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Kim Jiwon: *LEMON*

April 28 – May 26, 2022 | PKM & PKM+
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PKM Gallery is pleased to present *LEMON*, a solo exhibition by Kim Jiwon (b.1961) who has been extensively exploring the aesthetic act of 'painting' and building a unique artistic world for a long period of time, from April 28th to May 26th. Including the *Mendrami* series which became the artist's trademark, the exhibition features more than 50 pieces from the *lemon*, *everything with a form vanishes*, *infinite stream of water*, and *landscape painting* series, which are displayed throughout the entire gallery spaces.

By delving into the medium of 'painting' which he wholeheartedly trusts, Kim Jiwon has been expressing the hidden essence of the object at study through an active process of approaching or distancing himself from the object, instead of simply replicating it. Through a constant observation and exploration, Kim translates the everyday life and the world surrounding the artist onto canvases as an alternate reality. The unique combination of colors, the images that oscillate between the boundaries of the figurative and the abstract, and the rough yet sparse texture on the surface clearly reveal Kim's artistic journey, inviting the viewers with its intense energy and lyrical beauty.

LEMON is an exhibition where Kim Jiwon's carefully selected new works from his five painting series, produced over the past 5 years, are showcased. The keyword that connects all these different series is the image of 'buckshot'. Just as the fruit 'lemon' tingles our nerves with its fresh yellow color and its tangy flavor of the juice, the exhibition aims to awaken our senses in this period of lethargy with these popping images.

In the *Mendrami* series, displayed in the main gallery, flowers bloom and wither within the oil paints that were smeared with brushes and iron spatulas, diluted pigments and residues of the pigments, and scattered oil droplets. This series depicts the life and death of a cockscomb, which sprouts from a handful of seeds scattered in the yard of the artist studio, takes a few moments of glory under the blazing sun in the summer, all to splatter and disappear quickly. On the other side of its splendor lies an insatiable desire like a poisonous snake. Around the gallery space where this animal-like plant is spurting aggressively, *lemon* floats with its freshness. Just like disinfecting the atmosphere or reviving one's nerve, Kim is offering the viewers a stimulant drink like soda in these times of lack of vitality. The artist has assembled some pieces from the *lemon* series in readymade frames that were kept in a corner of his studio for a long time.

Meanwhile, the *everything with a form vanishes* series in the annex is a direct contradiction to the liveliness of the *lemon* series and originated from the aspirational thoughts Kim Jiwon had in front of a firepit in his yard. It is paradoxical how fire, which burns everything, can make tangible things disappear but resuscitate intangible matter such as the spirit. As the embers scattered in the series are flying up in the wind, the tangled grass and the streams of valley in the *landscape painting* series are moving along with the breeze. The scenery that the artist encountered by walking around the studio and his house became the landscape painting on the screen.

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Indeed, Kim Jiwon said he is trying to capture the landscape, that is the wind-swept scenery in Korea, on the screen. However, as the saying from the Buddhist scripture Sutta Nipata, “like the wind not caught in a net,” the formless wind could not be captured and this impossible challenge eventually became one of the driving forces for the artist to continue his work. Aligned with this sense, the wind is realized by the pouring water droplets in the *infinite stream of water* series. Just as a water fountain is a mechanism for revitalizing a serene urban environment, the splashing waterdrops are spread beyond the screen and into the dry exhibition space, bringing liveliness to the daily life of the spectators.

The five painting series that are shown in this exhibition are some of the ‘playgrounds’ set up by Kim Jiwon to come and go at any time while working. Among the different themes of playgrounds, the artist carried out tasks day by day, moving from large to small canvases, from one series to another, and the fruits of his consistent works are unfolded through this exhibition.

Kim Jiwon graduated from Inha University and the State Academy of Fine Arts Städelschule, Frankfurt, Germany. The artist held numerous exhibitions at major domestic and international art institutions including solo exhibitions at Kumho Museum of Art, Daegu Art Museum, The Hite Collection, and Art Space Pool, as well as group exhibitions at the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul Museum of Art, Busan Museum of Art, ARKO Art Center, National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, and Korean Cultural Centre in the UK. Kim received a special recognition from the Joongang Fine Arts Prize in 1983 and 1986 and was awarded the 15th LEEINSUNG Art Prize in 2014. His works are permanently collected in Leeum, Art Sonje Center, Seoul Olympic Museum of Art, and JTBC, among other locations. Currently, Kim serves as the Dean of Fine Arts at Korea National University of Arts.