

**B**EERS London is thrilled to present the debut of South Korean painter, Hyangmok Baik in his first international solo exhibition. Since finding him on Instagram, the young artist's profile has exploded – seeing him appear as an online favourite and securing shows in the USA and abroad. The naïve but honest approach paired with reductive colour schemes and complex compositions has found him a loyal collector base with both peers and critics singing his praises. As is our practice, the gallery reached out to Hyangmok for a few 'thoughts' regarding his forthcoming exhibition, *Forgotten by Us*, and we were so struck by the power, beauty, and unadorned quality of his words that we have decided to print it below, unedited, in its entirety.

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*What surprised me so much when I was preparing for this show is that I had forgotten so many things.*

*The whole world is exhausted now, but I forgot all the little moments before because I only focused on the situation.*

*Hanging out with a loved one,*

*Swimming together,*

*Things like this ... to go on a trip together again.*

*Then I was curious...*

*What have other people forgotten? What are some precious moments we have forgotten?*

*I hope this show is time to share them. It's time to remember things we've forgotten for a while.*

*It's truly the world now, it's tough.*

*Many are tired and depressed.*

*The world is so wide, but we are all tied to our own seats and are unable to leave as freely as before.*

*Then I found out.*

*The moments that were trivial just two years ago were moments that were so precious to us.*

*We are hanging out with loved ones,*

*We went on a trip together,*

*Like birds sitting in a tree and singing, we all gathered together to convey love to each other.*

*We met new people and enjoyed beer together.*

*Those moments that weren't the days when the preparations were masks were very precious moments when I think about it now.*

*And I too easily forgot those precious moments.*

*Now is the time for us to remember again.*

*The small, trivial, but very precious moments we forgot.*

*Because we are overcoming this situation now and we will definitely get over it.*

# FORGOTTEN BY US

H Y A N G M O K B A I K

PREVIEW: THURSDAY 8 JULY (4-8PM)

EXHIBITION: 9 JULY - 7 AUGUST 2021



**Cupid** (2020). Mixed media on canvas 117 x 73 cm



**Moonlight** (2021). Mixed media on canvas 146 x 112 cm

# H Y A N G M O K B A I K

**H**yangmok's work continues in a tradition of bold, somewhat crude, almost post-aesthetic contemporary painting. His work combines a flattened perspective; a raw, heavily-worked surface; unpredictable colour-schemes; and irreverent subject matter – from disembodied heads to ducks to platters of fruit or bottles of champagne – the paintings seem somehow atemporal, acultural, ahistorical, and, paradoxically, universally relatable. Hailing from South Korea, Hyangmok is into surfing and weightlifting, but also keen on dream-analysis and the subtle unspoken intricacies of human interaction. Through recontextualization, the non-sequitur, deconstruction, and a fair amount of dark humour, Hyangmok's paintings would seem just as relevant in California just as soon as they seem to articulate the kind of laissez-faire, post-punk lifestyle of a South Korean millennial.

The manner in which he speaks about his work would not seem out of place, in, say, a Haruki Murakami novel:

*It seems cloudy and gray, like a dream, but it's expressed very clearly. All the elements in my work are arranged through my imagination into a single story. In the very middle of it, A person: he or she or it, is myself or a portrait of a modern person at the same time. A character. Sometimes we can remember the characters in our dreams, but mostly, we can't. I try to express the stories that no one can remember but me, as dreams i've never experienced, and as uncannily familiar moments someone has maybe experienced before, in the past.*

Through his usage of familiar, if uncanny referents, the work offers a fresh perspective to the conversation of painting. Through a diverse visual arsenal of motifs, symbols, and stylistic tendencies, the paintings are elevated to a new kind of complex, albeit reductive, semiotic language. The paintings seem to connect through a sort of visual connectivity apart from language – where the visual has been disassociated from meaning and reduced to a series of images, colours, shapes, and symbols that may (or may not) have a real-life reference and are left for the viewer to impart further meaning.



**H**YANGMONK BAIK (b. 1990, South Korea) lives and works in Seoul, South Korea. He graduated in 2019 with a MA in Fine Art from Hongik University. Solo exhibitions include: 'Image Utopia', Gallery Stan, Seoul, South Korea (2020); 'Wanderlust', Gallery Marron, Seoul, South Korea (2019); solo show, Gallery Meme, Seoul, South Korea (2018); solo show, Gana Art Space, Seoul, South Korea (2016). Group exhibitions include: Yeonhee Art Fair, Seoul, South Korea (2019); KIAF, South Korea (2019); Yohood, Shanghai, China (2019); Gallery Ili, Seoul, South Korea (2019); Art Busan, Busan, Korea (2019); Mercielbiss, Busan, Korea 92019); Stan Art Center, Seoul, South Korea (2019); Chiyoda, Tokyo, Japan (2019).