

Jeremy
The Eye of the Storm
January 25 – March 3, 2024
Opening Thursday, January 25, 5-7PM

Peres Projects is pleased to present *The Eye of the Storm* by Jeremy (b. 1996 in Geneva, CH), the artist's first solo exhibition with the gallery in Seoul.

While often misused in everyday language, the "eye" of a storm actually refers to the calmest area within a windstorm; a region spared from the surrounding chaos. However, winds being moving forces, the eye keeps shifting position, blowing away the illusion of a refuge in the midst of the turmoil.

Drawing on this imagery, Jeremy has created an exhibition that assembles 16 new paintings into a gallery of portraits swept by the winds. Inspired by ancient mythology, fantasy literature, and video games, the artist sees his art as a form of worldbuilding. With each work, he builds a universe populated by non-normative allegories, where allegedly frivolous ideas, such as a cyclops winning a beauty contest (*Miss Cyclope 23*, 2023), invite reflection on nonconforming bodies and identities. The exhibition unfolds an overarching narrative that connects the paintings, both spatially and conceptually, while immersing the viewer in the work. With *The Eye of the Storm*, Jeremy, whose early practice comprised installation work, presents an augmented experience, as a soundscape produced by Golce complements the paintings and envelops the viewer. Starting with a gentle breeze and growing into a thunderstorm, several sonic layers overlap and follow the progression of the exhibition and its storyline, echoing the visual leitmotif that runs throughout the gallery space—a mischievous wind that sweeps and swirls across each canvas.

While the anthropomorphic figure has long been central to Jeremy's practice, it takes on a new dimension in this most recent body of work. Departing from the amorphous and faceless characters of *Mourning Opulence*, his previous exhibition with Peres Projects, Jeremy delves into portraiture through a series of bust portraits and situational full-length ones. Approaching the genre from various perspectives, he embraces a wide array of references drawn from art history and the graphic arts. These range from the ancient ideal body and drapery in *Golden Skin* (2023) and German expressionism in *Lady with pearl in red* (2023) to manga in *Confession* (2023) and even a passport photo aesthetic in the very frontal composition of *Rose* (2023). In each painting, flowing strands of hair, swirling leaves, or garments billowing like sails signal the presence of an additional character—the wind.

An ambivalent element, the wind is a motif—or anti-motif—whose representation and the challenges it poses have captivated artists throughout art history. Intangible and invisible, it is only detected through its effects and the traces it leaves in its wake. In *Flute Player* (2023), *Cigarette Break* (2023), and *Prayer* (2023), the wind acts as a shapeshifter, manifesting itself through a musical instrument, cigarette smoke, or pouring rain. Delightful and promising as a spring breeze, the wind can just as well be destructive, herald bad news, convey diseases, or, as legends go, induce madness. It is a profuse narrative element, whose connotations Jeremy explores through a range of atmospheres, transitioning from innocence (*Signs of the storm*, 2023) to chaos (*The Tempest*, 2023).

Resisting repetition—in particular the idea of repeating himself—Jeremy cultivates instead an art of variation. In so doing, he takes up and excels at the exciting and demanding challenge of developing his own aesthetic through constant renewal. His kaleidoscopic approach to the same pictorial object—whether a thematic one such as the wind, or a formal one such as portraiture—allows for the expression of both a singular aesthetic and worldview. Jarring juxtapositions of intense and unnatural colors, sensual curves, exuberance in ornamentation and emotions, and indulgence in the bizarre and the fantastical come together in a highly cohesive yet always surprising oeuvre. Jeremy engages with the history of art and its canons through a queer lens, reconfiguring the human body and existence beyond binary categorizations.

Mindful of our turbulent times, Jeremy questions the role of the artist in the midst of the storm, and embraces that

of imagining new possibilities and narratives as his own. In the exhibition, the eye of the storm doesn't symbolize mere escapism. Dreaming and envisioning alternatives are critical to address the urgency of our time, and yet they require spaces of respite—oases where hope can survive. Although imbued with gravity, *The Eye of the Storm* conjures up a hopeful romanticism. With a certain playfulness, Jeremy weaves in details that circulate from one work to the next. Materializing an idea of cyclicity, they are an invitation to envision better times. Within the titular work lies a message of precarious yet possible hope, concealed in the form of a partly obscured inscription—an encrypted key for the viewer to decipher.

"The wind is rising!... We must try to live!"
Paul Valéry, *Le cimetière marin*, 1922

This is Jeremy's second solo exhibition with Peres Projects and his first solo in Seoul. Jeremy graduated from the Haute École d'Arts et de Design (HEAD), Geneva, in 2021. That same year, he had his debut solo exhibition *Art is Lifer* at Wallstreet, Fribourg. In 2023, Jeremy had his first solo exhibition with Peres Projects in Berlin. In addition, he has participated in a number of group exhibitions, including the recent *Peintres*, Centre d'Art Contemporain d'Yverdon-les-Bains, Switzerland (2023); *The New, New*, Peres Projects, Seoul (2023); *La main-pleur*, curated by Nicolas Brulhart and Sacha Rappo, Kunsthalle Friart Fribourg, Switzerland (2022); *September Issues*, curated by Mohamed Almusibli, Peres Projects, Milan (2022); *CHEMICAL X*, Cherish, Geneva (2022); *A moment of being*, Bollag Atelier, Basel (2022); and *LEMANIANA – Reflections on other scenes*, Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève, Geneva (2021).

For further information and sales inquiries, please contact Kacey E. Cho (kacey@peresprojects.com).
For press and media inquiries, please contact seoul@peresprojects.com or +82 2 2233 2335