

Small voice – sounds big

Dong Yeon Kim develops highly concentrated works of typological character. The sculptures as well as the painted images are carefully and thoughtfully balanced: Every element has its justified place. The works are models, quotes and paraphrases of contemporary constructions and deal with matters of exclusiveness and concentration, reduction and clarity. They carry a certain formal uniformity - while in their daintiness breaking with it again - and appear as ciphers of civilization and culture. Through the years, Dong Yeon Kim has been using very different materials and techniques in order to maximize their expression and effect.

Many of his works are no higher than a few centimeters. The theme “city” serves as a central metaphor, which in 2003/2004 led to the arrangement of works shown in “The Holy City”. The installations are characterized by the exemplary that remains fundamental, even anonymous, as well as by the extraordinary which – especially placed on the floor, floating from thread, or integrated into table board - preserves the untouchable and the differentiated. Examining the primal human needs of sedentism and nomadism, the sculptural works denote an almost sacral set of mind and expressive condensation.

Dong Yeon Kim’s works are often found at the feet of their beholder who can move between them and looks down on them, creating an almost cartographic impression. In contrast to that, Dong Yeon Kim has enlarged individual segments of the buildings to enable people to step into them and that now function as something between a protective shell, hideaway, contemplative experience, and monumental secret. The buildings themselves are inornate and reduced to basic shapes, even if they refer to public infrastructures (e.g. like the electrical towers). Furthermore, Dong Yeon Kim creates shells of unfinished buildings that suggest the abandoned as well as the incomplete. Simultaneously, the isolated towering buildings that seem to reach up into the sky create moments of nature and transcendence. Many works, especially the most recent ones that are based on the image of smokestacks that emit white smoke, seem to create transitory moments - despite their architectural clearness. The smokestacks are made of bricks and concrete and often reach up well above human size. The swelling “cloudlike” shapes of plaster that represent smoke, describe the

material appearance of the figure: in shape of “Venus” or of a naturalistically modeled (but still fictional) “Angel”: Dong Yeon Kim reconciles conceptions and beliefs and creates images of shining clarity and wondrous incidents. Status and story form a unity that on the one hand delivers itself to the beholder and on the other hand pulls him into a swirl of experiences. Dong Yeon Kim’s works are sensitive approaches that instantly touch us.

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