

Escapism

Opening December 19th

6 – 9 PM

Taedong Lee | Eetu Sihvonen

Andrea Festa Fine Art is pleased to present *Escapism*, a two-person exhibition featuring works by Taedong Lee and Eetu Sihvonen. *Escapism* invites viewers to go beyond the boundaries of reality and delve into the emotional and symbolic realms depicted by the artists Taedong Lee and Eetu Sihvonen. Through their distinct but at the same time complementary artistic approaches and chosen mediums, this exhibition offers a captivating journey into the landscapes of emotion, memory, and symbolism.

Taedong Lee's art is about capturing how places make us feel. The creative process begins for him with a sensory exploration: sketches, videos, sounds, photographs, and personal reflections are gathered to unlock the depths of emotional experiences within specific landscapes. These collected fragments of memory serve as the foundational elements for the artist's canvas transformations. As emotions meld with recollections, shapes and colors change, they ultimately turn into captivating and evocative landscapes that reflect the feelings experienced when they were created. "I call it an archive of memories and emotions". In other words, the elements of memory such as emotions and objects in the landscape newly influenced by other media (photos or videos) which I saw. The main point is the process of combining the current new self-influenced by various media in a new space created from the past. Eventually, the space is reconstructed into a "phantom place" that is "my things" but has different emotions from other moments".

Eetu Sihvonen's wood-and-resin sculptures invite the viewers into the world reminiscent of mystical talismans found within medieval narratives. Drawing inspiration from Pieter Bruegel the Elder's famous painting, "The Land of Cockaigne" (1567), these sculptures often feature a striking two-legged egg, an evocative symbol embodying multifaceted meanings. Reflecting Bruegel's allegory of human gluttony, the egg, half-eaten and fleeing for survival, signifies wasted potential and the dangers of hidden desires. At the same time this is a powerful symbol that stands as a metaphor for our curiosity to our lives, being caught in the net of our own desires and navigating the intricacies of existence, occasionally stumbling upon its traps while seeking our own transformation.

Both Taedong Lee and Eetu Sihvonen invite to engage in a form of escapism. Lee's evocative landscapes, born from sensory explorations and emotional memory, transport viewers to semi-real and ethereal spaces, allowing an escape from the reality into the depths of personal emotions. Similarly, Sihvonen's enigmatic sculptures, inspired by medieval narratives and allegorical symbolism, act as portals to an alternate realm, where viewers can for a moment leave the difficulties of life and think about how our desires, potential, and the traps of existence interact.

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December 19 - January 30, 2023

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