

Hye Kyoung Kwon: unfamiliar experiences from conventional everyday life

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The paintings of Hye Kyoung Kwon start from an illusion. She realistically represents objects with brushes and sprays. In this aspect, I can say her paintings have a tendency of realism in a broad sense. However, the difference is the characteristic, made from how she sees objects. The artist paints everyday objects around her. Although art embodying everyday life can be defined to be very conventional, the reason that I am mentioning that the everydayness in her paintings seems to be unique is based on the fact that how her paintings approach to audiences as a kind of an experience.

The everyday matters that the artist uses in her paintings are not ordinary subject matters like scenery, still life or portrait but trivial and conventional things that do not have specific meanings or values as a subject of painting while the honest stories based on her experiences is being added. Today's artists, especially painters, feel oppressed as if they paint for a divine punishment. This is because the field of painting today is drifting across the pressure of narration and the compulsion of visualizing everyday life. The effective way to reduce these burdens should be embodying an artist's experiences honestly in art but this way has been taken by many artists already so many of them often end up in their conventional monologue. Painting about everyday life must be easy and difficult at the same time.

The important point is on the value of experiences. Not only artists but also people in general live with their own experiences of everyday life because life means the repetition of experiences. However, artists should have a specific reason for dealing with experiences of everyday life, create the emotional point that shares with audiences, and communicate with them through its progress. Then, it says that talking about unfamiliar experiences can provide differentiation because audiences can discover a new event and narration that could not be thought or felt from the new viewpoint that tries to rediscover conventional events or objects of everyday life.

The paintings of the artist from her university years in Germany represent objects that she met in everyday life in Germany such as a container and a switch box. While progressing them, she changed the subject that talks about her experiences of everyday life in the unfamiliar environment, Germany, from a person to an object. Objects should be the one that she could experience fully in the unfamiliar place where she should find difficulty of communicating with people. This was an act of realizing the personal value that gives a value to an object and an act of finding a meaning from an ordinary object in everyday life. She has proved that art reflects everyday life while working as a creative artist who creates a new event beyond everyday life with imagination thoroughly through her practice.

Her interest in unfamiliarity has been continuing even after she came back to Korea. As an artist whose role is like an invisible man's even after coming back to Korea, she has delved deeper into the job of an artist and created the series that captures the feeling of interior spaces with such parts of a window or wall, notebook, cover of a rubber basin, wooden plate, and box. This series also has started from the idea that she wants to give a value to a trifle, and understand an object, its structure and even the essence of it. In the recent paintings, there is a meaningful change, which shows that she is looking towards the outside from the inside of her studio and finding a new experience and expression.

The paintings of Hye Kyoung Kwon clearly reflect how the environment of an artist defines a direction of practice. When coming back to Korea after studying in Germany and spreading down her roots again in Korea, she participated in the Sancheong residency program and has continued meaningful works that presents how an artist gets used to a place. Her recent works especially leave a significant impression from how they draw the interior spaces and everyday life of the Sancheong residency program. Like she had deducted the concept of her practice from the unfamiliar environment of Germany, how the artist's practice has been localized with objects of everyday life in the Sancheong residency program positively and naturally connects her previous practice with the present.

The fact that a young artist, Hye Kyoung Kwon, painted Sancheong-specific works during the Sancheong residency is surely leading her to root back to Korea firmly as an artist who can have a positive progress and result. If the artist's point of view were defined to be digging special feelings from an ordinary event or object of everyday life, how she recollects the environment in the Sancheong residency program into her current paintings would be the decisive factor of her recent practice. The practice of Hye Kyoung Kwon reminds the life of an artist who does not have a permanent abode. In her paintings, there are neutral viewpoint on the truth, only experienced through the life of an artist, and eyes of a realist who sees life and art as transcendental matters. This is because she is the artist who draws unfamiliar experiences from conventional everyday life as I mentioned above.