

## **Facing Disability, Jae-Min Jang**

Jae-Min Jang paints what he sees as if he didn't see. This ironic statement only makes sense in his paintings, which generate life force. In his second solo exhibition titled 'Facing Disability', the artist intentionally misses out clues of the space and time. Through the process of the omission, Jae-Min Jang realizes the perceived scenes as his painting. First, he encounters an object. Then he layers the time he experiences it and the time he paints it. As a result, he delays our vertical time scale. His photos are just physical evidence that proves the scenes he saw. They are used only as means to recall the scenery he spotted.

The narration of Jae-Min Jang's painting depends on his coincidental and immediate judgement made while he is painting. It seems that his work is progressed by its own fate. However, he initiates his work from admitting the hypothetical and imperfect condition where a painting is destined to be. As the enormous 7-meter-width painting <Landscaping> are standing on the floor, instead of hanging on the wall, all the paintings from 'Facing Disability' function as temporary stages for the clear objective of the exhibition. If viewers walk behind <Landscaping>, they meet <Tree Person>, which is not seen from the front as if it were hiding. What is interesting is that <Tree Person>, a half-person half-tree as an incomplete figure, is arranged alone witnessing the back of <Landscaping>. Behind <Landscaping> where the hidden side is revealed, does the artist leave the trace, like a wild animal leaves its trace.

Jae-Min Jang does not paint as planned. One movement occupies a broad space of a canvas and another makes a scratch across it. The artist volatilize the actual scenery with other details such as 'bark' and 'air' cued in the pictures he took. For example, the tombs are erased in the series of <Memorial Park>, and the face of <Tree Person> is unseen in the place of natural burial. It is like individuality is withdrawn by commonality. Unique factors in character, event, and background which render originality of a painting are represented as 'the omitted whole' in his work. Like the outer structure that resembles a human face, the deliberately hidden symbols of the scenery features the sense of 'the omitted whole' in his painting. His act of painting means more than just briefing specific scenes he saw in the past.

The sources of his work does not matter much, indeed. As he mentioned, Jae-Min Jang wandered around cemeteries and some golf courses under construction, and he witnessed a various incidents occurring in the name of landscaping. The paintings, <Where the Rocks Crumbled> and

<The Unexpected Rock> show natural and artificial objects all coexisting in the spontaneous moment, without any clues about where and when. This ongoing landscaping makes still rocks grinded and crumbled for constructing artificial field. Otherwise, they would never have been touched. The person who is barely standing, with pipes sticking out here and there, seems like a mess which refuses to function in his painting.

Hidden forests, sea, rocks, and trees are discovered for human's specific use, and the moment appears to be a "progressive scene" and also 'present' sliding by, as the artist states. As Stephen Kern mentioned "thickened present" in <The Culture of Time and Space>, Jae-Min Jang's work demonstrates a young artist's twofold position in the way that he does not try to capture the scene of the present, but still want to keep up with the moment. Those places he saw dwell in his paintings as if they refused to be fixed, but rather wanted to flow.

As "Facing Disability" shows not just an artist's monologue when confronting a scenery at the moment of isolation, but as visual exploration, it has viewers linger in the exhibition. The flow of the rocks and water and the touch of the mountain range in his painting somehow recall the real scenery landscape painting from the Joseon Dynasty. The sceneries of his paintings are dark, but paradoxically, vivid and powerful. In <The Series of Marginal Poems>, the center of his vision moves into the 'marginal context'. The artist who enjoys night fishing told me one time about how keen his hearing becomes while he is fishing. He said that those surroundings make him feel like he is in another place of tranquility. The paintings, <The Night Air> and <The Bark> can be appreciated for their tactile impression. It is an unfamiliar experience like hearing a sound coming from a remote area.

**By Curator, Si-Won Hyun**