

The Hopper Prize

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Yoora Lee

Yoora Lee on growing up with friends who practice a variety of art forms, an evolving definition of art, developing an affection for the 1990's & the power of the media.



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How did you get into making art?

I was born and raised in South Korea. Since I was five, I've always enjoyed drawing. I attended art school all throughout my adolescence, and grew up interacting with friends who practice a variety of art forms such as music and ballet. Through practicing drawing portraiture and still life, I soon acquired the skills to do

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artistic abilities. By the time I graduated with my Master's Degree, my definition of art had completely changed. I had created my own language in painting. The reason I continue to make art is because I'm always finding new ways to create and challenge myself as a painter.



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What are you currently working on?

I'm making grainy VHS grade images meet the retro mood of Japanese anime and 90's TV shows. Time is warped and figures of the present are juxtaposed with those from the past in my painting. Compositionally, the repetition of reflected spaces and screens creates sub-narratives that are open-ended and incomplete. My painting captures the moments of ideal, real, or reflected world from everyday life. There are also themes of the psychological space and physical spaces we face in our daily lives mixed in the painting. This combination is a reflection of my experiences through media and observations of the younger generation's culture and mundane desires.

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What inspired you to get started on this body of work?

I've discovered my affection for the 1990's as an adult through social media, movies and animation. These days, generations who have not experienced the 90's era are immersed in the cultural nostalgia of the past. Hence why I am using the cultural context of the 90's, which is responsible for today's young generation's culture. Various television dramas and movies are reproducing the previous era. I think this power of the media often manipulates people's mind and memory. I'm interested in the fact that time can be edited and rebuilt by people who archive the past.

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Do you work on distinct projects or do you take a broader approach to your practice?

I make a drawing or a note if there is anything that comes to mind. My process starts with the spark of an idea, then a sketch, and finally onto a painting. Sometimes an image or a video will guide the direction of my new work. I usually work on one piece at a time until I am satisfied.



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