



Over the Influence presents

**Hyangmok Baik**

## **THE GARDEN OF EDEN**

**Exhibition dates: 2 October to 7 November 2021**



**Hyangmok Baik**, *The Garden of Eden*, 2021, Mixed media on canvas, 162.2 by 130.3 cm, 67 7/8 by 51 ¼ in, Courtesy of the Artist and Over the Influence. Photo credit the Artist.

**Over the Influence is excited to present South Korean artist Hyangmok Baik's debut show the *Garden of Eden* with the Los Angeles gallery.** The new series of artworks are inspired by Genesis 2-3 in the Bible that details the Garden of Eden, also known as the Garden of God and the Terrestrial Paradise. The exhibition is on view from 2 October to 7 November 2021.

Often, Garden of Eden is a utopia and the hometown for the first generation of the human race. The world is suffering from the pandemic. People are hurting each other because of their skin color. Pure hate and violence are prevalent because of different backgrounds and value standards. Hyangmok's version of Paradise is one where viewers can escape to a more pastoral and peaceful time- Essentially a utopia of their own personal manifestation within the framework and inspiration of their own minds.

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The present exhibition is a continuation of the artist's earlier paintings that also alluded to the pandemic and the impact it had upon the international community's psychosis and emotions. The *Garden of Eden* therefore becomes a metaphor that shines light on what once was and what the artist hopes will transpire again: A pre-pandemic world with less violence and hate, where love champions jealousy and pettiness, and universal compassion is the language understood by all.

"Unfortunately, we are living in this sickening world filled with hate. Did this world look like this before? If not, what was the world like, before the pandemic?", the artist asks." Thinking of a pre-pandemic world with less hate, led me to the Garden of Eden. Someone told me in the Garden of Eden there's no jealousy or hatred, there is only love. No one gets sick or is in pain. All living beings are safe, there are no hazards around".

The paintings highlight the artist's keen understanding of how colours can perfectly convey a range of emotions depicted honestly and without artifice. The vibrant compositions invite viewers to fully empathise with the raw feelings captured in each figure's expression, as well as to be inspired to take personal action to create their own Garden of Eden here on earth.

The Garden of Eden seems to be an oasis, a utopia completely different from this current world. However, even in this utopia, a small temptation can lead to a bigger disaster; the angry God can close the door to the Garden of Eden. As he explained, "Perhaps, when you look at the Garden of Eden, this place is not too far from our own world. Yet, our world might also be the Garden of Eden where its door is slowly closing over time".

Hyangmok believes that humanity has free-will to reject all the instability that resulted from the pandemic. Within his creative mindset it is possible to return to Paradise, for it is a person's choices that can create a utopia, or conversely lead them back to temptation and pain. "The only difference we have is that we still have a choice. We still have a choice to reject the temptation of the snake. We still have a choice to stop everything that hurts one another. We still can protect this utopia where we reside", he said.

"In this series of works, I wanted to depict ourselves in the pre-pandemic and post-pandemic era. The portrait of ourselves in the Garden of Eden will be filled with love just if we make the right choices", Hyangmok said. "And I wish, no matter where you are at, I hope there is a Garden of Eden for you filled with love".



### **Artist Bio**

Born in 1990 in South Korea, Hyangmok Baik received his MA in Fine Art from Hongik University in 2019. Diving into the artworld by quitting his stable job, Artist Hyangmok Baik shares his celebrative and liberating perspective on life through his painting.

Through the flattened screen with doodle-like figures, rough touches, and unexpected compositions, Hyangmok creates his own world filled with freedom on canvas. His paintings provides a room to relax and stay curious for the viewers with his outstanding toned down colour palette, and by boldly leaving out the projection of narrative.

### **Location**

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Los Angeles, CA 90013

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