

Edouard Malingue Gallery

馬凌畫廊

Hong Kong | Shanghai

≡ edouardmalingue.com

Art Basel OVR:20c

Cho Yong-Ik

Date

28 – 31 October 2020

Contact

+852 2810 0317

mail@edouardmalingue.com

Press Enquiries

Sarah Aiman

sarah@edouardmalingue.com

+852 2810 0317

Other Enquiries

Lorraine Malingue

lorraine@edouardmalingue.com

+852 2810 0318

Edouard Malingue Gallery is pleased to present at Art Basel Online Viewing Room "OVR: 20c" works created during the 20th century by Cho Yong-Ik (b.1934, South Korea).

Delicate systematic marks revealing a dual undertone; rhythmic yet ad hoc strokes whisking the painterly surface; fine wisps skirting the edges of the page. Each are elements composing the delicate, process-driven work of seminal Korean artist Cho Yong-Ik. Rising to prominence in the mid 60s following his studies at Seoul National University, Cho commenced by creating colourful abstract compositions before passing in the 70s to the Dansaekhwa rubric of expression. Not a movement in the strict sense of including a select number of artists tied to a manifesto, this period of artistic action championed repetition, meditation, and tranquility through placing the "act of making" at the heart of creation. Translated into English as "monochrome painting", Cho differentiated himself from other Dansaekhwa artists by permitting subtle hints of colour to grace his work, whilst maintaining true to the emphasis on natural, energetic materiality.

Following the period of political turmoil that pervaded Korea in the 50s, a need amongst several artists in the newly established South Korea emerged for reconnecting with their roots of the Chosun Dynasty; those sentiments and habits associated with Daoism, Confucianism and Buddhism. Dansaekhwa provided an articulation for this resurgence, through its characteristic of "manipulating" the materials of painting: pushing, painting, dragging it. All, however, without aggression; the effect was rather one of meditative catharsis, an aspect of art production that permits the exploration of soft objects, from rice paper to the pigments used, to the delicate canvas. Melding both pictorial articulation and a level of performance, the works convey a timeless, universal language whilst equally symbolising a "liberation" from strict traditions of Korea's artistic heritage.

Cho followed the key tenets of the Dansaekhwa rubric whilst adding elements of his own. The "Scratch Series" from the 70s, for example, shows his rhythmic gesturing across the canvas, as he pressed off the top layer of paint with his bare thumb to reveal the alter undertone. Following through Cho's "Wave Series" of the 80s and his later "Bamboo Series" of the 90s, one continues to see this constant push and pull between the monochromatic tendencies of his peers and his more vivacious channeling of the techniques. For the "Waves Series" he delicately, yet with great physical exertion and in a single exhalation, whisked at the surface of each painting, creating minimalist, repeated yet ad hoc sweeps across the surface. Suggesting rather than depicting the sea or the ocean, the viewer at once senses it through the works' gestural quality, and is also left to complete the paintings' pictorial equation both through their physical presence and gaze. Equally with the "Bamboo Series", the leaves finely appear on the paper, revealing the textures of the materials used. Whereas the image of the bamboo itself is minimalist, two-dimensional and nearly naive, the quality of execution gives the entire series a textural sense of three dimensionality.

Overall, Cho introduces an important angle to the discussion surrounding Dansaekhwa: he identifies as such an artist – his thoughts as well as techniques certainly associate him with this line of action heralding repetition, meditation, and tranquility – yet, he permitted for the insertion of colour. Rather than it distracting from the rubric's emphasis on meditation, however, it seems to convey the possibility of multiple emotional states, from one of warmth to others of detachment. As such, Cho's works probe us to consider the diverse formal languages of Dansaekhwa and flesh out to a greater extent its associations with tactility, spirit and performance.

Cho Yong-Ik has been highly lauded as one of South Korea's most important painters and recently held a major solo exhibition at the Sungkok Art Museum, Seoul. Further exhibitions include the Samsung Museum of Art, MMCA Seoul & Gwacheon, Arko Art Center Seoul and Fukuoka Museum of Art. Cho's work has additionally been exhibited in various Biennales, including Paris (1961, 1969), Sao Paulo (1967) and is held in multiple permanent collections, including M+ Museum in Hong Kong, National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul Art Museum, Samsung Museum of Art and Gwangju Museum of Art.

///

Edouard Malingue Gallery was founded in Hong Kong in 2010 to build a critical dialogue between Asian and international contemporary artists, both emerging and established, who combine aesthetic concern with conceptual enquiry, and work across different disciplines from video and installation to painting and sound. In 2016 the gallery opened a second space in Shanghai, creating a wider platform of exchange for its roster of artists. In addition to presenting dynamic solo exhibitions, the gallery pushes the boundaries of art in public spaces and stimulates artistic discourse through collaborations with curators worldwide.