

GLADSTONE GALLERY

Joeun Kim Aatchim
Minimally Invasive (최소침습)
June 20 – August 3, 2024
Opening Reception: June 20, 4pm – 6:30pm
760, Samseong-ro, Gangnam-gu, Seoul
Gladstone Seoul

Gladstone presents *Minimally Invasive* (최소침습), its first exhibition with Joeun Kim Aatchim, in Seoul. The exhibition debuts new paintings and drawings on silk; a site-specific audio installation; and sculptures. These artworks represent a continuation of Aatchim's rigorous attempt to render visible her memories in their multilayered complexity—memories of pain, of care, and of love, grounded in the artist's personal history. Making reference to the idea of a memory palace—an imagined structure that serves as a mnemonic aid and as a home for one's memories—the artist uses the resources of her multidisciplinary practice to construct a physical and metaphysical space for remembrance. In this space, Aatchim rejects linear narrative in favor of capturing how memory, reality, and representation exist simultaneously, in emotionally charged interplay.

The title, *Minimally Invasive* (최소침습), refers to the delicacy of a surgical procedure that aims to minimize bodily harm. It is inspired by the artist's personal experience. In her own words:

To give pillars to my memory palace, which is a bit of a mess at this very moment, I broke down my ongoing project title *Minimally Invasive* (최소침습) into four chapters from its Korean-Chinese characters: 최最/소小/침侵/습襲. This time, I present the chapter “소小,” meaning small, tiny, few, and so on. Here, Minimally Invasive becomes a philosophy of life by those ironic who prefer minimal presence while wishing to become subjects of pierce memories, see the tiniest flowers rather than the forest, cherish small gestures over grandiose action, and mess up the melodies for chasing after every little missing lyric.

Aatchim's works draw entirely from firsthand observations and personal memories. She deconstructs these memories microscopically and prismatically, finding multiple perspectives to examine moments of pain, distilling cinematic sequences into complex images, and rendering visceral expressions of vulnerability with a dreamlike and poetic visual language. A melancholy pervades many of the works on silk, which often depict compassionate scenes where a foregrounded figure provides comfort to another with the gesture of a warm embrace. Past and present are amalgamated; deeply painful moments are refracted through a lovingly observant eye; and the complexities of human memory and human relationships are given a fresh visual language.

Aatchim's intricate works pay close attention to texture and color, rendering fraught exchanges with poignant detail. Her congenital eye condition, intermittent strabismus, has limited her stereoscopic vision, but combined with her innate strength in draftsmanship, contributes to her "near-neurotic desires" to capture memories in multilayers. The artist harnesses this quirk of perception to develop illusory-seeming representations of intimate memories—uncanny, peer-through experiences that shift and change with different vantage points. Employing various transparencies of silk, Aatchim preserves surreal recollections of her relationships with objects, space, and figures. This approach, which she terms “Transparentism,” involves an obsessive, rigorous daily practice dedicated to authentically capturing the details of her memories in translucent scenes that seem to defy gravity within blurred, sheer layers. These tender and quotidian still lifes, rendered with autobiographic sincerity, are indeed complex—documenting the passage of time in nonlinear fashion, capturing the energetic exchange between what is seen and what is recalled, and broadening our possibilities of perception.

Joeun Kim Aatchim was born in South Korea and lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. She received her BFA in Studio Art from New York University, followed by an MFA in Visual Art from Columbia University. Aatchim's work has been exhibited with Travesía Cuatro, Guadalajara, Mexico; François Ghebaly, LA and New York; Make Room LA, California; Harper's, East Hampton, New York; 80 WSE Gallery, New York. Joeun Kim Aatchim has received fellowships at Yaddo (2023), Triangle Art Association (2021), Lighthouse Works (2021), Foundation for Contemporary Arts (2019), The Drawing Center (2018-20), and Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture (2017).

For further information, please contact press@gladstonegallery.com
New York gallery hours: Tuesday-Saturday, 10am-6pm
Brussels gallery hours: Tuesday-Friday, 10am-6pm and Saturday, 12pm-8pm
Seoul gallery hours: Tuesday-Saturday, 10am-6pm