

PRESS RELEASE
27/01/2008



Seohyun and Her Pink Things, 2007

JEONGMEE YOON
The Pink and Blue Project

La Caja Blanca is proud to present "The Pink and Blue Project", JeongMee Yoon's first solo show in Europe.

In her latest photographic series, Yoon uses her mischievous sense of humour and characteristic curiosity, to entice the viewer into an exploration of society's fascination with the collection of objects.

Her enchanting portraits of young boys and girls proudly displaying their personal treasures, raises uneasy questions about freedom of choice and identity in contemporary society.

Yoon will be visiting us in Spain for the opening, thanks to the kind support of Arts Council Korea.

ARTIST: JeongMee Yoon

EXHIBITION TITLE: Pink and Blue Project

PRIVATE VIEW: Friday 8th February 2008, 20.00 – 22.00

EXHIBITION DATES: 9th February 2008 – 5th April 2008

MORE INFORMATION ON THE ARTIST: www.lacajablanca.com

GALLERY ADDRESS: La Caja Blanca, Calle Verí 9, Palma de Mallorca 07001, Spain

OPENING HOURS WEEKDAYS: Monday – Friday 11.00 to 13.30 and 17.00 to 20.00

OPENING HOURS WEEKENDS: Saturday 11.00 to 13.30 and Sundays Closed

GALLERY CONTACT: Eva Shakouri tel. 00 34 971 722 364 [info\(a\)lacajablanca.com](mailto:info(a)lacajablanca.com)

This exhibition has been kindly supported
by the Arts Council Korea:



ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

"The Pink and Blue Project" at La Caja Blanca, brings together a selection of ten photographs from a series initiated in 2005, while the Korean artist was studying at the SVA, School of Visual Arts in New York.

Since the initial experiments with a 6x6 format Hasselblad camera and her five-year-old daughter's collection of "pink things", Yoon has made over XX portraits from children – boys and girls – who live in entirely different social and cultural environments, within the first world.

Today, the project has developed into a work in progress which Yoon adds to as she travels across the globe.

... she loves pink so much that she wants to wear only pink clothes and use only pink toys or objects... I found that she is not unusual and most other little girls in the U.S. and South Korea love pink clothing, accessories and toys. This phenomenon seems widespread among various ethnic groups regardless of their cultural background.

- JeongMee Yoon

THE PHOTOGRAPHS

In the fashion of traditional portraiture, the sitters appear accompanied by their most prized possessions, a collection of status-signifying and gender-specific objects.

At first glance, the photographic studies of smiling little children, immersed in their vibrant colour of choice, merging into their private collections of artefacts and objects, appear humorous, delightful and charming. Displayed together within a museum or gallery space, however, the little characters appear as exhibits within a collection of studies, provoking an eerie sense of staged, orchestrated performance.

While the camera appears to offer a non-objective, detailed, and neutral gaze into the child's universe, the viewer is offered a seductive insight into the very process of identity construction in contemporary society.

Surrounded by a host of objects carefully displayed according to size, shape and colour, the children appear to assimilate and mimic the aesthetic qualities of these objects, in an effort to become *like* them, to belong to the same category.

THE ARTISTS DISCOURSE

This fascination with the accumulation of things, and the relationship with social systems is a recurring theme in Yoon's work. Between 2000 and 2004, the Korean artist worked on a series titled "Space-Man-Space" where she photographed workers at shops in Seoul, as they were classifying and organizing their items in order to display as many as possible in very tight spaces.

I am fascinated by [...] artificial environments that are arranged and organized through predetermined classifications.

- JeongMee Yoon

In "The Pink and Blue Project", she takes these concerns a step further, by explicitly referencing objects that are displayed in a museum collection, questioning the role of collecting in contemporary society.

LA CAJA BLANCA

When I take pictures, I begin the photographic session by arranging the larger items blankets and coats, and then spread the smaller articles on the bed and floor... This method shows my organization of subjects similar to the way in which museums categorize their inventories and display their collections.

- JeongMee Yoon

The neutrality of the camera's gaze in these works, and their evenly diffused lighting and all over sharpness of focus conveys the sense of a social inventory.

- Richard Vine, Managing Editor, ART IN AMERICA.

It is not entirely clear whether Yoon's work is consciously exploring the theme of collecting, as a mechanism for constructing identity within a pre-defined social system, or if her work seeks to celebrate the joy of aesthetic and material consumption.

Nonetheless, once the first impressions left by the oversweet images melt away, the viewer is confronted with a series of awkward questions: Who exactly is responsible for the performance we see here, the media? The parents? The photographer? The marketing departments for Barbie and Superman toys? ... the children themselves?

ABOUT THE ARTIST

JeongMee Yoon (Corea, 1969), earned both a BFA from Seoul National University and a MFA from Hong-Ik University in South Korea. In 2006, she received her MFA from the School of Visual Arts in New York City.

Her work has been widely exhibited in galleries and museums around the world, including a solo show at the Kumho Museum, Seoul, as well as several collective shows such as the Busan Biennale and Gwangju Biennale in South Korea, Casa Asia in Barcelona, Loop Art Festival in Barcelona, Paris Cinema, Thermocone of Art - New Asian Waves at the Center for Art and Media (Karlsruhe, Germany), New Acquisitions at the Museum of Fine Arts (Houston, Texas, USA), Flash Cube at the Samsung Museum of Art (Seoul, South Korea), The Photographic Center Northwest Gallery in Seattle, Washington and the Perkins Center for the Arts in New Jersey.

Numerous awards include the prestigious 2006 Daum Prize presented by the Geonhi Art Foundation (Seoul, South Korea), the Aaron Siskind Scholarship (NY, USA), and the Paula Rhodes Memorial Award among many others. In 2007, Yoon publishes a Photobook titled "The Pink and Blue Project" which gathers many of these photographs, with accompanying texts by the artist herself, Young June Lee, and Richard Vine (Managing Editor of *Art in America*). The book becomes selected by American PHOTO magazine as one of "The Best Photo Books of the Year". In April 2007, one of JeongMee's photographs from her Pink and Blue project appeared on the cover of Life magazine, accompanied by a report inside the publication. This issue turned out to be the penultimate edition of the now mythical publication.

Yoon's work is held in collections worldwide including Johnson & Johnson Collection (NJ, USA), National Museum of Contemporary Art (South Korea), The Museum of Fine Art (Houston, USA) Art Bank (South Korea), 5.18 Foundation (Gwangju, South Korea), Ssamzi e Space (South Korea), the Dell Children's Medical Center (Texas, USA), and the private collection of Bonnie Yochelson (at the time she was Curator of Museum of the City of New York, USA).

Having lectured in six prominent academic institutions in South Korea since 1999, Yoon currently continues to teach photography at Seoul National University, the most prestigious centre for undergraduate and postgraduate study in the country and Seoul Institute of the Arts, a specialist centre for visual and performance arts.

METHODOLOGY AND PHOTOGRAPHIC TECHNIQUE

JeongMee uses a 6x6 Hasselblad camera, with the smallest aperture, f-22, in order to make sure all objects within the frame, appear in sharp focus, as in a painting.

Five to eight rolls of films are used in each photo session, while the definitive image is chosen among the sixty to ninety resulting proofs.

Globe diffused lighting is used in order to flash all the articles in a small room evenly.

RELATED LINKS

"Pink and Blue Project", a selection of works by JeongMee Yoon

<http://www.lacajablanca.com/EXHIBITIONS/exhibitions.htm>

Seoul National University

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seoul_National_University

Seoul Institute of the Arts

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seoul_Institute_of_the_Arts

JeongMee Yoon website

<http://photyoo.simspace.com/>