

PRESS RELEASE**KICHE |** 《-Director》**On View** 2024.08.29(Thurs) – 2024.09.28(Sat)**Venue** KICHE**Artists** SHIH Yung Chun, KWON Ahram, JUNG Soo Jung

Installation view of 《-Director》
(Image courtesy of KICHE and SHIH Yung Chun)

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- **Exhibition exploring the directorial approach in the works of three artists and their relationship with the viewer**

INTRODUCTION

From August 29 to September 28, KICHE holds a group exhibition, *-Director*, featuring artists **KWON Aram Kwon**, **SHIH Yung Chun**, and **JUNG Soo Jung**. This exhibition focuses on the attitude and working methods of the artists as "directors." Here, "director" means, deciding on a 'repertoire', choosing narratives, practice structures, and materials, and designing the entirety of the drama, including the direction and composition that fit it, to create a visual product from the artist's perspective. This practice is deeply connected to how the artist establishes and approaches the relationship with the viewer based on his or her own perspective and worldview.

Antonin Artaud's "**Theatre of Cruelty**," stemmed as a motif for the exhibition, signifies above all that **theater is something difficult and cruel. However "on the level of performance, it is not the cruelty we can exercise upon each other by hacking at each other's bodies, carving up our personal anatomies ... but the much more terrible and necessary cruelty which things can exercise against us. We are not free. And the sky can still fall on our heads. And the theater has been created to teach us that first of all. [...] I propose that the means and images that stimulate ecstasy through theater return to the idea of physical perception."**¹ In this exhibition, the three artists navigate freely through past and present, reality and virtual, searching for materials for their work, giving them symbol values, and decorating the stage with their own unique methodologies.

KWON Ahram critically examines the media network that spreads out like a dense spider web across almost every corner and moment of daily life. Increasingly, screens have dismantled their physical form – divided into minute units and penetrated into layers that we had not even imagined. The on/off switch that allows the user to intervene and control stimulation is ever more cleverly hidden while penetrating into the physical and inner worlds delicately and persistently like fog. In this sense, it is probably impossible to control the environment through one's free will by specifically recognizing the place, time, and method of exposure, as we have now reached a point where we are trying to send advertisements into space using satellites.

Double Wall is an extension of the works combining screens and mirrors, with five screens tied together. When the viewers enter the exhibition space where the work is installed, they are met with the discontinuously flashing light without any warning, explanations to induce assimilation, or steps in between. It is impossible to know where and how it starts, or what is behind the flashing wall. The mirror reflects the object in front of it, but at the same time, repels it. The viewers are helplessly placed on a path that repeats endlessly without an exit, as if they are sucked into a Möbius strip.

SHIH Yung Chun's work begins with old magazine images, furniture, and toys that he collected or discovered. He freely reconstructs the "objects" surrounding him that encompass the past and the present. In doing so, he maintains a complex structure of installation, video, sculpture, painting, and short stories, and does not set any set rules. As seen in **Kitchen**, the artist builds shelves, objects, and figures himself based on a single magazine photo, or, as in **Private Hotel**, creates an unfinished dollhouse painting from his previous work into a large-scale, site-specific installation. In the main work, **Private Hotel**, the artist actively intervenes in the way of viewing and movements by placing a dollhouse in the center of a room surrounded by mirrors, blocking the front with a wall, and allowing the inside to be seen only through either a small hole at waist height or from the second-floor railing.

Fairy tales and fables made for children are never innocent. The values and ideologies inherent in the history

¹ Artaud, Antonin. *Theatre and Its Double*. Seoul, Jimanjidrama, 2021, 144-146 (Translation in Korean).

of rise and fall that humans have experienced as members of social groups are not fixed as one, but vary significantly in each cultural sphere. In fact, they are exaggerated narratively. This complex aspect of “toys” has been a constant subject of interest to artists for a long time. **In that context, the scenes created with and drawn from toys and objects collected or handmade by the artist symbolize unrealistic dreams or a type of loss that resides in him – and us – wandering between the present and the past, the reality and the ideal.**

JUNG Soo Jung's references to the West and the East densely compose a dual canvas that seems familiar yet unfamiliar. The various icons that the artist usually collects and summons are symbols in themselves. At the same time, by blending them together, she creates a narrative that alternates between continuity and discontinuity. These scenes seem to converge into one large worldview, but they are always inconsistent and disjointed. **The viewers, while drawn in by the familiar icons, cannot easily immerse themselves or become assimilated into the scene. When they stand in front of her paintings, like in Brecht's plays, one must take a step back before the story unfolds in order to finally converse with the work.**

Newly introduced in this exhibition, the ‘tropical painting’ series starts from an interest in certain styles and types revealed in natural objects. The three works, *Tropical Games*, *My Juggler*, and *Shell and Tango*, form a triptych to bring together various elements such as nature, women, nymphs, and animals, and actively use repetition and patterns to connect and balance. Starting with a turtle with a hard shell and slippery skin, it continues into various species of plants and animals that have survived through evolution, and introduces a fictional character. The artist depicts the dynamic power of nature through her painting style and perspective. In addition, images such as *Farewell, My Old Friend*, and *Harvest*, which mix the faces of people and animals, stand out as new attempts by the artist as they are portraits that borrow from the Japanese Ukiyoe artist Utagawa Kuniyoshi's personification of animals.

The attitude and direction of the “director” that the three artists each take in their work are distinct. However, similarities can be found in that rather than inducing immersion or assimilation, they intentionally create distance or difficulties for the viewer. In effect, the viewer is not overly swept away by the visual sensations but rather given the space to stand before these works with a cool head, just as on the stage of the “Theatre of Cruelty” that Artaud proposed.

ARTISTS**SHIH Yung Chun**

SHIH Yung Chun (b.1978) lives and works in Taipei, Taiwan. He received his B.F.A. in the Department of Western Fine Arts from the National Taiwan University of Arts. He has held solo exhibitions at HiArt space (2021, Shanghai), YIRI ARTS (2021, Taipei), Hive Center for Contemporary Art (2019, Beijing), 798 Line-Gallery (2016, 2012, Beijing), Art Experience Gallery (2015, Hong Kong), and more. He has also participated in group exhibitions at KICHE (2024, 2023, Seoul), Heide Museum of Modern Art (2024, Melbourne), YIRI ARTS (2024, 2018, Taipei), Taitung Art Museum (2023, Taitung), Long Museum West Bund (2022, Shanghai), Hive Center for Contemporary Art (2021, Beijing), FreeS Art Space (2018, Taipei), Long Museum Pudong (2013, Shanghai), and more.

**SHIH Yung Chun*****Private Hotel***

2024, Acrylic on Wooden panel, Ceramics, Fabric, Carpet,
Antique ready-made object, 3D Prints, Oil on canvas
183W x 191H x 93D cm

Courtesy of KICHE © SHIH Yung Chun



Installation view of «-Director»
(Image courtesy of KICHE and SHIH Yung Chun)



SHIH Yung Chun

Kitchen

2024, Acrylic on Wooden panel, Air Dry Kaolin Clay, Antique wine bottle, Antique Paper box
51W x 63H x 32D cm
Courtesy of KICHE © SHIH Yung Chun



SHIH Yung Chun

Choice Paralysis in Tableware

2024, Oil on canvas, 90.9 x 72.7 cm
Courtesy of KICHE © SHIH Yung Chun



Installation view of «-Director»
(Image courtesy of KICHE and SHIH Yung Chun)



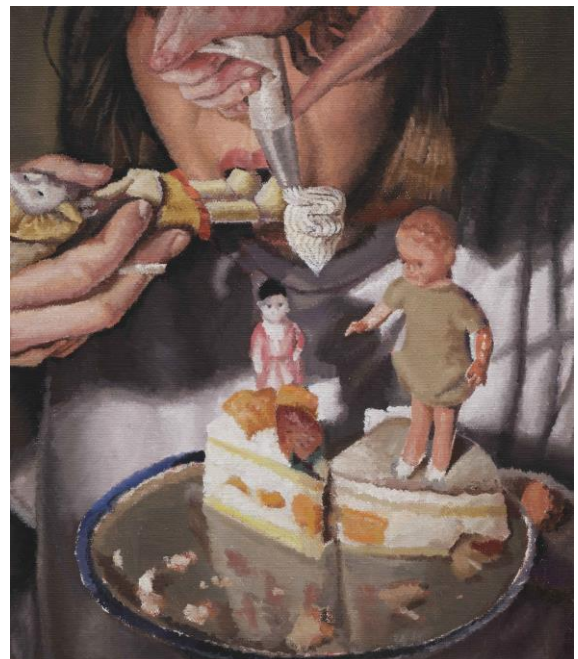
SHIH Yung Chun

Homage to European Architecture

2024, Oil on canvas, 3D prints Dolls

65 x 53 cm (Painting), 32 x 18 x 13 cm (2 Dolls)

Courtesy of KICHE © SHIH Yung Chun



SHIH Yung Chun

The Pastry Chef

2024, Oil on canvas, 53 x 45 cm

Courtesy of KICHE © SHIH Yung Chun

KWON Ahram

KWON Ahram(b.1987) is a Seoul-based artist who holds a B.F.A from Konkuk University, an M.F.A from Slade School of Fine Art, University College London, and a Ph.D in Design Major from Seoul National University. She has held solo exhibitions at The Great Collection (2021, Seoul), One and J.+1 (2018, Seoul), and more. She has participated in group exhibitions at KICHE (2024, 2023, Seoul), Museum Hanmi (2024, Seoul), SONGEUN (2022, Seoul), Seoul Museum of Art (2022, Seoul), Sungkok Art Museum (2021, Seoul), and international venues in Hong Kong, London, Germany, and Netherlands. In 2022, she received the Grand Prize at the 21st edition of the SONGEUN Art Award Exhibition.

**KWON Ahram****(L) *Double Wall_R2***

2024, LED, stainless super mirror, 50 x 50 x 8 cm

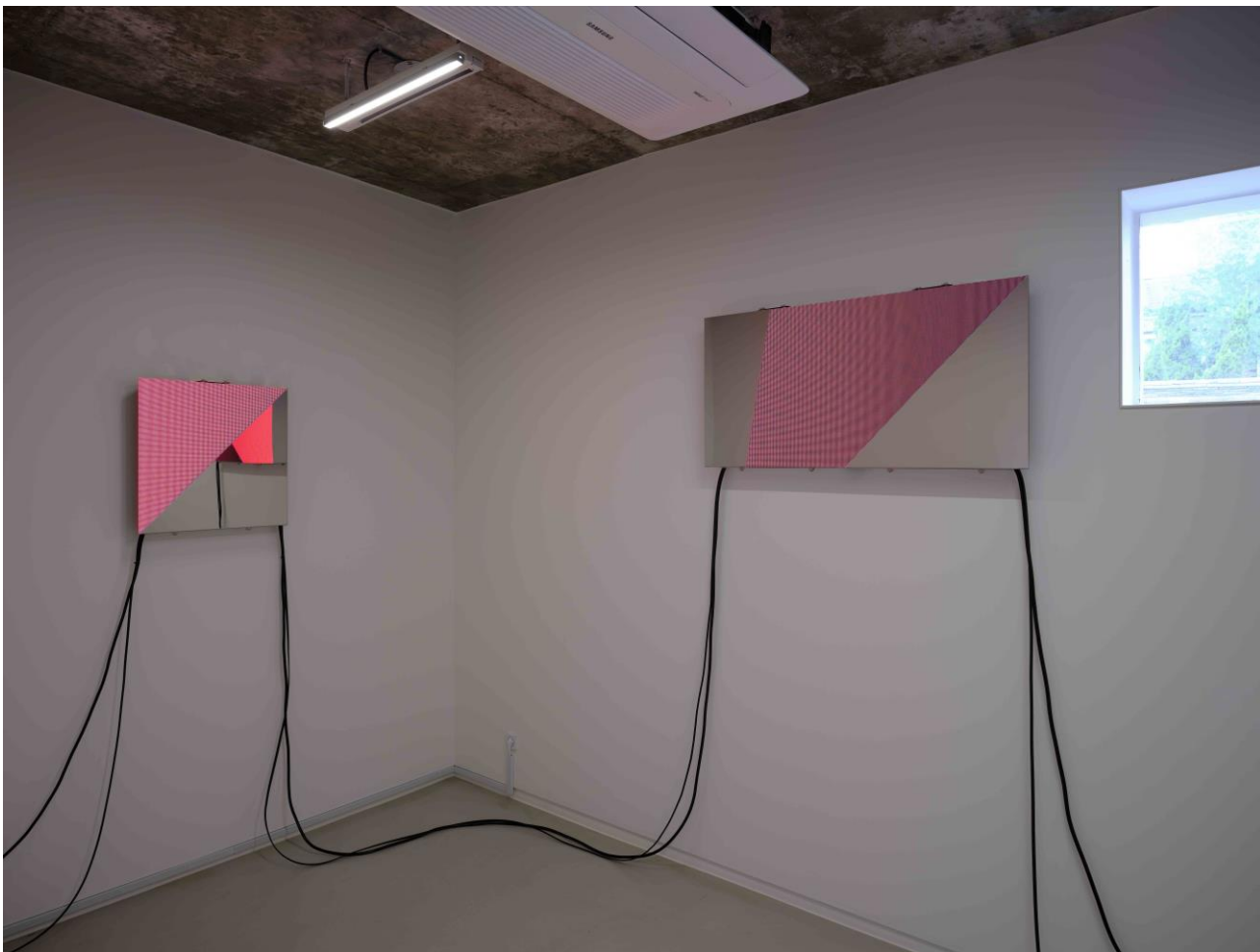
(M) *Double Wall_R4*

2024, LED, stainless super mirror, 50 x 50 x 8 cm

(R) *Double Wall_R5*

2024, LED, stainless super mirror, 50 x 50 x 8 cm

Courtesy of KICHE © KWON Ahram



KWON Ahram

(L) *Double Wall_R2*

2024, LED, stainless super mirror, 50 x 50 x 8 cm

(R) *Double Wall_R3*

2024, LED, stainless super mirror, 50 x 100 x 8 cm

Courtesy of KICHE © KWON Ahram



KWON Ahram

(L) ***Double Wall_R3***

2024, LED, stainless super mirror, 50 x 100 x 8 cm

(M) ***Double Wall_R2***

2024, LED, stainless super mirror, 50 x 50 x 8 cm

(R) ***Double Wall_R4***

2024, LED, stainless super mirror, 50 x 50 x 8 cm

Courtesy of KICHE © KWON Ahram

JUNG Soo Jung

JUNG Soo Jung(b.1990) is a Seoul-based artist who holds a BA from Gachon University, and MFA from The Glasgow School of Art. She has held solo exhibitions at A-Lounge (2023, 2021, Seoul), SeMA warehouses (2021, Seoul), OCI Museum (2020, Seoul) and more. She has participated in group exhibitions at KICHE (2024, Seoul), IAH (2024, 2023, 2021, Seoul), Pace Gallery Seoul (2024, Seoul), Frieze Seoul (2023, Seoul), Daejeon Museum of Art (2023, Daejeon), Ilminmuseum (2023, Seoul), Cylinder (2022, Seoul), Museum Head (2020, Seoul), Buk-Seoul Museum of Art (2019, Seoul), Project Space1 (2015, Glasgow), Stirling Castle (2015, Stirling) and more.

**JUNG Soo Jung***My Juggler*

2024, Oil on canvas, 122 x 91 cm (Painting), 65 x 62 x 30 cm (Stand)

Courtesy of KICHE © JUNG Soo Jung

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JUNG Soo Jung

Shell and Tango

2024, Oil on canvas, 122 x 91 cm (Painting), 65 x 62 x 30 cm (Stand)

Courtesy of KICHE © JUNG Soo Jung



JUNG Soo Jung

Tropical Games

2024, Oil on canvas, 122 x 91 cm (Painting), 65 x 62 x 30 cm (Stand)

Courtesy of KICHE © JUNG Soo Jung



Installation view of «-Director»
(Image courtesy of KICHE and JUNG Soo Jung)



JUNG Soo Jung

Strophanthus

2024, Oil on canvas, 50 x 45 cm

Courtesy of KICHE © JUNG Soo Jung

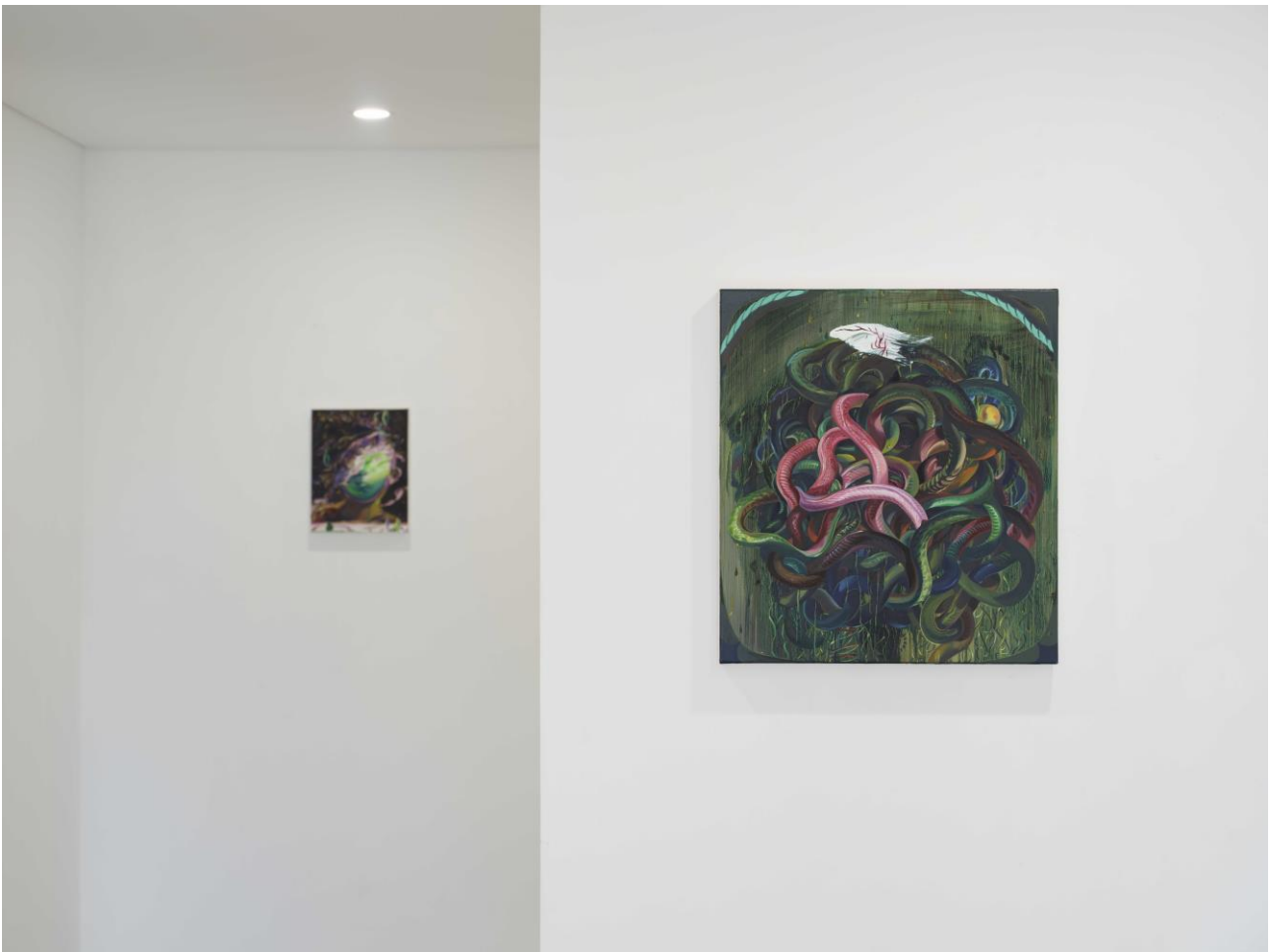


JUNG Soo Jung

Dead Sea

2024, Oil and acrylic on canvas, 31.8 x 40.9 cm

Courtesy of KICHE © JUNG Soo Jung



Installation view of «-Director»
(Image courtesy of KICHE and JUNG Soo Jung)



JUNG Soo Jung

Harvest

2024, Oil and acrylic on canvas, 30 x 24 cm

Courtesy of KICHE © JUNG Soo Jung



JUNG Soo Jung

Farewell

2024, Oil and acrylic on canvas, 30 x 24 cm

Courtesy of KICHE © JUNG Soo Jung

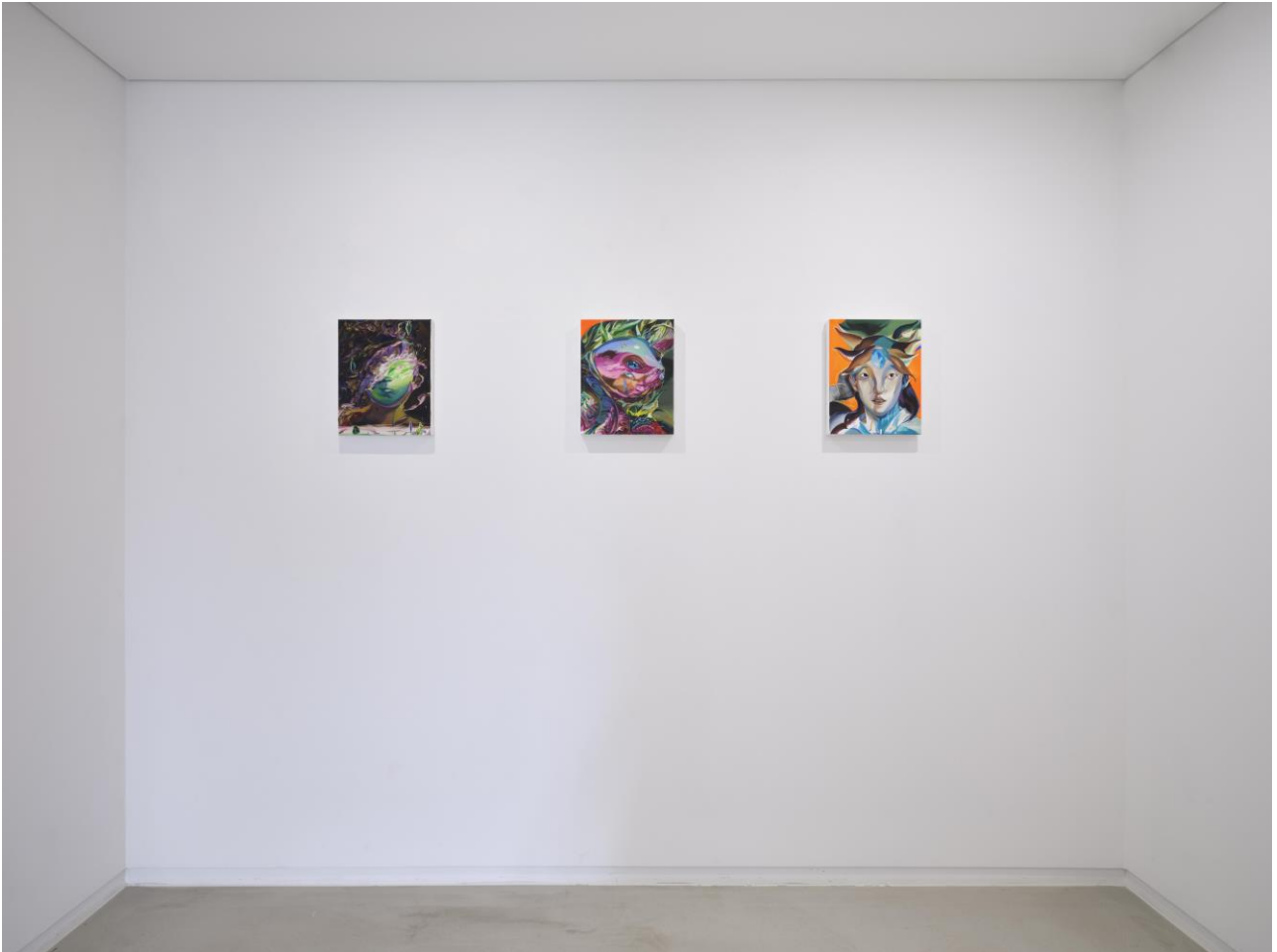


JUNG Soo Jung

My old friend

2024, Oil and acrylic on canvas, 30 x 24 cm

Courtesy of KICHE © JUNG Soo Jung



Installation view of «-Director»
(Image courtesy of KICHE and JUNG Soo Jung)