

Floating Worlds: Kyung Jeon, Taiyo Kimura, kozyndan, Andre Yi

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Branch Gallery is pleased to present *Floating Worlds: Kyung Jeon, Taiyo Kimura, kozyndan, Andre Yi*.

In 19th-century Japan, “Floating World” referred not only to the urban underworld, but also the images connected to it: *ukiyo-e* (or “pictures of the floating world”). Like this earlier visual form—closely associated with metropolitan culture, its isolated pleasures and a love of nature and landscape—the four artists in *Floating Worlds* create alternate realities in their work, twisting convention and our expectations in a range of media. The result is at times humorous, disturbing, and surreal; familiar even in its strangeness.

Kyung Jeon’s large-scale drawings resemble Japanese scroll paintings, yet their multi-faceted narratives are often comically dark, drawing on Jeon’s personal experiences to explore the perils of navigating through stereotypes of Asian femininity. Upon first glance, Jeon’s works seem to be populated by sweet doll-like girls and boys reminiscent of those found in Japanese Manga; but the naïve, dream-like style of her drawings belies the more sinister landscape of the artist’s imagination. Jeon is based in New York and received her MFA from the School of Visual Arts, NY in 2003.

Taiyo Kimura’s humorous video, *Typical Japanese English* is a Dadaesque exploration of details of language, lost in translation. Watching the artist fight his cat for food, make dinner in a washing machine, pick up a pair of chopsticks with his eyes, and perform other “tasks”, an alternate reality begins to emerge in what might be seen as a commentary on the challenges of urban life. Kimura, who is based in Tokyo, received his BFA from the Sokei Academy of Fine Art and Design in 1995. He has shown extensively outside of the United States in venues such as the Wuerttembergischer Kunstverein in Stuttgart, Germany, and the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art in Kanazawa, Japan.

Artist duo kozyndan (Kozue and Dan Kitchens) will exhibit works from their recent series, *Nirai Kanai*. This body of work employs the culture of *ama*, or diving women of Japan, as a vehicle to explore the climate of disconnection in contemporary culture. Through the idealistic and romantic lens of the *ama*, kozyndan look to a world in which harmony in life is achieved through harmony with nature, and where women are the masters of their own fates. kozyndan are based in Los Angeles, and both received their BFAs from California State, Fullerton in 2002.

Andre Yi’s paintings combine the flat, monochromatic color fields of modernism with delicate renderings of crumbling, solitary architectural forms. The artist uses colored pencil to draw ruined structures: mills, mines, bridges, and general stores; which float ghost-like in fields of soft, yielding pigment. These spare landscapes, whose quiet delicacy recalls Japanese or Korean wood-block prints, create beauty out of something wasted; bringing to mind the distant past or perhaps a nearer future, where we might ruminate on ruinous attempts at utopia. Yi—who is based in Los Angeles—received his MFA from the Cranbrook Academy of Art in 1998.

For more information, please contact Teka Selman or Chloë Seymore at info@branchgallery.com or 919.918.1116.

Gallery Hours: Wed–Sat 12–6 or by appt.

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