

Dorothy Circus Gallery Rome

Proudly presents

Lonely Journey

By Cheng Cheng Yi

ROME | 19th November 2022 - 17th December 2022

Via dei Pettinari 76, 00186 Rome, ITALY



The unicorn

30 x 40cm, Acrylic on canvas

In the last fifteen years that *Dorothy Circus Gallery* has been open, we have showcased many *female artists*. We have talked about *Women, Femininity, and Feminine Art* in all its forms. This is because our curatorial research's mission is to direct attention towards the Female voice, which is still so often shut down.

However, our research, as the acceptance of feminine appearance, prescinds from gender. Instead, it embraces the more arcane and profound concept of the woman who encompasses the ideal and real femininity also in gender fluidity. We recently showcased the work of **Jana Brike**, in her representation of powerful, free and proud women. However, we now find ourselves facing another aspect of femininity, closer to the abstraction of the feminine ideal.

The idealised female imagery represented in the work of **Miho Hirano** and **Mitsuko Kuroki** is rooted in the imagery of art history, as a message of beauty and perfection, as the woman that embodies the angel bringer of positivity, light, and justice. A constant in

the modern-century depiction of the female figure is the coexistence in all aspects of this being. Contemporary feminine art completes itself through the ambivalence of its message.

Just like this, within the representations of these women, we can find figures that range from the Mother to the Daughter, from the Maiden to the mature Woman, and from the Angel to the Baby. Whether these representations come from a female artist or from a male artist's avatar, they embody the coherence of the Female choice. In fact, it is not by chance that throughout our past and contemporary artists this Feminine avatar appears, showcasing a poetic narrative, intimate and profound, linked to themes such as spirituality and conscience.

The two artists, renowned representatives of the New Japanese Surrealism, will be presented in a double solo show. Their work will lead the audience on a journey through feminine perception. Through *the Sixth Sense*, it proposes suggestions instead of stories, dreams instead of reality, and the color of the night sky and its stars, in order to once again lead the audience's gaze to the interiority and the inner voice that is in every one of us, resounding with what is beautiful, fair, and sublime in response to violence, war, and horror.

The Woman embodies the Feminine voice once again, as well as the Masculine one, coming together in a quest for change, united in a magical union in which, during these angsty times more than ever, we feel the need to believe in.

Art remains culture and soul's weapon of choice. It pries on the most developed of our senses: sight. It captures our attention and calls us to challenge the manipulation that wants us blind and functional in front of the bright screens of our *daily commitments*.

While we cross through the night guided by **Mitsuko Kuroki's** five luminous canvasses, infused with powdery pigments and stardust, we can observe, in **Miho Hirano's** five canvasses, a light-blue spring composed by the meeting of Air and Water, as a foresight of the coming down of a new era focused on the protection of nature.

The female avatar is the protagonist of Japanese painter **Kazuhiro Hori's** canvases. Like other great artists exhibiting at DCG, not least Ray Caesar, the artist chooses to depict himself and his experiences through the maiden.

The profound meaning of this artistic choice lies once again in the essence of the feminine. This choice intends to rewrite the iconography of the female figure so that it escapes the reductive symbolic key of the muse and simple source of sentimental inspiration.

But instead, it is a rewrite reality and artistic sensibility that investigates the unconscious, linked to the true nature of the feminine as a profound, brave and authentic search for the inner self.

In **Hori's** 6 acrylic paintings, the element of sweetness recurs, materialised in the numerous shapes of candies and sugars that the artist recalls symbolising childhood. A childhood that changes flavour as it grows up, to the point that it now transmits its stickiness and bitterness.

Hori's perspective on the reality of the feminine embraces adolescence from a broader perspective. In a way that bring both the girl and the boy closer to the truth about growing

up and disillusionment, sowing the seeds of identification as well as an acknowledgement to raise awareness of understanding, equality and the idea of freedom.

Through his sophisticated and refined language, the artist unravels the stimulating new scenarios of the brand-new series pervaded by a *Vanitas Pop*. All around it, flowers, worn-out teddy bears and disturbing creatures are twisted, yet kept at bay by the recurring magic wand sceptred by the power of imagination, an ambivalent escape route to flee as much from reality as from illusion.

Adolescence returns to tell its story in the 12 works of *Lonely Journey* that will be showcased in the solo show of the young Chinese artist **Cheng Cheng Yi**.

This time, however, the constant dualism of this painter's colourful canvases is combined in a succession of diptychs inspired by European culture, focusing on a reinterpretation of the classics of art and literature that influenced the artist's art and youth. **Cheng Cheng Yi's** new series is the outcome of a creative globalisation that makes us closer despite distance and on which friendship is based, embodied by the cultural and poetic journey undertaken by **Yi**.

In a journey through the senses, we can taste and smell the flavours in the artworks painted by **Yi**, a drowsiness of memories that interface, between *Vermeer's Milk Maid* and the breakfast table in the artist's childhood memories of autumn, chocolate, coffee, ice cream, to describe the taste of an imagined and immersed *Pinocchio* as well as a dreamy *Dolce Vita* and the adventures of *Calvino's Nonexistent Knight* from who new stimulating adventures spring.

The flawless hyper-defined technique that characterises **Yi's** acrylic painting on canvas conveys to the viewer the consistency of the artistic message combined with the poetry of storytelling and imagination, transferring to the fairytale a new life that opens up on our walls to be savoured and re-read every day.

A mysterious tale is the one painted by American prime mover of purest pop surrealism, **Kathie Olivas**, with her new series of unpublished eight canvases named *Miss Fortune*.

Olivas plays hide and seek with the symbology of fortune, conveying signs and secret messages through the folds of bows, ribbons, and laces that distinguish the typical character of the artist, marked by the vintage vibe that has made her work prominent and unique. The iconic protagonists of **Kathie Olivas'** work, who already in 2007 were recognised as vinyl figures under the brand *Kidrobot*, came back more mischievous and delightful than ever to bring a message of positivity and good fortune in a pop-surrealism pattern.

From one side, the artist's strong identity with a deep, accurate, and experienced painting follows and evolves according to the *School of Nara* that arrived in the USA at the beginning of the 21st century. On the other hand, it confirms a record of authenticity compared to the new trends, often too emulative and willing to play with the infinite repetitions of borrowed codes in a fast production driven by the need of the market to use large formats in maximum quantities as briefly as possible.

The scene shows the singularity of a genuine artistic pathway and the resilience of a career established not only through oil paintings on canvas but with irresistible sculptures

created in fibreglass and painted with the most bizarre oil palettes that go from small to more prominent formats.

The exploration of the *Grazioso* code continues with ***Above & Beyond Kawaii***, a group show for which we have selected many new artists, characterised by a multitude of original and captivating techniques. To connect them all is the theme of *Japanese Kawai* reinterpreted in hyper-contemporary fashion, nowadays definable as *Kawai Pop*.

Amongst the names are some of the most desirable and highly demanded emerging artists representing the Asian avant-garde movement, such as **Zhu Chen Wei**, characterised by a seamless and innovative pictorial technique, **Rene Cuvos**, an inspiring Philippine pop-surrealist artist whose work displays an exquisite oil technique, the young Japanese **Ayame** and **Mami Ando**, both characterised by a soft technique and liberal, impressionist-inspired depiction. **Leegan Koo** will also be returning to the scene, with two new canvases displaying his unique cinematographic style and **Aya Kakeda** with a brand new ceramic sculpture, the time in a large format. The newest discoveries that will be joining the group show are the Chinese, London-based artist **Yunny** and the Italian **Maddalena Fanfani**.

With this enthusiastic exhibition programme, *Dorothy Circus Gallery* wishes to entertain and accompany you through the coldest months of the year, bringing a vortex of colour and joy to your homes, and introducing to you the artists that move us and make us proud through their passion.