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### Trackable Painting

Jisoo Hur  
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Trackable Painting

by

Jisoo Hur

Submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
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## List of Illustrations

1. [Figure 1] Jisoo Hur, *From September 4th, 2018 to March 10th, 2019*, 2018 - 2019, Oil on multiple canvases, 42 x 316 inches

## I. Fraction of painting

The gap between paintings can become an open source to create a 'total picture.' This concept was derived from a painting making process that assumes a new role for a plethoric image database. This reasoning also frames seriality in painting by deliberately conceptualizing a physical boundary as a 'gap,' expanding a linear border to an unfilled space. I think it is more important to find a way to post images than to demystify the singularity, or originality, of them.

If painting is an experience in a given situation, then it would be a reflection in a mirror, posing a question through actions found on the surface: scratched, cut by tools, or covered with paint. Interpretation does not modify the image itself, but by questioning representation, it can meet the need to write a "convenient fiction".<sup>1</sup> But the act of observation is grounded on an optimal possibility to define the beginning and the end of actions. It is based on the fact that we semantically presume a route to meaning that can be caught by us, the viewers, because 'to see' precedes the reliability of images. If we regard the reflected moment as an indicator of a detour, however, because the mirror is not flat anymore, but a database expanded in limitlessly growing volume, then how can we rewrite the fiction? In other words, because of the limitlessness of the plethoric database of images, and the interpretations these images spawn, we have lost any sense of optimality that was once possible to be drawn through posing the

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<sup>1</sup> Alan M. Turing, "I.—Computing Machinery And Intelligence," *Mind* LIX, no. 236 (1950): 438.

questions in painting. The growing volume is omnipresent but not universal. We can search an image through the database but it only shows analogous codes that the corresponding images share in the searching process. Then can this case be applied to the condition of comparability in painting?

I take an approach to connect each analogy in painting by materializing it based on making comparable images. The physical boundary of each painting is the first cue to specify separation. But simultaneously the gap expands the scope of its function. A physical distance between two paintings is assumed by differences of third-dimensional depth which is projected differently into two eyes. The extent and nature of these differences are utilized by us with binocular vision as a cue for the perception of distance.<sup>2</sup> Then the formatively recognized physical gap leads us to a new phase that followed conjecture is enumerated. In this step it's not a guessed distance that defines the beginning and the end, but a limitless comparison of quantifiable and qualifiable space do. The followed interacts unlike that how eyes do with the visually recognized depth. It's because of a priori gap that we realize when the two different images are classified by several criteria.

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<sup>2</sup> Edward C. Tolman and Egon Brunswik, "The Organism and the Causal Texture of the Environment," *Psychological Review* 42, no. 1 (1935): 63, doi:10.1037/h0062156.

## II. Making a map; Perspective

In order to approach to the a priori gap, it is important to retrace the semantic route that is initially started by the differences in third-dimensional depth. Starting with the visible mark; depth, a way to configure the gap is to make plethoric transitions with gestural strokes so numerous intersections appear. In the next step the quantity itself is also coded into a graspable information like 'recurring' or 'the variations'. And this information imposes a new aspect in the intermediation by supporting transparency in it's own body, from seeing to revealing the latent void. The physical body of the drawn figures become a chassis, driving like a vector in the image. I deliberately make the image on the gap where the image is repositioned only in imagination.

And so for that, I've been focusing on a new stance in color perspective. In Figure 1, a serial work, *From September 4th, 2018 to March 10th, 2019*, eleven paintings are hung in a row. Each small canvas depicts different fluid movements with oil paint. The scenes depicted on them seem to be discrete but the arrangement of canvases makes them look coherent, heading to a similar direction horizontally through the multiple screens. But at the same time the gestural strokes are a dividing force between images by making a swirling movement and locking them in. These directing strokes on the surface divide the perceived scenes and eventually guide the discrete perception to be retrieved by similarity in matière.



[Figure 1] Jisoo Hur, *From September 4th, 2018 to March 10th, 2019*, 2018 - 2019, Oil on multiple canvases, 42 x 316 inches

All process is based on what I captured with a camera, constructed on optical laws different from those of our eyes.<sup>3</sup> A painting which is embracing all the categorized features in the photographs has no control point telling where the image fabrication is grounded. Each painting shows a grouped movement through the whole series which points out the 'categorizable' moment. The painted actions are representations of

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<sup>3</sup> László Moholy-Nagy, *Painting, Photography, Film*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1969), 32.

collected visual stimuli that are encompassed from all sides at once by a lens.<sup>4</sup> This collecting presupposes how I define a collapsing pictorial space. As Walter Benjamin mentioned, painters and photographers both have an instrument at their disposal.<sup>5</sup> And by deliberately intermixing the originally different tones together, the base ingredient in the captured and flattened movement subordinates what the blank canvas once defined with painter's authority. Because of the processed information inserted by the tone that is tuned by the camera and is *subject to restrictive laws*,<sup>6</sup> what I can adjust on the canvas is basically to understand the camera's role in making images and to trace back the grounds that I estimate.

The installation of the paintings also splits the space adding an oppositional gap. In Figure 1, the distance between each painting is also providing a doubt on 'pictorial' distance by artificially squeezing the support; white wall that we regard as a fiducial space for viewing. It doesn't help to view the works individually but expels the viewer from each distorted scene.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Walter Benjamin, "Little History of Photography," in *The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility, and Other Writings on Media*, eds. Michael W. Jennings, Brigid Doherty, and Thomas Y. Levin (London: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2008), 284.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

### III. Radical termination; Titling

Understanding the optical representation of a photograph, it clarifies a way to seek 'totality' in a painting. The route to find out of subjectivity through the observation in captured images is the key to deepening the question about my primary subject in painting, and sincerity in making images. Representing a distorted space is related to an impulse to make a modification on originality, and by doing so it is related further to making an entire system. Productivity can reveal an agent in a situation in which things are being made, so it emphasizes the person, or the subject of the action. And at the same time it erases their actual body, remaining only as some palpable detours on the surface. It reminds me of the position of an interpreter who visualizes distance between objects, and a subject who is located in a different stage, becoming a desire to be close to the 'subject' model, but only suggesting a proximity.

It can be ironic to suggest existence of an agent through the painterly depiction. The pictorial space captures the entire scene as a pseudo field that evokes a feeling of being in the middle of nowhere but also attempting to seek 'I' located outside of the painting. In terms of alienation, I titled the work with dates and the name of locations, deporting the sense of subjective empowerment by operating it as an indicator but not a fulfilling party. It's an automatically created byproduct invalidating my effort to engage with my work since the location and dates are not changed by my camera when it took

the picture and recorded them. However this account can complete my primary question by purposefully twisting the effort with the given information: once again flattened form.

It is only possible to account for one side of things when speaking about the concept of a boundary, or a point of collision where a boundary suddenly meets another.<sup>7</sup> Providing a body of work, it is crucial for the artist to figure out a rightness in historical and aesthetic contexts. Looking back at the time when I was in Korea in 1990s and 2000s, I've been arranged what influenced me through an art education I got. It was an effort to seek for my first artistic statement in the contexts and provided me with inquiries on my artistic valuation and criteria. A Korean art critic Youngwook Lee said, since the 1990s, the Korean art system has experienced a full-fledged transformation for the first time since it was externally imposed as a sub-system of colonial civilization at the beginning of the modern colonial era.<sup>8</sup> In the rapid change I've been wondered where I actually started to be influenced by it. It wasn't just about how the the education guided me in a certain direction, but also about what content I desired, believing it is the 'next step' for me. Then I realized that I considered it important to be familiar with any newly developed apparatus in daily life besides understanding a gradually revised aesthetic appreciation. Seeing technological advances defined as a driving force of

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<sup>7</sup> Chan-Kyong Park, "The State of Identity from Dislocation to Hybridity," in *Access to Contemporary Korean Art 1980-2010*, eds. Sohyun Ahn et al. (Seoul: Forum A, 2018), 100.

<sup>8</sup> Youngwook Lee, "The Typology of the Art System: an Essay," in *Access to Contemporary Korean Art 1980-2010*, eds. Sohyun Ahn et al. (Seoul: Forum A, 2018), 91.

Korean society, there was always a gap between me and the heightened expectation in technology, giving me a doubt on my way to respond to it. I've been trying to embed the confrontation into my image making and it was the moment that made me think about internalizing a society by requiring a way to overcome the self-doubt.

So for that I've been working on assimilating 'learning' experience that I had in Korea into a palpable sense in other ways. It depends on where I first find any possible connecting point by internalizing methods of the apparatus. It's generally believed that completely clarifying mimesis must lead to sincere self-presentation. So for responding to this idea, embedded in society, it is the key to restore independence between the objectified and the objectifying since there has been the ground rule; there would be no possible way to make newness without being objectified when we are facing and learning the mechanism of the apparatus.

The tendency elicits objectiveness through the apparatus and takes the objectiveness into a self-reflectionary zone. It's similar to a defined boundary between an object and a user in terms of manifesting the user's autonomy. Users can set up their ways to handle it but it's initially driven from the language that designed the object. The tendency to seek our own autonomy through refiguring out from it, it naturally goes to see the actual subjectivity as a phenomenal stage. According to East Asian studies scholar Chungmoo Choi, South Korean colonial modernization was focused heavily on copying the much fetishized visual and material representation of modernity, and not necessarily with the attendant underpinning infrastructure that enabled their production. For the colonized Koreans, who were excluded from the operations of modernity,

whether knowledge production or colonial administration, the visual and material reification of modernity that occupied the colonized space (buildings, department stores, neon signs, etc.) commanded a kind of enchantment and produced desire.<sup>9</sup> In this sense, I guess a desire to become an authorized conductor in defining selfhood is an initial guide line to pose a question about subject-object relationship during the refiguration. And while we are asking ourselves within the dynamic, reiterating over the two, maladjustment is a natural byproduct. It makes us keep reassessing the location where we ground, and based on the found difference, it reasserts the notion of a dominant position in the relationship.

When I was young, it was general to teach young kids to become a perfect apparatus like painter especially providing lessons to make them understand so-called 'perfectness' in art classes. It aims to master the laws of perspective in two dimensional space with coloring and drawing. What I've been taught through the training is how to use my body in the repetition and wondering where I can insert my statement in the trained 'way'. It led me to visualize the understood ways into a symbolic gesture to overcome a sense that I'm just producing gradations on a ruler given by my teachers. So it is important to me to revisit where I'm used to and totally forget about how I arrived there. This dynamic makes me keep producing the pictorial space, to find out where the objectivity I set is reflected to. This process is accompanied by a cultivated emptiness. I have to realize the hollow to answer to the contradictory situation in making images. By

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 87.

examining this pattern, admitting dynamics on both sides, my work endlessly destabilizes the understood structure.

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**Image list for Thesis show images**

1. [Figure 1] Jisoo Hur, *From September 4th, 2018 to March 10th, 2019*, 2018 - 2019, Oil on multiple canvases, 42 x 316 inches
2. [Figure 2] Installation view 1
3. [Figure 3] Installation view 2

**Image of each piece in the exhibition**

[Figure 1] *From September 4th, 2018 to March 10th, 2019, 2018 - 2019, Oil on multiple canvases, 42 x 316 inches*

## Installation photographs



[Figure 2] Installation view 1



[Figure 2] Installation view 2