

Minae KIM

- On the Future's Future's Future

The origins of KIM's works are understated and local; she names views from a window, street scenes and street furniture as her influences. KIM alights on common items and gives them poetic license such as 'wind fishing', which turns out to be in essence a little propeller on the end of a long pole. The whimsy in these small asides is charming but they soon collect more seriously to play their part in her larger 'anonymous scenes' installations. The two works that we have for this exhibition however are both very independent and both pull the same trick on the viewer.

With 'continuous reflection' and 'conundrum', KIM is able to quickly transport us to profound questions about the nature of the spaces we inhabit. The steel shutters used in continuous reflection are a ubiquitous bit of security kit found everywhere; generally speaking if the shutters are up then the shop or the house is open. They are the defensive screen from behind which the commercial world appears each morning to begin business. This familiar street armour comes in any size to keep out the marauders of the night, allowing shop keeper's everywhere to sleep easy.

By leaving the shutter partially open KIM quickly arouses our curiosity, placing a mirror behind fools us into assuming there is a space beyond, only to realise after a double take that we are seeing our own legs walking about in that space. We are reversed into that other space, outside and inside swap places and cause us that momentary sense of destabilization. It's not unlike Manzoni's 'Socle du monde', where the upside down plinth becomes the base for the whole world.

The skeletal telescope 'conundrum' does the same thing for our expectations, we expect to peer into it as though it really is a telescope. We expect to see far things shoot closer to us only to find that the eye hole is covered by semi-transparent paper and that the main lens at the other end has been replaced by a double-sided mirror that can only reflect our gaze back. A telescope, the supposed aide of the orb that is our eye, is also the promise of seeing beyond the eye's capacity. However KIM has left us only with a round mirror, a circular world through which the whole world may be experienced but in reflection. Poetically this brings us back to the notion of our own eyes as portals to the world; again it is that idea of inside and outside in dialogue as with continuous reflection.

I am tempted to think of Minae KIM's conundrum as an autobiographical work where she describes something about what it means to come from one side of the world to the other and the way that one's expectations loop back on themselves.

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