

Kyung-Me

Sister

October 29 - December 22 2022

Sister, Kyung-Me's newest suite of eight ink drawings, alternately present four works set in the two distinct and overlapping social orders of the monastery and geisha lodging home (okiya). Each of the labyrinthian houses, which mirror and merge throughout the series, might be considered as an acute social and psychological diagnosis, as well as an architectural map of multigenerational histories of dissociated rage and aggression in female life. Each of the drawings is linked to each other like nesting dolls; in one picture, a daughter is swallowed by her mother, in another, the mother is devoured by the house.

Thus inextricably linked, the mother-daughter dyad is both sheltered and entrapped in a house where the windows are variously obscured by screens, shadow, or light; what lies beyond its confines is only alluded to. These are scenes of innocence and corruption, faith and vanity, with the transformation of a female subject portrayed through human figures or anthropomorphized instruments and architectural features. They are also a repetition and articulation of the artist's own conflicted relationship to desire and the rigorous demand for perfection, and pose a question of historical specificity: Who mothers?

Lacan described gender as a "necessary fiction," one that often plots a woman caught in the undertow of negation. Fated and fundamentally interred in an internal world of representations that endlessly repeat the same scenarios, she has little sense of a future that might be different from the environment she finds surrounding her. There is a feeling of despair to influence the course of one's life, and this despair often plants a seed of envy. Envy, in turn, ushers in anguish, fury, self-hatred, and shame. Envy and being envied forms knots for many women, with an ever-present potential to unsettle and spoil.

While the central, shrouded figures in the compositions are vertically bisected, many of these pictures are also divided along a horizontal plane: Above, an authority or deity that promises the possibility of ecstasy, and below, the penitent, prostrate, desirous subject, reaching towards the apex above. In the final work *The Organ*, the image is split between a flank of wind pipes and stained-glass rosettes. Beneath this maze of devotion is a proliferation of gothic arches punctuated by a final, coffin-shaped passageway expiring in white light.

Here, the figure vanishes, the shining void awaits. A sense of destiny, however, is different from fate.

—Hiji Nam

Sister is Kyung-Me's first solo exhibition at Bureau. Kyung-Me (b. 1991; lives and works in New York) received her MFA from the Yale School of Art. Solo and two-person exhibitions include *Coniunctio*, with Harry Gould Harvey IV, Bureau, New York, 2019 - 2020; *Poor Thing*, with Sydney Shen, Hotel Art Pavilion, Brooklyn, 2018; *Theatre of Cruelty*, with Ashton Hudgins, Museum Gallery, Brooklyn, 2018; *Copy Kitty*, Selena Gallery, Brooklyn, 2017; and *Bad Korean*, 17 Essex Gallery, New York, 2016.

She is the author of *Bad Korean*, published by Spaceface Books (2016), and *Copy Kitty*, published by 2d Cloud (2020). She also teaches at the Rhode Island School of Design and Willamette University. In 2022 she received the Picture Collection Artist Fellowship at The New York Public Library. Her work is in the collection of Magasin III, Museum for Contemporary Art, Stockholm.

The artist wishes to extend special thanks to The New York Public Library for their Picture Collection Artist Fellowship for production assistance.

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(front gallery)

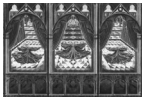


The Fall, 2022
Pen and charcoal on paper
10 × 14 in.

(main gallery, left to right)



The Resurrection, 2022
Pen and charcoal on paper
32 × 47 ½ in.



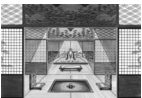
The Prostration, 2022
Pen and charcoal on paper
32 × 47 ½ in.



The Marriage, 2022
Pen and charcoal on paper
32 × 47 ½ in.



The Mother, 2022
Pen and charcoal on paper
32 × 47 ½ in.



The Profession, 2022
Pen and charcoal on paper
32 × 47 ½ in.



The Confession, 2022
Pen and charcoal on paper
32 × 47 ½ in.



The Vessel, 2022
Pen and charcoal on paper
32 × 47 ½ in.



The Organ, 2022
Pen and charcoal on paper
32 × 47 ½ in.