

SESAMEGALLERY

KOH SANG WOO

TRUE STORIES

EXHIBITION PREVIEW

6.5.10 – 3.6.10

PRIVATE VIEW: THURSDAY 6th MAY 6:30PM – 8:30PM

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TRUE STORIES

Koh Sang Woo has a taste for controversy. His images may look beautiful, but the stories beneath needle away at the unspoken do's and don'ts that tie us up in social and cultural obligations. His last exhibition in his hometown of Seoul, South Korea, was almost pulled at the last moment due to a call from KBS, the Korean equivalent of the BBC. It featured one of their presenters, with her husband, in a state of undress and, more importantly, without their permission. Another show picturing a mixed race couple was simply avoided and mothballed, to avoid offending 'cultural sensibilities'. And yet it's hard for us in the West to believe by just looking at the work.

Koh's art is part painting, part performance, documented in photography. Carefully choosing his subjects for their personal stories, he paints directly onto their bodies as he works, and then reverses the colours in the final exposure to give his photos an unmistakable electric vibrancy. In one way, he is an artist that paints photographs, and sees the world in reverse. But this reversal is also a social statement, a means of subverting the way society can push people away from their ideals, and make them compromise and change to accommodate social pressures.

In *True Stories*, all his photographs probe the kind of subtle conventions that restrain and limit their subjects - be it corporate control, racial prejudice, or the pressure to "be the best" as in his Portrait of a Girl / Portrait of a Woman" series. The works thus become a kind of release and defiance, beautifully rendered. And it's his Eastern form of kicking against the system that makes Koh's work so interesting. Not in the obvious punk aggressive way, what the West is used to, but a more discreet and suave manner of counter-culture, balancing Korean values of discipline and respect with the need to make a point.

Koh is typical of why there is a current swell of international interest in Korean contemporary art. Moon Generation, the spotlight exhibition for Korean Art at the Saatchi Gallery in October 2009, received superb reviews, and Koh been selected to exhibit at the Korean Art Show, a similar show timed to coincide with the 2010 Armory Show in New York. Having been overshadowed by the booming Chinese market, increased investment and activity is helping Korean art make serious inroads on the contemporary scene. Given that Korea is currently the thirteenth largest economy in the world (predicted to become the 3rd largest by Goldman Sachs), and already has a massive cultural presence in Asia through its films and music (known as the Hallyu wave), it is only a matter of time before, as an ArtTactic report recently stated, "the Korean art market and its collectors .. play a very important role in the Asian and international art market in the future."

About Koh Sang Woo

Koh Sang Woo was born in Seoul and currently lives in New York. He has had numerous important international exhibitions recently, including "Media Media" at the Queens Museum New York, Pulse Miami, "Distinctively Korea" at Christies in London, the Sungkok museum in Seoul, and as an invited artist at the 798 Beijing Biennial in China. Along with solid auction results in both Hong Kong and New York, Koh also exhibited most recently in the important "Korean Art Show" in New York, timed to coincide with the Armory Show in 2010 and to raise the profile of contemporary Korean art. True Stories will be his first solo exhibition in the UK.

With enquiries, please contact: James Freeman

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True Stories is sponsored by Kay Mounting, the diasec mounting specialist - www.kaymounting.co.uk



ARTWORKS



Portrait of a Girl II
C-Type Lambda print,
Diasec mounted, ed. 5, 2010
76 cm x 107 cm
£2950



There Was Love III

C-Type Lambda print,

Diasec mounted, no. 3/ 5, 2009

74cm x 74cm

£2000



What Light Dreams II

C-Type Lambda print,

Diasec mounted, ed. 5, 2009

112 cm x 163 cm

£5000



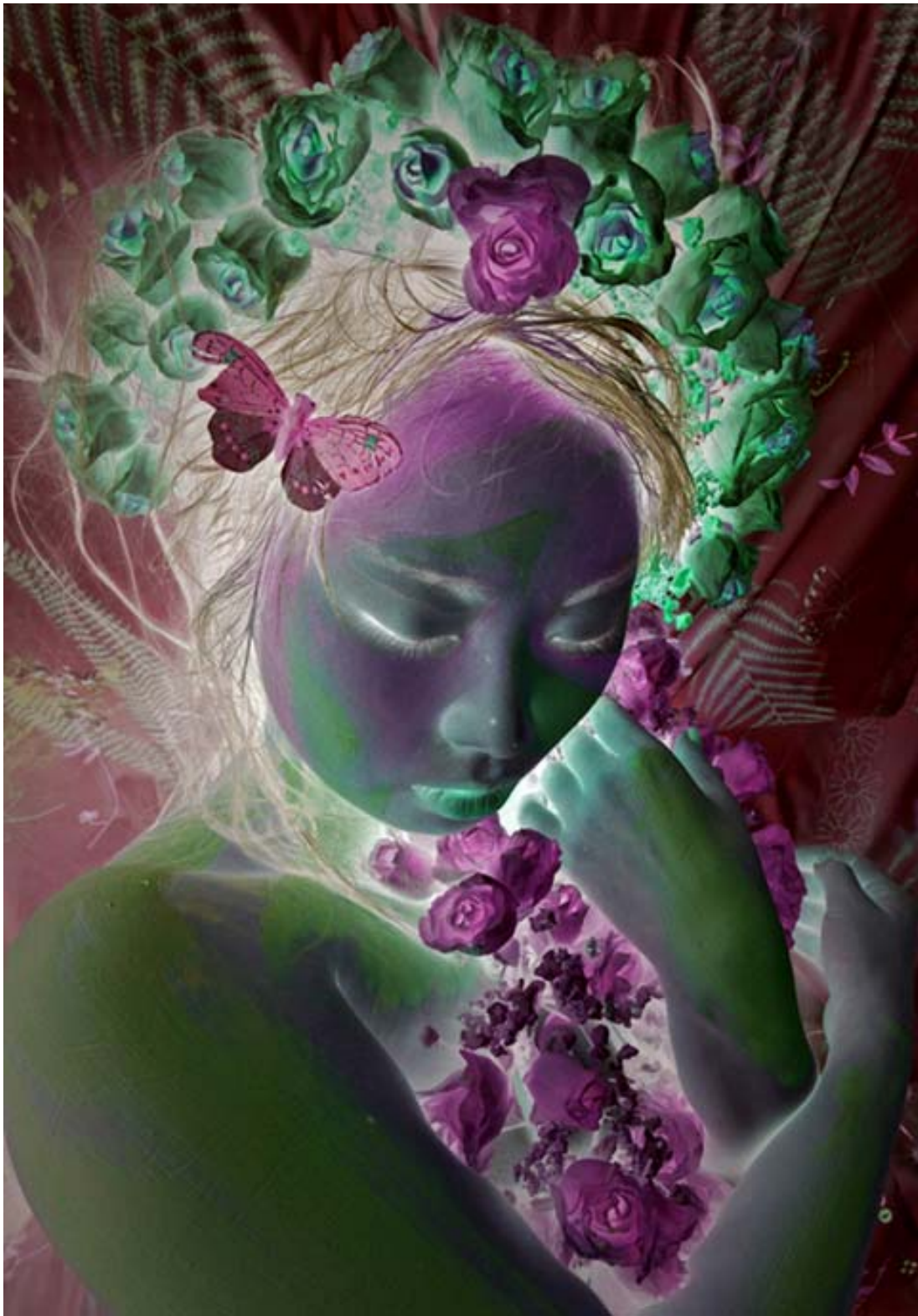
Portrait of a Girl I

C-Type Lambda print,

Diasec mounted, ed. 5, 2010

76 cm x 107 cm

£2950



Portrait of a Woman II

C-Type Lambda print,

Diasec mounted, ed. 5, 2010

122 cm x 180 cm

£5750

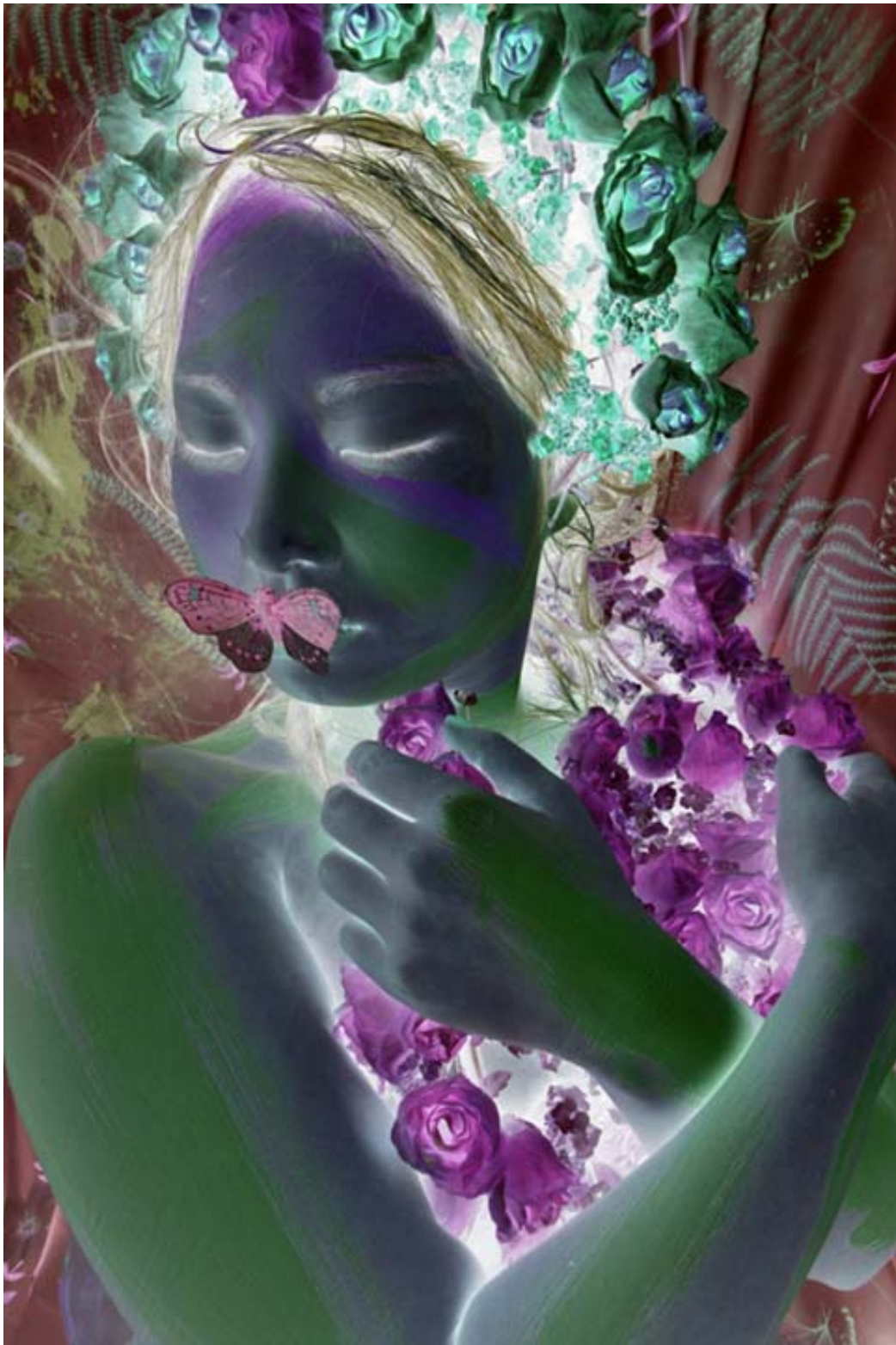


Kiss II

C-Type Lambda print,
Diasc mounted, ed. 5, 2010

76 cm x 107 cm

£2950



Musical Inspiration

C-Type Lambda print,

Diasec mounted, ed. 5, 2010

76 cm x 107 cm

£2950



Portrait of a Woman
C-Type Lambda print,
Diasec mounted, ed. 5, 2010
76 cm x 107 cm
£3500 (edition sold out - only Artist Proof available)



Portrait of a Couple

C-Type Lambda print,
Diasec mounted, ed. 5, 2010

76cm x 51cm

£1500



Hug II

C-Type Lambda print,
Diasec mounted, ed. 5, 2010

56cm x 59cm

£1250



Kiss IV

C-Type Lambda print,

Diasec mounted, ed. 5, 2010

51cm x 38cm

£950



Conversations between a man & a woman

Diasec mounted, no. 2/3, 2010

76 cm x 107 cm

£2950



Hug

C-Type Lambda print,

Diasec mounted, ed. 5, 2010

76 cm x 107 cm

£2950



Karma Sex

C-Type Lambda print,
Diasc mounted, ed. 5, 2010

76 cm x 51 cm

£1500



What Light Dreams III

C-type Lambda print,

Diasec mounted, edition of 5, 2009

163cm x 112cm

£5000

Artist CV

Education

- 2001 The School of The Art Institute of Chicago, Major in Painting & Performance Art, Chicago IL
2000 New York Studio Residency Program, Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design, NY

Solo Exhibitions

- 2010 True Stories, Sesame Gallery, London, UK
2009 Koh Sang Woo, Gallery Sun Contemporary, Seoul
Koh Sang Woo, Busan Art Center, Busan
2008 Korea Contemporary Art Fair, Hangaram Museum, Seoul
2007 I Am Beautiful, 2x13 Gallery, New York
Korea Contemporary Art Fair, Hangaram Museum, Seoul
2006 I Love You, 2x13 Gallery, New York
2005 CIGE 2005, China World Trade Center, Beijing
2001 The Korean Culture & Arts Foundation: INSA Art Space, Seoul

Group Exhibitions

- 2010 Sungkok Museum, Seoul, Korea
Korean Art Show, New York
"Media Media", Queens Museum New York, USA
Philips de Pury New York, USA
2009 Pulse Miami, USA
Ideal Worlds, Sesame Gallery, London
798 Beijing Biennial 2009, Beijing, China
Christie's London, 'Distinctively Korea', Photography Auction, London
PHILLIPS De Pury & Company, White Box Auction, New York
Asian Auction Week in HongKong, K-Auction, HongKong
KIAF 2009, Korea International Art Fair, Coex, Seoul
SCOPE New York, International Art Fair, New York
Photo Seoul 2009, International Art Fair, Coex, Seoul
Talent Preview 2009, White Box, New York
0809, Gallery Sun Contemporary, Seoul
2008 ACAF NY, Asian Contemporary Art Fair New York, Pier 92, New York
SIPF 2008, Seoul International Photo Festival, Seoul
KIAF 2008, Korea International Art Fair 2008, Coex, Seoul
YIAF 2008, Yeosu International Art Fair 2008, Yeosu
Interalia Art Company, Samsungdong, Seoul
Body Extension, The Columns Gallery, Seoul
The Negative Image, Gyeong-Gido Museum of Art, Gyeong-Gido
The Face, Gallery Private Collection, Seoul
Photo Photo!, Gallery Sun Contemporary, Seoul
Gallery Collection, Gallery Sun Contemporary, Seoul
2x13 Collection, 2x13 Gallery, Paju
Illusion, 2x13 Gallery, Seoul
2007 ACAF NY, Asian Contemporary Art Fair New York, Pier 92, New York
Contemporary Korean Artists, New York, Hangaram Museum, Seoul Art Center

- Fresh Illusions, AHL foundation, White Box, New York
 Photograph, Touch Art Gallery, Heyri Art Village, Gyeong-Gido
 Photography, Artbit gallery, Seoul, Korea
- 2006 SIPA, Seoul International Photo Art Fair, Hangaram Museum, Seoul Art Center
 Holiday Auction, Helen Mills Theater, New York
 Five Syllable Stanza, Hun Gallery, New York
 Reflection/Refraction, 2x13 Gallery, New York
- 2005 Self-Reflect, Carl Hammer Gallery, Chicago
 Merry Christmas, Sun Contemporary Art Center, Seoul, Korea
 Wind, Missouri University, Columbus
 Eye of Camera, Ward Nasse Gallery, New York
- 2004 Armory Show, International Art Fair, New York
 Christie's New York, Photography Auction, New York
 Eye of Camera, Ward Nasse Gallery, New York
 Photo LA, International Art Fair, Los Angeles, CA
- 2003 Open Your Eyes, Maronieer Art Center, Seoul, Korea
 Armory Show, The International Art Fair, New York
 Art Chicago 2003, The International Art Fair, Chicago
 March Madness," Bottom Feeders Gallery, New York
- 2002 Armory Photography, The International Art Fair, New York
 The Armory Show, The International Art Fair, New York
 Art Chicago 2002, International Art Fair, Chicago
 Asian Photography 20, Gallery Surge, Ginza, Tokyo
- 2001 Exploring Future Stars, Carl Hammer Gallery, Chicago
 The Next Generation, Jean Albano Gallery, Chicago
 Microwave International Media Art Festival, Hong Kong
- 2000 From Adam to Atom, AICAD Gallery, New York
 Jet Propelled, Summer Solstice, Museum of Contemporary of Art, Chicago
 Body Language, Gallery X, The School of Art Institute of Chicago

Collections

Frederieke Taylor Gallery, New York
 Bridgewater Associates, New York
 Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, Montreal, QC
 Asian Artworks, New York
 2X13 Gallery, New York
 SJNY Design, New York
 AHL foundation, New York
 REDBBAR, New York
 Carl Hammer Gallery, Chicago
 Brad/Trask, Chicago
 Michael Richmond Interior, Chicago
 The School of Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago
 Busan Art Center, Busan
 Gallery Sun Contemporary, Seoul
 Centry Golf Resort, Seoul
 Iroom Gallery, Seoul