

Silence in the Storm's Eye and Shaking Vision

Paik Gon

I. Shaking image

Kyung Sunghyun's work has a diverse and layered narrative. His work is created through various frameworks, with one of the main foundations being about 'shakiness'. It's as if the image is shaky due to an incorrect over exposure on a photograph. In fact, Kyung Sunghyun's paintings reinvent the overexposed photographic image. However, his reinventions don't speak specifically about the shakiness of the image, nor does he emphasize that shakiness. To Kyung, shakiness blurs the shape, at the same time revealing his subject's true emotional and psychological state. At a closer look at his paintings, one finds that images of faces from different angles, such as frontal and side views, are superimposed upon one another. This expression exposes his desire to better reveal his subject in the portrait. In ancient Egyptian art, parts of the human body were depicted in combinations of the frontal and side views. This was the common artistic style of capturing the human body at the time.

This illustrates that in order to capture the artist's subject, there are many ways of expressing it. Kyung chose to express his subjects as if they were shaking, in order to reveal the essential nature of a human being. His painting is not just simply an image; rather, it is the depiction of a three-dimensional phenomenon engraved in the human mind's eye. How were the ancient men able to draw pictures in the dark on the cave walls in the Prehistoric Age? Surely they could not have encountered a piece of art in their time, let alone have an idea about the fundamentals of art. The art historians have decided that the drawings are ritualistic images of their hunting practice. However, it may be more accurate to postulate that what they have drawn is not just a reinvention of what they saw around them, but an expression of what had been engraved in their minds.

The images are a visual product of hallucinatory phenomenon induced by the darkness of the deep cave, and the experience is similar to being in a fantasy or an ecstasy. The red dots that are spotted on the cave walls in different regions illustrate this theory. Therefore, we can say that the translation of history is layered, and is always in the present tense. Our memories of people and things around us, are not merely representations of them; rather, they are reflections of images engraved in our minds. Kyung Sunghyun resurrects the engraved images in the mind. When we perceive the visual image of a person, we can perceive that person's peculiar emotional and psychological state. Through shaking the image, he further separates the subject from its process of being merely a representation of itself, and interrupts that immersive process in representation. Just as the image in the mind's eye becomes blurry as one approaches closer to an art work, Kyung's work asks the audience to view the work from a distance and perceive the overall emotional mood of the work by reading it as a pure image. This is the metaphor for

transformation.

Representing and transforming the image is like expressing the mood of the subject on a dark cave wall. Trembling and imperfect, the shaky image brings out the essence of the depicted subject. Ungraspable and hazy, but coming into a being; this is what Kyung sees as being the truth in his subject. The reason for the unclear outline of form in Kyung's work lies in the realization that his work is not about representing the form, but of depicting an image. Depicting the shaking image is Kyung's attempt to accurately capture the true image of his subject.

II. Dreams

Kyung Sunghyun's shaky images depart from his dreams. He constantly dreams, but they are of reality. As one can see in his sketchbook, he naturalizes the marriage of the upper half of a mouse and the lower half of a salamander in his dreams, while at the same time realizing that it cannot be real. Through waking him, Kyung realizes that if his experiment in his dream fails, his creature might die as a result. He recollects his memory, and reassembles the pieces of the images in his dreams, and creates new relationships and new beings.

The dream that he talks about here, does not simply play the role of the unconscious, but is a way of creating personal and private images that are related to the human memory. To the artist, dream is more of a visual space rather than a cognitive space. In fact, he looks at reality as if he's dreaming, and therefore, his reality becomes a space of illusions and his dream becomes a reality, but not a truly free one.

In the illusion of the dream space, the trembling form in the shape of a human being, is indeed rooted in the reality of its physicality. This symbolizes its tangled position in the laws of the nature and the ethics of the society. His concern is not about revealing the illusions of the dream world, but about looking at the structure of reality through his dreams.

Utopia asks the people to live productively in the system of the development mechanism. There is no such thing as a society taking care of individual scars and feelings, and these pains and scars remain in individual's dreams to be treated and cared for. Through his dreams, Kyung desires to reveal these scars. By shaking the awakened ego standing in reality, he tends to his scars as if he were dreaming. This is the power of paradox: revealing the reality for Kyung, is actually the immersion into a dream. On the contrary, leaving a dream means escaping from reality; therefore, the images that he dreams of in his dreams, are in fact not just simply imagination or fantasy but reality. Works like *Waiting* and *The Sign* depict a dream-like background space while being a real space. That is a dream that doesn't escape the regulations of a reality, and expresses the trembling existence of innumerable images.

III. The Six-Fingered Person

Polydactyl is an inheritor of a genetic deviation that grows an extra finger on a hand or a foot. The six-fingered person has 6 fingers, or 6 toes. The one extra finger is of no use, because it cannot function as a whole finger, and causes awkward discomfort. Six fingered person is

considered by the society, to be abnormal and undeveloped, and therefore is discriminated against. Generally-speaking, it is the six-fingered person who remains outside of the societal norms. The society constantly creates the standards for normalcy, and regulates hierarchical authority based on these standards. The five-fingered authority in the society would never acknowledge a six-fingered person. The six-fingered people are spread widely within the society, accepting the social biases towards them. The regulations set up by the society are essential elements that organize and maintain itself. This is the formation of authority and method of maintenance that Michel Foucault introduces. Society tirelessly classifies and differentiates the normal and the abnormal. To categorize and differentiate, the society nurtures specialists and hierarchically authorizes intelligence. The six-fingered becomes the abnormal, the diseased, the prisoner and the failure. The authority regulated within a society is linked to Foucault's theory of the 'biopouvoir', which compares the societal regulations with the biological regulations that happen within our own bodies. 'Biopouvoir' is essentially about segregation. Once considered a society's six-fingered, s/he is at once segregated and becomes the prey for the witch-hunt. Furthermore, the society silences the isolated and constantly indulges in witch-hunting in order to maintain and protect its authority. Kyung states that he is the six-fingered, scarred and discarded from the society. The lonely six-fingered person, unable to adapt to the society, runs away crying to hide the sadness, and lives his life as a societal deviant. Cursing to one's desire doesn't change a society, but makes the six-fingered feel even more foolish and miserable. The six-fingered has a drink and looks out at the world with a shaking mind and decides: "Let's just keep on shaking." He keeps on shaking, because he is somewhere between wanting to stay abnormal, and needing to be accepted into the norm. The society of innumerable six-fingered people, has the suppressive canon that demands all to be normal, and persists on the six-fingered to cry out that he is normal. All this is because the society does not accept a transplanted being of a mouse and a salamander, but of a human body. In that case, Kyung decides that he would rather go back inside his dream, shake his body into a blurry image, and become unrecognizable.

IV. Sonic Boom felt on the Earth's Surface

If by and large Kyung Sunghyun's work focused on expressing the shakiness of the people as his subject, he is now focused on shaking the matters around him in order to change the point of view of perception. That is to say that he converts the subject and its substitute. By fixing oneself firmly and shaking the world around, one starts to look at the world in a different light. In the eyes of the norm, the matters around them become the six-fingered. If the matters around me consider me as an outsider, then the shaking of the matters transforms into the shaking of the society itself. Now, the ego no longer trembles.

That becomes a fixed entity, one perception, and the conditions that termed one as the six-fingered, start to shake. This is a reformed conversion. When the rocket charges into the mach speed, one can visually see the sound that comes from the speed through the trembling of the rocket wings. This is when the aural becomes visual.

Similarly, when the society holds onto an abnormal point of view, it creates an abnormal ego, and the society itself becomes the abnormal six-fingered. This transcends the notion of conversion, into conquest. However, the problem about this conversion, rests on the fact that to the audience, both the people and the matters are shaking.

All is perceived as shaking, when one simply no longer looks at the fact that the forms shake, and reaches the state of receiving the image. It's similar to the fact that the passengers in the rocket that has entered the mach speed cannot feel the vibration of the sonic boom that the audience outside can feel. Kyung's story is about the shakiness that the audience feels. The values that once labeled Kyung as the six-fingered and shook up his very core, extended into the very society that embraces him, until reaching the audience who look at his work. This phenomenon is a reality rather than a dreamscape.

Loud music and voices, beer bottles clinking and all sorts of other noises fill up a dark café, and as one is shaken and made dizzy by it all, he realizes that all this is not a fantasy nor a dream but a reality. Art has always expressed imagination and creativity, and attempted to cure social illnesses and scars of the ego, but all of this is perceived in the light of reality. Nothing can escape reality. Steadying his dizziness and pressing down on the shutter, does Kyung already know that he is in fact capturing reality and not a fantasy?

My body trembles and I feel dizzy. I wonder if it's the beer. Kyung's painting on the wall enters my eyes. As if in a dream, his work starts to shake, and steadily approaches me.