

The Buoyant, Stunning, and Sometimes Prickling Aesthetic Pleasure Aroused by Visual Perception

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1.

When approaching Yoon Ki-un's work, we come to realize how our own sense of visual perception can turn into an exquisite charm. Our eyes are far more than just bodily organs that confirm the physical appearance of objects. When viewed from a few steps away, Yoon's images merely look like two necklaces threaded with beads or a pattern made up of small, orderly arranged spheres. However, when moving one or two steps closer towards his paintings, they unexpectedly and quite magically capture our eyes. Upon closer examination, they are not neutral, deadpan geometrical figures, but human faces with various vivid expressions. They appear as perverse, annoyed, intrepidly laughing, and slightly unsatisfied. All these simple, tiny circles can be shown as laughing, weeping, glum, or tedious. The gathering of tiny hand gestures, which indicate positive or negative meanings, looks like a large flower bud.

Viewers can do nothing but admit their perceptual mistake, realizing that they were invited into a game playing with their visual perception. As intended by the artist, the viewer is caught in a trap. However, the experience of being deceived doesn't make them feel bad, but paradoxically appears as something aesthetic. Repeating the process of approaching and backing away from his pieces and after inspecting them closely, the viewer is filled with a sense of enjoyment rather than rejection. In other words, this experience is related to the conditional limits of our system of visual perception that operates within extremely limited conditions. This is closely associated with our ontological consciousness of the limits of our worldly experiences, when departing from the sphere of such compositions.

This experience of perception brings about an aesthetic echo. A true aesthetic quality is a profound feeling in our hearts when the self approaches its true nature after incessantly pursuing fact and truth. This is also an experience of inner abundance we secure in the process of recovering our acute senses. Like this, any aesthetic pursuit has to do with a quest for truth, in connection with the experience of recovering and enhancing certain profound senses.*** Yoon's work leads viewers to realize the utility of our sense of visual perception by revealing its limitations.

*** Shim Sang-yong, A Road to Creative Originality: Reflective Thinking Enduring Winter, Creative Cultural Center Forum

2.

In Yoon Ki-un's Motion series, form is created from the absence of form and meaning. In this work, parts become a whole and the whole is again divided into pieces. His forms appear atypical and undefined. Unrestrictedly moving, lines bring about concentric circles and sometimes create human faces, bodies, or body parts. What's interesting is that the distinctions between absence and presence, shape and non-shape are ambiguous. This is a clue to understanding an extremely crucial element of Yoon's art.

The dichotomy that classifies the existence of images as order and the absence of images as disorder cannot be applied to his painting because the distinction between form and non-form remains obscure. Yoon's painting prefers to a patternized order and simultaneously explores each person's varied spectrum of internal aspects. A geometric order of circles coexists with a wide variety of facial expressions in one body. His paintings show the overlapping of cold, geometric figures with hot indicators of existence, facial expressions, styles, and emotional fragments. Icons and psychology, super-simplicity, and complexity are dependent on the same identity.

Yoon presents a way to get rid of the antipathy between two irreconcilable worlds. In his work, the two conflicting worlds are not found in coldness and antagonism any more. We come to realize that Yoon's complementary, non-contrastive approach corresponds to the principles of conventional, profound aesthetics and inspiration. As proved in the history of aesthetics, creative inspirations appear irrespective of each other and often abnormally and thus have to do with an analogy of the relationship between two worlds. Of course, the human tendency to distrust the abnormal always hampers this creativity. (Brewster Ghiselin) Georges Rouault, for instance, worked in the boundary of two contrasting worlds: one world where we open our eyes wide and the other world where we close our eyes to see invisible order in a perceptible world. This is a stage of harmony and equilibrium to which materialists or realists and idealists or abstractionists are hard to reach.

3.

The assertion that we always have to be serious to deal with truth is our mere prejudice. Our habitual consideration that sees laughter and interest as something intellectually vulgar is a regrettable fallacy. Above all, one of most terrible mistakes is aesthetic radicalism that believes art should be always at the forefront. Nick Park who majored in sculpture at an art school and is known as the creator of Wallace and Gromit (1997) states that "I was always forced to take a more radical attitude and to explain my art more plausibly.". This remark indicates an art class we conventionally had at an art college for last several decades. We rejected something invaluable due to this prejudice and misunderstanding.

Fortunately, Yoon Ki-un maintains some distance from this evil practice. Yoon still asserts that

visual pleasure can be an outlet for delight. The magnetism of Yoon's art lies in his presentation of simple amusement that doesn't depend on ideological radicalism, superficial sensation, and fixed notions. The value we have to recover in the age of the aesthetic disaster is to enjoy simple deeds themselves or to become absorbed in the dialectic game of the possibilities and limits of our visual perception.

The world is still beautiful and empty spaces for analogy between existence and objects are spread endlessly. Artists who have the creative spirit and will to explore the world of time and objects earnestly are expected to emerge and become successful. All of us have come to expect that through some unexpected encounter concealed meanings and unique narratives will reveal themselves.

Yoon selects a course somewhere between circles and psychology, but rectangles and Arabian patterns also can be said to be found in his work. This path eventually has close links with an attitude that affirms the conditions of life. Standing before his work, viewers feel aesthetic lightheartedness and free from any ideological restriction.

Comfortable, buoyant, stunning, and sometimes prickling, Yoon's art has nothing to do with abstruse notions, radical ideas, and aesthetic dogmas. It evokes such aesthetic pleasure through indirect reflections and his outstanding skills as a painter and craftsman. Yoon plants and cultivates his work like vegetation in the fertile land of his creativity.