

DEREK ELLER GALLERY



In Between Dreams, 2024, 70 x 60 inches, acrylic, oil, fabric collage, oil pastel, and pencil on poly cotton

AREUM YANG

Home of Being

May 30 – June 29, 2024

Opening Reception:

Thursday, May 30, 6–8 pm

Derek Eller Gallery is pleased to present a solo exhibition of new paintings by Areum Yang entitled *Home of Being*. In Yang's vivid, gestural paintings, surreal environments replete with personal symbolism tell a fragmented reverie-like story about the meaning of home.

Yang, who was born and raised in Korea and immigrated to New York for art school in 2019, has grappled with a feeling of in-betweenness born out of that experience. Painting has been a vehicle for her to explore what home signifies. Without providing answers, her narrative is vague and

ambiguous. Is home merely a roof over one's head? A place of safety? Where loved ones reside? A repository for meaningful objects? In one painting, a crouching figure perched on a stool is accompanied by a regal dog, conveying the importance of companionship. In another, two figures lying in bed, eyes closed and hair intertwined, are feverishly imagining flocks of birds and a boat rocking on the sea, indicating that home is a place where one dreams. A different painting shows a figure seated at a table drawing, creating, surrounded by domestic objects gathered from past and present. "Home isn't a fixed destination," Yang explains, "it's a dynamic, evolving experience shaped by one's choices and connections."

Birds and fish make frequent appearances in Yang's paintings, depicted both as captives in cages or bowls and flying or swimming freely. They function as metaphors for her own journey of living between different cultures and trying to define her surroundings. In *I'm Home*, a hunched figure grips the sides of a fishbowl, face eerily pressed against the glass, while the fish has escaped and is splayed out on the tabletop, essentially reversing the dynamic between the observer and the observed. As the narrator of this story, Yang captures the interplay between these two worlds and acts as both the observer and the embodiment of diverse perspectives or

characters. From this outlook, she invites viewers to step back and discover home in the richness and range of their own unique experiences.

Yang's process of combining both wet and dry materials (charcoal, pencil, collage, pastel, acrylic, oil) lends motion to her subjects and captures an emotional state bordering on urgent anxiety. Figures coarsely rendered in pencil or charcoal inhabit vibrant backgrounds imbued with colorful, improvisational mark-making and collage. At moments, the boundaries are blurred, and the subject and atmosphere become one.

Areum Yang (b. 1994 Seoul, South Korea; lives and works in New York) graduated from Hongik University, Seoul, South Korea in 2017 and from the Hunter MFA program, New York, NY in 2021. She recently undertook residency at Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. She has been included in group shows at Long Story Short, Los Angeles, CA; Analog Diary, Beacon, NY; Hauser & Wirth, New York, NY; Margot Samel, New York, NY, and Mammoth, London, UK. Yang was selected as the winner of the Silver Award for AHL T&W Foundation Contemporary Visual Art Awards and the KCC Young Artist Awards in 2021. Her work has been selected for print publication in Art Maze Magazine edition 23, Friend of Artists volume 15, and Whitewaller issue 33. This will be her third exhibition with the Gallery.

Derek Eller Gallery is pleased to represent Areum Yang.

Derek Eller Gallery is located at 300 Broome Street between Eldridge Street and Forsyth Street. Hours are Tuesday - Saturday, 11am to 6pm, and by appointment. For further information please contact the gallery at 212.206.6411 or visit www.derekeller.com.