

HESSE FLATOW

Sung Hwa Kim: *I Still Dream*

June 3 – July 1, 2022

Opening reception: June 3, 6-8pm

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HESSE FLATOW is pleased to present *I Still Dream*, an exhibition of paintings by the New York-based artist Sung Hwa Kim, marking his first solo presentation with the gallery.



Sung Hwa Kim's paintings embody a spirit of contemporary Romanticism in their portrayals of lightness. His *Nocturne* series, which began during the recent pandemic, explore the dichotomy between light and dark through symbolic valences of hope and life triumphing over loss and despair. Like a modern-day flâneur, Kim takes inspiration from regular walks throughout the city, often stopping and taking notice of things that are fleeting and frequently overlooked. In his cinematic paintings, butterflies, lightning bugs, flowers, and the moon are common protagonists, whose forms are delineated by a mesmerizing, intrinsic glow.

Language plays a significant role within Kim's work, as his characteristically long titles double as miniature haikus, whose potent lyricisms invoke feelings of love, longing, and wistful nostalgia. Not only are they evocative of the artist's personal musings on his subject matter, but their narrative qualities act as open invitations for viewers to continue the verse, all the while reflecting on their own memories and emotions.

Kim's radiant lifeforms are reminders of the ephemeral nature of human existence placed in stark relief against an inured urban context. Their enduring lightness arrests one's gaze and reignites a connection to things absent or forgotten, heightening an awareness of self. As time inevitably passes, and nothing lasts forever, Kim's paintings persevere in their endearing defiance against darkness, always looking into the future and remaining stubbornly optimistic.

Sung Hwa Kim (b. 1985, Seoul, South Korea) received his MFA at the Maryland Institute College of Art and his BFA from The Art Institute of Boston. Recent group exhibitions include "Gone Was the Glow" at 1969 Gallery (New York, NY); "You Had Me At Hello: New American Paintings 2022 Review" at Steven Zevitas Gallery (Boston, MA); "The Views" at Moskowitz Bayse (Los Angeles, CA); "Shifted Horizon" at HESSE FLATOW (New York, NY); "36 Paintings" at Harper's Books (East Hampton, NY); "NOCTURNE" on Galleryplatform.LA, M+B (Los Angeles, CA); "The Edge Effect" curated by Akili Tommasino at The Katonah Museum of Art (Katonah, NY). Sung Hwa Kim lives and works in New York City.

Image: Sung Hwa Kim, *They are not gone. They will wait for you and be with you*, 2022, acrylic, flashe, and gouache on canvas, 40 x 60 in (101.6 x 152.4 cm)