



KANG CONTEMPORARY

SUMMER SHOW 2023

YOUNG INTERNATIONAL POSITIONS

JAEHONG AHN | MORITZ JEKAT | PAUL GÜNTHER KÖSTNER | SOJIN PARK

30 June - 18 August

Kang Contemporary is proud to present artworks by five artists in the Summer Show 2023. In this exhibition, we want to highlight the young creative scene that comes together in Berlin. Together the artworks present an array of media that unexpectedly enter a dialogue and create a vibrant space of exchange.

Jaehong Ahn's paintings celebrate the harmonic balance that can only be achieved through separation. Ahn's process is determined by creating abstraction through automatic painting only to move to figuration. The contenders and colors which enter this cosmos of tension are often separated into unreachable spaces where they linger, unable to overcome the divide. The artist's quest for balanced tensions and division leads him to create god-like figures that command their authoritative positions on the canvas. Despite their power and eminence, they seem unable to fulfill their tasks and connect with their environment. Some are disengaged, while others are evidently failing to rule. This cautionary tale of neglect that can develop with superiority is veiled by the dreamlike atmospheres of Ahn's paintings. The pastels and fairytale-like landscapes not only mislead the viewer but also emphasize this persisting phenomenon's absurdity. The paintings collectively tell the story of the inevitable divide between humans and the struggle against this separation.

In his artworks, **Moritz Jekat** investigates notions of originality and copyright. Reproduction and appropriation have long been a part of artistic practice; however, in times of NFTs, meme culture and AI practices, this question has expanded into new dimensions. They have come to resemble uncertainties and new conceptions surrounding the evaluation and creation of art. Jekat's work *Western Flag (NFT) 2* references the NFT by John Gerrard. Gerrard listed his artwork for 250 ETH (the equivalent of back then 850.000\$). Since then, it has remained unsold and was taken offline in 2021. After reproducing Gerrard's NFT with the help of 3D software, Jekat is now selling the 720 reproductions frame by frame as NFTs. In addition to the virtual video file, Jekat creates a book that materializes the communal ownership of each frame by naming the owners of the respective sites in the book. The book is a materialized version of the video, a materialized NFT, a collection of originals, a snapshot of the blockchain from the moment of purchase of the NFT and a proof of ownership.

The increasingly digitalized and urbanized world of images and forms serves as inspiration for **Paul Günther Köstner's** abstract paintings. Köstner's creative work starts with computer-aided processes through which he manipulates visual input into abstraction. Shapes, composition, and colors become the subject of his paintings and transform the images into concrete and flat versions of themselves. His style of painting, in which gestural and random elements are reduced to a minimum, prioritizes intuitive associations over explicit references—resulting in artworks that activate the viewer's mind in trying to



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understand what is depicted or, rather, if something is depicted. In a way, Köstner's paintings present the viewer with a play of deception. Through the flatness of the colors, the geometric shapes are emphasized. The compositions of sharp lines appear dynamic and expressive, concealing the calculated creational process that eliminates spontaneity.

The threads and lines in **Sojin Park's** tapestries cross and create gaps. Patterns of string resemble faces from afar; close up, the intertwined knots and separating fibers are in focus. Similar to the complexity of human existence, the material bridges boundaries, floats between inner and outer realms, and perpetually cycles. The artist poses the questions of where boundaries begin, end and are dissolved. Perhaps that is why Park is naturally captivated by the liminal spaces that exist on the borderlines—ghostly entities, non-binary, ambiguous creatures that blend and divide. These figures bridge the gap between humans and the divine, ancient shamanism, nature deities, and folk beliefs. These entities create ruptures or offer new cultural possibilities. They give shape to our hidden inner worlds and awaken our imagination to realms rarely found in reality. The spaces in between, not just between worlds, but also interpersonal gaps of "you" and "me," are a source of difference and diversity.

Jazoo Yang has made a practice of discovering the extraordinary in the mundane. She explores construction zones, parks, and abandoned buildings in search of materials for her works. The artist then eternalizes them in resin molds. Though the abstract compositions of colors and shapes are flattened and sealed in resin, upon closer inspection, the different textures and layers reveal the three-dimensionality of the work. Species of dust and bending wires are forever sealed in the glossy material. They are the reminders, the fossils of modern-day life. Her art pieces are memories of buildings and sometimes entire neighborhoods that no longer exist but used to be vivid clusters of social life. They visualize the constant radical and sometimes brutal change life in the city entails. She assembles this rubble, usually a source of irritation and chaos. In a post-industrial age that gentrifies developing cityscapes before they can gasp for air, she turns to a more suitable medium than paint on canvases.

Text: Paula Böke