination of East and West, Moon incorporates additional invented and appropriated iconography in other paintings and sculpture, including Mexican Otomi dolls, Milagros, face jugs of the American South, emojis, tattoo design, and peaches (a symbol of immortality in Asian culture and a simultaneous nod to Moon’s hometown of Atlanta). She deftly utilizes this ever expanding vocabulary of imagery to explore relevant issues of identity, cultural displacement, and miscommunication.

Jiha Moon (born 1973, Daegu, South Korea) lives and works in Atlanta, GA. She had a recent solo exhibition at Abrams-Engel Institute for the Visual Arts at University of Alabama, Birmingham, AL and was included in “State of the Art 2020” at Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, AK and “45 at 45” at L.A. Louver Gallery, Venice, CA. She has had solo exhibitions at Museum of Contemporary Art Georgia, Atlanta; The Cheekwood Museum of Art, Nashville, TN; James Gallery of CUNY Graduate Center, NY, among others. She has been included in group shows at Kemper Museum, Kansas City, MO; Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia; Asia Society, New York; and The Drawing Center, NY. Moon’s mid-career survey organized by the Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art and Taubman Museum toured more than 10 museum venues around the country through 2018. This will be her second solo exhibition at the gallery.

Derek Eller Gallery is located at 300 Broome Street between Eldridge Street and Forsyth Street. Hours are Tuesday - Saturday 11am to 6pm, and by appointment. For further information please contact the gallery at 212.206.6411 or visit www.derekeller.com.