

**GALERIE NÄCHST ST. STEPHAN
ROSEMARIE SCHWARZWÄLDER**

**JONGSUK YOON
YELLOW TO PINK**

1 JUN – 27 AUG 2022

Opening: Wednesday, June 1, 2022, 7 p.m.

Introduction at 7:30 p.m. by

Tessa Praun, Director and Chief Curator of Magasin III Museum for Contemporary Art, Stockholm

Traces can run parallel, cross each other, or be superimposed. In Jongsuk Yoon's work, traces of condensed temporality, corporeality, memory, and biography intersect and result in idiosyncratic pictorial worlds that display an impressive range of colors. The paintings by the artist, who was born in South Korea and has been living in Germany since the early 1990s, fuse the traditions of Asian landscape painting with a Western canon of art that is defined by abstraction, translating these elements into abstract landscapes that consist of large, overlapping forms.

Titles like *Meer (Ocean)*, *June*, or *Rivers* evoke associations of nature observations and variant moods. Yoon creates space in her pictures for her own memories of the South Korean landscape. *Azalea Mountain*, which refers to a mountain range in South Korea that radiates bright pink when the Azaleas bloom in spring, inspired the title for Yoon's second solo exhibition at the gallery. Political aspects can also be discerned in *Kumgansan*, named after the eponymous mountain region that has formed the arbitrary and visible divide between North and South Korea for decades now and therefore plays a major geopolitical and symbolic role. For Yoon, these pictures symbolize the current political reality. She says, "I believe that painting is a medium that is able to demonstrate the authenticity and symbolism of art as a powerful tool of change. All engagement with Korea has a political dimension – in other words, pictures that refer to Korea are politically charged."

Time plays an important role in Yoon's oeuvre. The artist works on several paintings at once and does not embark on the next painterly step until she feels enough time has passed and it is the right moment. The composition and meticulous selection of shapes and hues often unfolds directly in the process of creation. Although Yoon's color palette reveals a broad range, she only rarely uses black, white, or red, and when she does, they serve as accents or strong gestures. The paintings are structured by formal elements and layers of paint applied precisely on top of and next to each other, their deliberate arrangement evoking narratives and traces of implied landscape elements. Yoon calls her works, some of which are based on a meditative painting process, "mindscapes" or "landscapes of the soul" that allow her to articulate her inner emotions. Stephan Berg remarked about this that "all of these tableaux are about landscape, but in an encompassing and introspective sense in which landscape is not understood primarily as representation, but rather as the expression of mental states and as imagination."

For the artist, the creation of each work seems like a dialogue with the painting. Like layers of sediment, her physical painting process can be retraced on the image's surface, especially in her large works. Yoon applies thick layers of oil paint to the canvas with vigor, before making corrections and changes, and even wiping away some of the applied paint. She leaves these alterations visible, integrating them into the picture, where they create layers of paint, time, and a painting process that is defined by powerful brushwork and precise artistic solutions.

JONGSUK YOON, born 1965 in Onyang, South Korea, lives and works in Düsseldorf, Germany.

In 1996 she studied at the University of Fine Arts Münster, from 1997 to 2001 at Kunstakademie Düsseldorf and from 2004 to 2005 at Chelsea College of Art, MA, London. In 2019 Yoon received a residency at SoART Millstättersee, Spittal an der Drau, Austria, in 2000 she was a scholarshio holder of the DAAD Artist-in-Residence Programme, Berlin, Germany.

Exhibition (selection): Kestner Gesellschaft, Hanover, Germany; 2020 Nordiska Akvarellmuseet, Skärhamn, Sweden; 2019 Akademie-Galerie, Düsseldorf, Germany; 2018 Art Sonje Center, Seoul, South Korea; Kunsthalle Münster, Münster, Germany; Galerie nächst St. Stephan Rosemarie Schwarzwälder, Vienna, Austria; 2017 Museum Kurhaus Kleve, Kleve, Germany; Sprengel Museum, Hannover, Germany; Gyeonggi Museum of Modern Art, Ansan and Korea Foundation Gallery, Seoul, South Korea.