

Chan-Hyo Bae
Fairy Tales
2 July – 31 July 2010

Press Release

Purdy Hicks Gallery is delighted to announce a new exhibition of works by acclaimed Korean photographer, Chan-Hyo Bae.



Rapunzel



Swan Lake

Following on from his previous series of photographs, *Existing in Costume*, Chan-Hyo Bae's new work continues to explore themes of identity, alienation and memory through the form of exquisitely staged scenes of traditional fairytales.

Since graduating from the Slade School of Fine Art in 2007, Chan-Hyo Bae has expressed in his work the feelings of cultural and emotional estrangement he experienced when he first came to study in England. He wrote: "*as an Asian man, there were many restrictions on entering the western culture*".

The *Existing in Costume* series saw the artist posing in a variety of female historical western costume. Researched in meticulous detail, he created elaborate scenes of himself as a noblewoman from the Elizabethan to Regency periods. Having felt that the West possesses a misplaced sense of superiority over the East, and that Eastern men are considered sexually unattractive to Western women, he portrayed himself as a western noblewoman: both desirable and superior to others.



Existing in Costume 5

The recent works draw further on the idea of placing oneself into a collective consciousness within the dimensions of nationality. Chan-Hyo Bae has chosen as his subject the realms of western fairytales: stories that have permeated our culture and become embedded into our general psyche. As in his previous series, which in turn was inspired by traditional European portraiture, he employs a painterly approach to the subject matter. The combination of carefully scouted locations, authentic costumes, props and settings lend the images an air of historic grandeur, heightened by the use of strong and rich colours.



Sleeping Beauty



Cinderella

The focus on fairytales, a product of history rather than history itself, allows the artist to travel further into our culture and society by embodying not just the people but also the characters they have created, characters often so reflective of society as a whole. For someone who has not encountered them before, these fairytale characters become a vivid source of inspiration in understanding the traditions and values of a different culture, aiding him, perhaps, in becoming more British.

Chan-Hyo Bae: Born, 1975, South Korea. Studied at Kyung-Sung University Korea, and Slade School of Fine Art, London.

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2009 Purdy Hicks Gallery, London, UK
2008 Trunk Gallery, Seoul, Korea
Gallery 44 Centre for Contemporary Photography, Toronto, Canada
2007 Gallery Jin-Sun in Window, Seoul, Korea

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2010 *Chaotic Harmony: Contemporary Korean Photography*, Santa Barbara Museum of Art
2009 *Chaotic Harmony; Contemporary Korean Photography* Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
Equilibrium, Aando Fine Art, Berlin,
Man Woman Human, Trunk Gallery, Seoul
SHE-Another Gesture, Gallery Hyundai, Seoul
Identity, Costume, Cliché, PCNW Gallery, Seattle
2008 *Human Landscape*, Seoul International Photography Festival, Seoul
Storytelling, Photo Edition Berlin, Berlin
The Progressive Canvas, Gallery Wa, Kyunggido, Korea
2007 *International Discoveries*, FotoFest, Houston
The Alchemy of Shadow, Third Lianzhou International Photo Festival, Guangzhou, China
NEW VISIONS, Gallery 181, Lawrence, Massachusetts
FINGERS+CODES The Contemporary Portrait, Eyedrum Art Gallery, Atlanta

Public Collections

- Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara
Museum of Photography, Seoul

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