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Abstract

My research intends to explore the ongoing path of contemporary painting through the lenses of architecture, literature, and techne in terms of both methodology and the filter of Eastern philosophical ideas, such as a void and relationships, as expressed in cultural history. In academics, I initially studied English Literature with passionate academic enthusiasm (I learned many poems and read multiple theses pertaining to architecture while attending classes in architecture, French literature, and German literature). As MoMA provides opportunities for studying architecture, fashion and literature, I want to explore the different ways in which certain new trends in the visual arts are now erasing the definite lines between fine art and art of daily life, painting and other mediums, Eastern and Western, and North Korea and South Korea.

My trial to amalgamate all visual and aural language is inspired by my denial of the proposition “This is not a painting”, which I believe is both a preposterous and a controversial idea. The process includes the grafting of painting on different characters. After Clement Greenberg’s dogma era, painting was no longer a matter of trends or story subject matter. The form of painting changes for each generation; however, the content still stresses humanity.

For example, Rene Magritte drew a pipe and captioned it, “This is not a pipe”. There are two seminal ideas here in Rene Magritte’s image of a pipe. The first refers to the relationship between painting and language. The second refers to the relationship between painting and artistic representation. Painting starts from language, but it then evolves to become a visual expression. Thus, a painting can become a mirror image interpreted by its painter’s eyes and ideas, not an actual representation of reality. An expansion of the visual language of contemporary painting is not a problem of image content, but rather it is a problem emanating from “a way of seeing”, “a way of thinking”, and the lens or filter that is employed to “interpret” that image thusly.

As Magritte believed, the linguistic assumption that one paints to expand the territory of pictorial language, but then asserts that this image is not a painting, is an attempt to engender different things by adding, dividing, multiplying, and subtracting other visual idioms, thereby stressing the correlation between other visual language and the act of painting. However, that change is a form of painting after all. This view is meaningful in that it is an attempt to discover the possibility of integrating painting with other mediums to rediscover the indispensable, eternal value of painting through a contradictory process wherein the denial of a preposition after all turns new attention to the affirmation of that same preposition.

This Is Not a Painting
Post Modernism and Painting: For the Humanity

by

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What has changed in this painting is not the content or theme, but its form. The mission of post-modern painting was indeed to change its form.

Painting is not simply an expression of one-sided thought and emotion completed by individual artists. Viewers are expected to see painting from integration rather than judging that painting's specificity which has been shattered in contemporary art. Paradoxically, through the processes of hybridizing, different stage setting, I suggest that the essence of painting is the revival of humanity. The zeitgeist (spirit of the times) yearns for a Renaissance (rebirth). It is a Re-Renaissance that is needed for especially for post-modern people who crave humanity.

This paper is of significance in that it is an exploration of painting's identity and new orientation. That is, it is intended to explore the nature and value of painting through a comparative, amalgamative study into other forms of visual and aural language. This is also to consider what new perspectives can be employed to figure out painting's peculiarity as a medium in terms of cultural history, and how painting assumes the role of a precursor couched in different visual languages in terms of form.

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Prologue

A Bar, Midnight in New York, 2018

Rene Magritte from Schaerbeek, Marcel Duchamp from Paris, Sunyoung Lee from Seoul, Oscar Wilde from Paris

SL: Why did you write “Ceci n’est pas une pipe” after paint a pipe?

RM: Who said it’s a pipe?

SL: It’s a pipe, 파이프, pfeifentabake, pijp...and maybe (draw heart mark)

RM: Come on...You already known my answer. Do you paint paintings in your studio?

SL: Yes but no. I try not to paint. Duchamp, you?

MD: You know...I quit painting a long time ago. Let’s play chess instead of talking about boring paintings!

RM: **Let’s say the game of chess is a painting**, and let’s play.

OW: Talk about a play or playing the game? Anyway, I agree that let’s not talk about art. *When bankers get together they talk about art. When artists get together, they talk about money.*

SL: (wearing a fake smile) Hey, I quit a banker job 8 years ago. So should I talk about art or money? Or English literature?

MD: No, No, It was a perfect choice. Let’s play chess and fall in love with life. (holding a wine glass)

Eros, C’est la vie!

OW: Sure, Love is always best resource. It put me in jail for two years, though. (shrugging his shoulders)

SL: Ok. Have fun. I’m going to my studio.

MD: Come on..Don’t go. You don’t need to paint to be a real artist!

SL: I won’t. I will write, build, wear, count numbers...

OW: For money or love?

SL: Do I look like a writer, painter, or banker?

MD: No. This is interesting... Rene changed the identity of an object, from chess to painting; Sunyoung is playing with her professional identity How about this? Please call me **Rose** Se’lavy from now, I just changed my gender!

RM: Remember, you’re not a painter, but you are.

SL: Yes, only for Eros!

MD, RM, OW: C’est la vie! (cheers)

Chapter 1

Introduction

People want something new. Also, the painting medium is considered old fashioned. New Painting in 80, America used collage, over layer, dividing section. Postmodernism is like America melting pot- every culture is mixed. We cannot judge someone's identity through appearance anymore. In a same way, we cannot judge the identity of painting. We need to redefine the meaning of painting.

After Greenburg's Modernist Painting, painting doesn't have to depict something. This is the first revolution of painting. "The End of Art" by Danto, the artist doesn't have to focus only on one specific medium art. This is stating of pluralism in Art. For this one, there are three main tactics: Hybridism, Transformation, and Contradiction. I want to create a mutant of these tactics. My first trial was hybridism of cultures, but it is not special anymore because globally it is already mixed well. Therefore, I started mixing different studies, putting into painting, and melting it.

I started to hybrid painting and others running parallel lines between architecture, writing, and techne. Secondly, I started to transform the visual aspects. I'm taking inspiration from applied and turning it into fine art. Finally, I stated to using Contradiction - Between Form and Contents, Everything and Nothing, Painting and Non-Painting, No realm and Limitation, Meaningful and Meaningless, and Signifier and Signified.

As we moved into the era of post-modern, the art was penetrated into daily life. Like the comment by Andy Warhol that he wanted to eliminate the difference between high art and low art by dragging Coke everybody drinks into the world of art, and to make the art that everybody can enjoy, artists came to use low art pointed by Clement Greenberg rather now.

The emergence of Pop art is the exact case. The one thing to be focused is that British pop art originally intended to satire and to criticize the social condition that art has been encroached by capitalism as Greenberg worried. But when it was transferred to USA, the original criticism has gone and it became Kitsch disguised by high art.

It is a matter of opinion whether we choose to see the popularization of art as the corruption of pure art spirit or the reflection of the spirit of a particular time. Self- reflection is required about whether artists select the easier route to avoid creative suffering, as that easier choice will likely satisfy the taste of the public and the artist thus can make money using the pretense of popularization. Even though the era of modernism of Greenberg ended, the spirit of Avant-garde - the creative spirit of the artist - won't end.

Even if the definition of art changes in accordance with a particular period, there will still exist an unchanged truth, namely, that the spirit of Avant-garde is forever, and art is intended to make people think and criticize the spirit of their times. It is not intended to be a simple reflection or consummate obedience to the current style.

Chapter 2

Analysis of Work I_Form

2.1 Exploring the self-identity of painting

2.1.1 Painting Vs Mass

I started to build a painting. Because I want to make it looks like a small building instead of painting. This contradiction. Painting is two-dimensional work. It cannot be three- dimensional architecture. However, by using Void space, it can be filled with viewers imagine. It's the contradiction of limitation and no realm. I want to call it Infinite Window, An Analogue Window which can contain everything. **(Fig.1)**

2.1.2 Painting Vs Literature

Painting is Poetry. Poetry is Painting. I tried to hybrid painting and writing. I changed the frame of painting which looks like an airmail pattern or folds canvas clothes which look like small envelopes. **(Fig. 2)**

People asked me that what's the contents of those letters? I answer that there're nothing but everything like theater of the absurd Waiting for Godot by Samuel Beckett. Like anti -novel, Post-modernism novel, no more direct story exists there. Void concept can apply here, too. After and beyond the text painting, no one can read it. It is the contradiction between contents and form, meaningful and meaningless.

2.1.3 Painting Vs Techne

Interesting thing about Media Art is that the paradox between analog and digital medium. Mashall McLuhan already predicted the form of communication in current 21st century in his book "Understanding Media" in 1967.

McLuhan himself identified the significance of his earlier literary studies to bis media studies, stating that "[m]y present interest is an extension of, and derivative of, my literary work." Furthermore, McLuhan claimed that "[i]f I could get a team of media students going, I would happily retire back into literary

studies. I find media analysis very much more exciting now simply because it affects so many more people."¹

The pioneer of new media research also wants to integrate the literary and media study. Nam June Paik, the pioneer of video art, also has aimed at hybrid of analog and digital, tradition and contemporary, and visual and performing art, though his approach is sensational and fresh.

In my painting, the square shapes symbolize both of pixel in digital screen and purity of fine art in suprematism. **(Fig. 3)** This contradiction gives a question to viewers to think about the paradox of analog and digital medium.

2.2 Anti-Traditional Materials and Embracing Other Genres

Fluxus is the radical and experimental art movement which escaped from authoritative art and tradition. This movement occurred in the 1960's during the cold war, a time of ideological confrontation. Fluxus came from "flow", they wanted to be a new flow to unify the world by respecting every different value of life and culture. It embraced Anarchism, Bohemians, even the ideology of Taoism. In addition, it embraced other genres and broke the boundary between life and art, high-art and low-art, Western and Eastern, human and nature. This attitude is worthy of more than just passing attention in this contemporary era, especially the still ideologically separated society which we call a global village.

In terms of material, I like to experiment in my painting with different mediums - fabrics, lipsticks, building materials for wall cladding, and other commercial products: sealing wax, and house paint. Some of the red colors seen in my painting are made of a mixture of lipstick and sealing wax. **(Fig. 4)** I think about my painting the way I think about getting dressed up every morning, putting on make-up, and matching pants with t-shirts. I want my painting to be seen as visually pleasurable.

Chapter 3

Analysis of Work II _ Contents

ACT 1: Waiting for Godot by Samuel Beckett.

¹ Marshall McLuhan, *From Cambridge to Communication: McLuhan beyond McLuhanism* (Order No. MQ61480).

Stuffed Letter.

Meaning Vs Meaningless: Painting is Poetry. Poetry is Painting.

ACT 2: Metamorphosis by Kafka: Infinite Windows.

Painting Mutant. Hybridity.

Close your eyes. I'm lying on the beach with my Kafka. The red sun goes into the heart of Kafka.

Luxe, calme et volupté are the wine that fill the glass of Venus. Open your eyes. Everything is a work of art. Thou art. Thou art nothing.

ACT 3: King Lear by William Shakespeare

Nothing will come of nothing. Who is it that can tell me who I am? Long Run. Emotion and Color in Imperfection.

Hall²'s representation meaning and language analysis singles out three key words: representation, meaning and language. Abstract expressionism focuses too much on the expression of personal feelings, and Minimalism, conversely, has no emotion and only focuses on composition. It seems like there are conflicts between Contents Vs Form, Meaningful Vs Meaningless, and Signifier Vs Signified. I'm using an envelope shape as a Significant Form(bell). In my work, the envelope form works as a sort of signifier in itself, and the inside contents of the envelope, which cannot be seen, work as a signified. Since language is used to represent the world it is also a form and a signifier; my process includes two processes of correlation between the signified and the signifier, language and meaning.

As Hall analyzes visual language by using the concept of representation, the letters are a representation of unity of language. According to his intentional approach, the meaning comes from intention of speaker or writer or painter who wants to say something personally. I'm making sealed the envelopes as a part of painting. Where the letters are and what we read into the work is the invitation to find meaning. Abstracted strokes call out to viewers out line of culture, life, and we search for more meaning in the shape.

Also, in Halls constructionist approach, people derive meaning, concepts and signs through the process of representation instead of objects itself or speaker's intention.

² Stuart Hall, "Representation, meaning and language"

3.1 Zen: Void and Relationship

Nam June Paik's "Zen for Film"(1962-1964) shows the hour-long black film. This resulted in an interesting debate between Cage and Paik concerning the various forms of materiality and mediality in silence and/or emptiness in music, painting, film and television.³ **(Fig.5)** Also, he showed the relationship and harmony between digital and analogue, civilization and primitiveness, human and technology, Yin and Yang, western and eastern in his work, "TV Buddha"1997. **(Fig.6)**

In my work, "Unification in the Reflection", red and blue colors symbolize Yin and Yang, sun and cloud, the divided Korea and different ideologies. **(Fig.7)** But two different colors meet in the shadow. This is a symbol of unification. Viewers can see them with a broad perspective. I hope we know that every nation, color, and race can be one.

Also, in "Painting For Unification of Two Values", the painting stick symbolizes the process of abstract painting, especially Jack Pollock's action painting. Pollock's abstract painting is a symbol of American New Painting. The painting stick in my work is a tool to mix all of color and culture in order to make a melting pot. **(Fig. 8)** Art is for all. Like mixing different colors as a painter, I hope art can unify every different nation and values.

Eastern philosophy(Zen) is essential to Ufan Lee's (Korean visual artist) painting, sculpture, and installation work. Lee hosted the 7th big exhibition at Versailles Palace, a symbol of absolute monarchy in France and a representative of cultural heritage in France. He installed the rainbow shaped sculpture "Relatum: the arch of Versailles" (Height 12m and length 30m) with a round arch-shaped stainless steel iron plate and stones on both sides. **(Fig. 9)**

*"I saw a rainbow when I walked on a road 10 years ago. I forgot this impression, and when I came here I decided to make a stage with a rainbow arch so that people can pass by. Therefore, the sky and the circumstance would be interpreted in a completely different way. I would like to make a space tell stories"*⁴

His installation leads the viewers to the world of meditation and silence. This idea relates to Zen philosophy directly and indirectly. Catherine Pegard, the museum director of Versailles palace, evaluated the work of Ufan Lee, noting that he leads us in his poetry which is fascinating but silent.⁵

³ Dieter Daniels, John Cage and Nam June Paik 'Change your mind or change your receiver(your receiver is your mind)' Nam June Paik. Tate, London, 2010, p.114.

⁴ Ufan Lee, interview with Yonhab News, June 13, 2014.

⁵ Ibid.,

The stone symbolizes nature, the iron plate symbolizes industrial society. Therefore, he sheds light on a civilization with these two representative materials. The relationship between nature and human stems from Eastern philosophy. Lee's arch allows the viewers to be a part of the art work. In my "White Wall" series, the frame of canvas works as an analogue window to observe and reflect the viewer's story. The void space allows the viewers to fill their story and make them think about the idea of relationship.

(Fig.10)(Fig.11)

3.2 Humanity: Medium of Communication

From Zen Buddhism and the Platonic notion of the Idea to Marshall McLuhan's communication theory, Paik examined and utilized various disciplines of knowledge and experience in stabling a unique understanding of the meaning of art in the electronic age. His profound insight into the genealogy of contemporary human condition. His seemingly provocative but genuinely insightful observations on TV and broadcasting conveyed a reviving utopian ideal of open and democratic communication, Paik's unique view on technology and its use for artistic creation and distribution are characterized by an at once humanized yet post-humanist perception.⁶

In the Nam June Paik's video installation "TV Garden"⁷(**Fig. 12**) at Paik Nam June art center of Gyeonggi-Do Yongin, Korea, the televisions are like the blossom rose in the bush.

In 1965, Nam June Paik was invited by his colleague to "write the accurate autobiography." He mentioned the war and his home country, Korea, which was governed by the power of imperialism.

I was born the son of the mother and the father, the grandchild of the grandmother and the grandfather, on July 20th, 1932, the day that the attempted assassination of Hitler occurred. In the lunar calendar, my birthday is on June 17th (the day that revolt against Stalin). According to Korean tradition, my family congratulates my birthday on June 17th. But my birthday is recorded officially on July 20th in my school voucher and my passport. I liked this day more because the day is when the German citizen resisted to Hitler. The blood from Stalin did not have any meaning. Therefore, the day July 20th should be a national holiday as well as June 17th.

⁶ Sook-Kyung Lee, *Videa 'n' Videology Open Communication*, Paik, Nam J., 1932-2006, et al. Nam June Paik. Tate, London, 2010.

⁷ Nam June Paik, *TV Garden*, 1974-77/2002.

Usually, television is viewed from front. However, the TV monitors of this installation are lying down to the side obliquely, also toward the ceiling. The video work “Global Groove” is in dozens of monitors. The video contains music and dance from all over the world, and is edited by Nam June Paik.

Paik appears to have concentrated on the effect of electronic and digital manipulations that resembled the attributes of nature. When Paik said, ‘my experimental TV is not always interesting but not always uninteresting. Like nature, which is beautiful, not because it changes beautifully, but simply because it changes, the emphasis was on the nonhierarchical and indeterminable quality of such changes that echoes the beauty of nature.’⁸ (Lee, 27)

There is a balance between technology and nature. Also, on the inside of TV, there are vibrant depictions of cultures from around the world. TV functioned as a communication tool that embraces global cultures.

In my “Universal Mail” painting (**Fig. 13**), I create abstract letter paintings, which are unreadable literally but can be read emotionally, because a painting is a universal language that can communicate from heart to heart. It embraces all colors and all cultures regardless of nation and race.

‘Humanising technology’ was among Paik’s central concerns. Not just the robots and video works created for his long-term performance partner Charlotte Moorman were ‘humanized’. Many installations and objects dating from the 1960s- including Magnet TV, in which the television image could be distorted by use of magnets – incorporate spectators as users. On the one hand, the latest technology played an important role; on the other, their use by humans was the real goal right from the very beginning. (Phillips, 200)⁹

In “From Red to Red” (**Fig. 14**), the red squares symbolize two different units: the human heart and a pixel of the digital era. Through the empty space of the painting, they exchange humanity.

3.3 Unification: Cultural Democracy.

In “Stuffed Letter” Series (**Fig. 15**), each unit, envelope shape, has different sizes and shapes. Each unit is weak, but once the individuals’ voices gathered, the mass of units is strong. Like every citizen in Korea put their voices together and changed president, people’s desire and humanity have strong power and can change the society. Each voice became one flesh.

⁸ Ibid.,p.27.

⁹ Lbid.,p.200

A painting cannot change society. A rule is a rule. But art can bend the rules like water can wear away a stone. I had a show in Seoul Central District Court, Seoul, Korea with work. “A Rule Can be Bent” (Fig. 16) was made after watching several real trial processes in the court. The show’s title was “meet art at court”, and my work published in DongA daily newspaper, a top Korean newspaper, with my interview about my opinion of the connection between art and society.

<i>Let Me In: My Letter is Crawling through the War. Wall.</i>	
<p><i>I'm from Korea, the divided country. The greatest mission of the divided country is to be one, unification.</i></p> <p><i>I'm in the United States, a Salad Bowl of different cultures. Yet, could I go inside?</i></p> <p><i>All kinds of art, Western and Eastern, North Korea and South Korea is one after all.</i></p> <p><i>I studied English Literature. I'm studying Painting. No matter what I did ... doing ... I'm an Artist like all of us.</i></p> <p><i>Art cannot change the world? I do not speak of social matters in a direct way.</i></p> <p><i>The beautiful and sincere mind of every human being will gather and crawl through the wall between you and me, country and country.</i></p> <p><i>Humanity is the only power that can unify and change the world.</i></p>	<p>나는 한국인이다. 분단 국가. 분단 국가의 최대 소명은 하나가 되는 것이다.</p> <p>나는 미국에 있다. 모든 색, 문화가 섞여 있는 곳. 그런데 정말 그 안에 들어갈 수 있나?</p> <p>모든 종류의 예술도, 동 서양도, 남북한도 결국 하나 이다.</p> <p>나는 영문학도였고, 화가이고, 총체적 예술가이다. (나는 아직 로맨틱한 꿈을 꾸다. 모든 색이 반짝반짝 함께 빛나는 하나의 커다란 캔버스를 꿈꾼다.)</p> <p>예술이 세상을 바꿀 수 없다고 좌절하는가? 나는 사회적인 것을 직접적으로 말하지 않는다.</p> <p>아름답고 진실한 마음이 모여 천천히 당신과 나 사이의 벽을 타고 흐르고 허물 것이다.</p> <p>결국 인류애가 세상을 통합하고 바꿀 것이다.</p>

3.4 Visual, Aural, and Computer Language

Aural Language

I think that this is realization in music that is different from what music was at the turn of the century. It was then that music so greatly influenced the visual arts as to be the excuse for the turn toward abstraction...I think that much of what is being done since 1950 in music is a response to this question you spoke of in the visual arts which was the response to music...So that music's response now to the

*visual arts of the first half of the century produces a situation to which the visual arts must reply, or may reply.*¹⁰ - John Cage

Computer Language

*Marchel Duchamp had already done everything – except video...only though video art can we go beyond Marcel Duchamp.*¹¹ – Nam June Paik

My media work, “Oxymoron_World Wide Web 4’33””(Fig.17), made by coding- ‘Processing’ computer program. I used computer language to make this, though my intention is how to humanize the technology and connect between people and world. A pixel, symbol of technology, moves and becomes a one by humanity.

The title comes from John Cage's piano performance. Like the Fluxus movement did, all tech, human is one beyond space and time. Cage’s 1952 piece 4’33” represents a radical simplification. The piece’s contents and the sounds heard over the course of its duration are left to the circumstances of the given situation. Equivalents in the visual arts are Robert Rauschenberg’s White Paintings depict nothing other than the light and shadows of their surroundings, thus providing that ‘a canvas is never empty’.

In “Zen (Line, 선) in Zen (Line, 선) in TV”(Fig. 18), only lines and lights are in the TV. This art work made by six music majors under my instruction. This project is for reinterpretation of Nam June Paik’s art organized by the SK corporation in Korea in 2012. It is called “SK happy school art project.” The pronunciation of the word “line” in Korean [son] has a same meaning with the word “zen”. They have different meanings in English, but what we focused on is that line and light are minimal and essential elements of the process of making art, like Rauschenberg’s White Paintings with only light and shadows. The TV is never empty and always contains philosophies for humans.

“Oxymoron_World Wide Web 4’33”” is composed in three languages: visual, aural, and computer language. After all, all three languages aim to reach to humanity. The scenario for oxymoron is as follows:

Sequence of Music Language	Sequence of Computer Language	Sequence of Emotional Language
----------------------------	-------------------------------	--------------------------------

¹⁰ Richard Kostelanetz, *Conversing with Cage*(London and New York, 2003), p. 196.

¹¹ Nam June Paik, interview by Irmeline Lebeer, in *Chroniques de l’art vivant*, no.55(February 1975), p. 35.

Bit Sound	Red Square	<i>My heart is beating.</i>
Brouillards (Mist) by Debussy	Moving Square	<i>My heart is moving.</i>
Electronic Sound	Red Square	<i>My heart is crawling up the wall.</i>
La Puerta del vino (The Gates of Wine) by Debussy	Moving Square	<i>I'm in the mood for a wine. I open the door.</i>
les fées sont d'exquises danseuses (The fairies are exquisite dancers) by Debussy	Moving Square	<i>I'm dancing. I feel like I am back in the 60's.</i>
Bell Sound	Air Mail	<i>I'm writing my letter from past to future.</i>
Funérailles (Funeral) by Franz Liszt	Artist Signature with Sealing Wax	<i>I sealed it with a kiss.</i>

Chapter 4

Post-Modernity Analysis

What John Berger¹² would say is that to approach works of art in actively perspective in many fields out of the stereotypical way. As the words of John Berger, “Ways of Seeing”¹³ is affected by what we know or what we believe, when every person looks at the art by applying the individual’s subjectivity and experience, another new way to see in different ways may be presented. His position is in awakening and encouraging the reader to approach in a different way.

4.1 +++ Σ Salad Bowl

4.1.1 Glue Gun School. Encyclopedia of all kinds of Modernism

Clement Greenberg offered strict modernism criticism in the 1930’s when he addressed the spirit of Avant-garde painting. Art is often classified either high or low art during a certain period, and art is always in lured by capitalism. This tendency has continued until now and moved beyond modernism, but artists inevitably fall into the key dilemma about whether to surrender to or resist the logic of ‘the art market’. Another problem related to the art market is that it causes the artist to be stimulated by a ‘desire

¹² John Peter Berger (1926 –2017), English art critic, novelist, painter and poet.

¹³ Berger, John. Ways of Seeing. Viking Press, New York, 1973.

for compassion'. Greenberg classified this attitude as both being Avant-garde and Kitsch. He emphasized that the spirit of avant-garde – it keeps its purity, while not surrendering to the political tool of dictators or capitalism – is the very attitude the true artist must have.

Greenberg said that farmers do not know the greatness of Picasso's work¹⁴, while *Mont Sainte-Victoire* by Cezanne shows the symptom of the lost concept of Mimesis in paintings and the pursuit of art for creation, not representation (Greenberg, 1919). Direct interpretation of objects as they appear to the human eye is no longer art. The destiny of art does not depend on mimetic depiction, but rather depends on the ability to re-interpret the world using the unique language of the painter. Yet the public too often does not have the cultural eye to interpret this point of view. For example, the public likes the works of Picasso's Blue Period & Rose Period. Although Cubism does have great historical significance in art history, applying three-dimensional aspects to a two-dimensional painting becomes an indigestible act for many in the public.

The revival of Abstract Expressionism in America during the 1940's and 1950's changed the paradigm of painting in that this different point of view pursued the origin of art and expressed the purity of art, especially painting. This trend realized the spirit of the Avant-garde of Greenberg and indeed became Greenberg's position.

According to Arthur Danto in his book, *After the End of Art*, Greenberg's dogmatic era disappeared, and the Post-Modern era replaced it, represented as Pluralism (Danto, 1984). Fredric Jameson further analyzed the concept of postmodernism in his essay entitled, "Postmodernism and Consumer Society". It made two significant points: The erosion of the older distinction between high art and pop, pastiche (Jameson, 1985). Post-modern era was thus represented as Pluralism. In other words, high art shifted toward artistic pluralism. As we move further into the era of post-modernism, art now penetrates daily life today like the main moto of Fluxus movement.

The significant features of Post-Modern art can be explained by these key words: Parody, pastiche, irony, fun, repetition, and textualization. The problem with these aspects is that there is a movement in focus from content to style. Therefore, post-modernism is hard to define and even severely criticize because there's no depth to its style, just a focus on the surface of its works.

All modernism trends are mixed in post-modernism works, i.e., surrealism, dada, pop, minimalism, and others. Such a choice is intended to criticize the logic of the art market that contradicted itself when it changed once again in the second generation of Kitsch.

¹⁴ Clement Greenberg, *Avant-Garde and Kitsch*

4.1.2 Hybridism of Eastern & Western

Hybrid of Eastern and Western

The interesting thing is that two completely different perspectives— Eastern and Western- to interpret the work of Nam June Paik. In the West, his work was called video sculpture and video installation, and criticism put the value on the tech and form. On the other hand, in the East, criticism paid attention to contents, viewpoints the achievement of cultural fusion based on Eastern philosophy. I translated Nam June Paik's saying that "Art is hazing, not universality". It means that he also suffered the Western cultural superiority complex in a foreign land.

Nam June Paik is well-versed in the study of philosophy and science in both the East and West, with the method of co-existence which goes over the barrier of the Western and Eastern. Nam June Paik believed that East and West can always meet, and mutual communication is possible, a rare idea at that time. He saw a space of all things integrated from the viewpoint of Eastern philosophy. Therefore, he tried to connect Eastern spiritual philosophy with Western high technology without the border of ideology, race, and the nation like the net that connects through a networking method.

Like in the East, Yin-Yang is one not separate, to him, music and art are one. He already tried interdisciplinary approaches between music and art. He majored in music and became a visual artist. He said that "my work is not a painting or sculpture, it's just a time- art."

His synesthetic thinking created art for all senses. He imposed aural aspect and sense of touch to visual art. He collaborated music (time art) with art (space art), and added the concept of TV- electronic art. In addition to that, he included his performance, for example, he used his body like a brush. In his interdisciplinary art, all creatures -nature, machine, and human - are equal.

Cultural Democracy

Thanks to Nam June Paik's fame as the founder of video art, he is considered a follower of a civilization of technology. However, his interests in high-tech ideas came from tradition, shamanism religious belief, and Zen philosophy of the East.

In 1959, "the respect which sends to John Cage", made public the performance which breaks a piano and giving him the nickname 'the cultural terrorist comes from Asia'. The fact that he destroyed the piano which symbolizes a classical art from modern Western European culture was a kind of declaration of war against the Western culture.

4.1.3 Techne: All kinds of Visual Language

Interface Between Technology and Painting – The Value of Eastern Philosophy

Nam June Paik reflected in 1969 on his collaboration: "The real issue implied in Art and Technology is not to make another scientific toy, but how to humanize the technology and the electronic medium". His idea combined the Western avant-garde with the Eastern philosophy (Zen) and controlled the Western speed culture with the spiritual meditative culture. (ex- TV Buddha) In the meantime, he humanized technology and articulated a way to combine humanity and technology instead of confining technology to technology.

He liked the phrase from the Diamond Sutra, "All conditioned dharmas are like dreams, illusions, bubbles, shadows, like dew drops and a lightning flash: contemplate them thus."

Utopian Laser TV Station, which was launched by Nam June Paik at the "Laser Idea # 3" at his first video tape screening, predicted future multi-channel broadcasting stations. He hoped for thousands of large and small TV stations to be freed from proprietary commercial broadcasters by using the high frequency of the laser, and he predicted today's real-time communication with SNS and one-person media.

In 1974, when the concept of the Internet was not yet available, the word 'World Wide Web' was presented along with "Electronic Superhighway". He predicted the web culture and the mass media of the modern society 20 years earlier than the Internet commercialization. Although ordinary technology development brings convenience of life, Paik's interest in technology is due to the belief that technologies can connect space separated from each other, and can connect the past and the present to the future. Nam June Paik's so-called "Satellite Trilogy" has united the world through satellite broadcasting. He expressed the gloomy future of mass media as a surveillance society in George Orwell's '1984' published in 1949, expressing it as a Shamanic ritual in his satellite television show "Good Morning Mr. Orwell", followed by "Bye Bye Kipling" and "Hand in hand" which was aimed at the 1988 Seoul Olympic.

One day, Nam June Paik said, "I want to shape the TV screen canvas as precisely as Leonardo, as freely as Picasso, as colorfully as Renoir, as profoundly as Mondrian, as violently as Pollock and as lyrically as Jasper Johns."

4.2 Put back: The Matter of Emotion & Healing.

The Eternal Value of Humanity: Meet the needs of the times -Healing & Meditation

Joseph Beuys and Korea

In Joseph Beuys's work, the fat and the blanket are essential elements which are symbols of surviving, to protect the pain of people who suffered from World War II. He uses this symbolic object to heal the wound from the place where ideology and the social system collide. Through his project called 7000 Oaks, he started the concept of 'Social Sculpture'.

Korea is left as the divided country in the world after East and West Germany reunited into one country in 1990. After Fluxus, World Wide Web system, we call this society a global village, but we still have problems caused by different ideologies. Especially Korea, my country is divided by two different societies.

My three keywords for art are unification, healing, and humanity, though the form is abstract expressionism that has criticism (too much focus on artists' inner personal emotion to convey to the viewers or society), it's still important to the contemporary context. I thought why can't personal emotion be a public art or social context. In Korea, every citizen held a candlelight vigil to protest the distorted government, and each person's desire for changing the society which resulted in a new president. I, daringly, compare this protest with Beuys' 7000 Oaks. **(Fig. 19)**

For Beuys's the value of healing came from his personal and social experience when he lost consciousness from airplane crash during World War II. He survived by the Tatars tribe's remedy using a felt blanket and fat. **(Fig. 20)** This experience had a huge impact to his artistic activities. His experience became a symbol that melts the cold to save a life which appears in his art. To me, in this (digital)contemporary era, my symbol for healing and communication (in an analog way) is a letter and a window.

Chapter 5

Conclusion - Painting ∞

Reply: Re: Renaissance of humanity_ Letter from Greenberg & Plato- The Idea of Beauty.

Non-traditional materials or their interpretations based on the lens of other visual languages may alter the form of a painting, but the eternal theme or content of that painting, such as humanity and human emotion, stays always. The day of methodologically discussing and classifying paintings into representational and abstract versions has passed. The theme of humanity has been displayed in different forms or through different veneers while passing through the heyday of abstract painting, English Pop, American Pop, and contemporary art. Painting deals with humanity's elemental desire to convey human

emotion even when morphological transformation is added to that painting. Further, contemporary art bears the wish of contemporary humans to recover their human nature even if it is in an immediate, provocative form. Art always tends to come full circle because after all it is a reflection of the spirit of the times, mixed with the nostalgia of its contemporaries. I like to call this process a Re-Renaissance.

Clement Greenberg contemplated the essence of modernism. Modernism was an inclusive phenomenon not only in literature, art, and culture but as a very different new paradigm. The era of Greenberg's dogma had passed, and the era of post-modernism had arrived, but the study of the modernism of his criticism is still meaningful. As someone with a painting major, I feel that his "Modernist Painting criticism" makes one ponder the answer to 'what is painting' once again. That is, the consideration of the uniqueness of painting helps raise the question of where flat painting is headed in the future, given the current situation of the status and authority of painting as being increasingly eroded by more and more digital art.

Two principles that can be asserted are the principle of self-criticism, stemming from Kantian philosophy and the principle of flatness. Greenberg took Kant to be the first modernist and applied the principles of self-criticism to painting in order to explore the essence of painting that is separate from all other forms of art. Reproduction that evokes the illusion of three dimensions no longer shows the uniqueness of pure painting and makes you consider painting as simply imitating sculpture. Visible things all remind us of three-dimensional space, thereby contrasting with representation and forsaking autonomy painting. In the era of abstract art, unique features, such as the planarity of painting and organizing the so-called points, lines, and surfaces of art are highlighted and become the subject of art itself. Greenberg's criticism has thus played a major role in supporting the heyday of Formalism, abstract art. Without traditional representational painting, the fundamental elements of painting - point, line, surface - were enough to produce unique and meaningful art. Indeed, Clive Bell called it a 'Significant form'. (Bell, 1919)

Emphasizing the flatness of these paintings already began during the Impressionism era starting with Manet. When art moved into Picasso's Cubism, painters, in keeping with the inherent flatness of painting, tried a new method for their painting so as to hold the third-dimension by integrating each of the different points in time on a single screen and not using either illusion or mass. Mondrian sought to contain the essence of the universe through a fully configured frame of the canvas. When Alexander Calder, the creator of mobile, the moving sculpture, saw Mondrian's picture, he criticized the limitations of two-dimensional pictures. Mondrian replied: "My pictures are already moving". What does this response then suggest? Even if not directly related to the effects seen in other genres, painting itself can create the powerful force of illusion of a three-dimensional effect. This is one of the values of that the essence of painting.

Because the value of abstract painting is connected to the question regarding the true essence of painting, it is still asked even after the age of Greenberg's dogma. The true value of Greenberg's theory is not only in its contributions to the creation of Jackson Pollock and his fame as the star of the art world and support of the era of abstract art. The value is in its precise study of the overall nature of painting.

Another opportunity to contemplate the uniqueness of painting was the emergence of photography. With the advent of photography, painting lost its meaning of representation. Modern painting had to show something new beyond Impressionism and Cubism. The appearance of photorealism, which is more photo-like than photography, testifies to this movement. Now painting must overcome this illusionary realism. Gerhard Richter says that "the blur conveys something about the uncertainties of this relationship to reality in my photo painting" (Richter, 321). This was his attempt at self-reflection by revealing the fiction and limitations of painting. Further, Stella showcases stripes painting, which uncovered limitations of painting and offered that now only the frames of canvas remain for painting.

The development of technology has converted the specificity of the painting medium Greenberg emphasized art seen on computer screen as a pixel unit that produces ironic scene visualization. In addition to the post-modern era, represented by pluralism, all genres are fused, and the use of combinations of medium is encouraged. This use already stands over his theory that asserted the uniqueness of the medium. Yet his theory, which was to see flatness with a unique identity, not the limitations of painting, and seeking to find a way of painting through this aspect, already exists as a form of 'significant thinking' that goes beyond any era. Based on such ideology, Greenberg's theory, however, left a still unanswered task, which is to determine the future path of painting in the more difficult post-modern era of today.

What is beauty? Art always has considered the matter of beauty. In other words, art never can say without the notion of beauty, and a matter of beauty is also can be a matter of art. From an aesthetic point of view, beauty is subjective. According to Kant, A sense of beauty is subjective, but there's universal sense of beauty. Also, in terms of art, which dealing with beauty, there are a bunch of different kind of beauty.

For Mark Rothko, beauty of art is on humanity. *"I'm interested only in expressing basic human emotions, tragedy, ecstasy, doom, and so on, he declared. And the fact that a lot of people break down and cry when confronted with my pictures shows that I can communicate those basic human emotions."*¹⁵ Regardless of form, painting is for communication of human being, and making process of painting can be a moral act.

¹⁵ The Museum of Modern Art, MoMA Highlights, (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, revised 2004, originally published 1999), 196.

Appendix A

Epilogue – Conversation with collaborators. Re: Renaissance of Humanity (From Silicon Valley To Studio)

(SP: Computer Engineer from Silicon Valley, MG: Musician from Canada, and SL: Painter from Korea)

SL: Let's start with apple. When you hear the word "apple", where does your mind automatically go to? To me, the apple painting by Cezanne.

SP: When I hear Apple, I think of Apple, inc automatically because I always use Apple products and I think Steve Jobs changed the world and people's life completely by introducing Iphone and other products. The impact of smartphones has been huge and now Artificial Intelligence dramatically improves every aspect of our lives. However, I also think the analogue world was more romantic and gave a lot of good memories I miss while I enjoy benefits from smart machines.

MG: Given the pervasiveness of cellphones, computers, and other technical gadgets, my mind immediately and unwillingly thinks of Apple the corporation when I hear the word apple. Perhaps in more naive times, it might have thought of the fruit; but such musing are impossible with the \$400 billion global empire that Apple Inc. has created. From connoting an organic fruit, the word apple now conjures up images of inorganic machines. The users are a cog in Apple's machine; so are the workers who make the phones and distribute them. This in turn leads to the question of the changing nature of humanity in the post-industrial age and the role that art is to play. In this world, we serve the machines rather than the machines serving us – a concept that ought to be anathema to any humanistic artist.

SL: How much time do you spend with a computer?

SP: Well, I'm a programmer, so I use at least 10 hours with one or more computers for my work everyday except weekends. And I also use my computer to talk to my friends and watch TV shows and movies around 3 or 4 hours or even more.

SL: Your job is a computer engineer, Do you think your job would be essential after 10 years, 20 years..?

SP: Yes, this job will be essential a very long time (more than 20 years). However, I believe A.I. (artificial intelligence) would change my job functions over the next 10 years and it could be very different between what I do now and what a future programmer do after 10 years or 20 years.

SL: How important are computer media in your life, not in your work?

SP: Now I cannot imagine my life without computer since all my daily activities use computer. For example, I wake up by my smartphone's clock and play music immediately. I check my calendar with my laptop or smartphone while drinking coffee before going to work. I use the GPA application of my iphone to check the traffic when I drive to work. And talking to my friends with various messengers and check facebook, instagram, and twitter to learn what's happening now. Like this, I heavily rely on computers to do all things my daily life.

MG: Do you think a computer can convey the humanity?

SP: Yes, I think so. Computers do amazing things such as the #MeToo movements, uncover a dictator's secrets, helping people who need help by the internet communities, and making friends communicate the other side of the earth. Although there are side effects which show negative side of humanity, now computers are becoming the main medium to share emotions and sentiments in both good and bad ways. You?

SL: I don't think so. Emotions are based on life and death. Machines don't understand death.

Fear or death is one of important part of life. Machines can be replicated over and over, but think about that no matter how many peoples in the world all of them have finger print. My brush marks in painting are like the finger print. What do you think about that Matt? Do you think music can convey the humanity?

MG: Music by its very nature cannot exist without a perceiving human subject. This is, so far as I understand it, also true of painting and other arts. These seemingly grandiose claims have one constant – the central role of the audience in artistic experience. The "thing in itself" - art – is not the sole source of the artistic experience, it IS the experience of the thing in itself that is art. This conception places the human being at the center of the artistic experience and this, by definition, makes it humanistic. There is nothing mechanistic in this concept. To tie it back to my earlier statements about Apple, it allows us to free ourselves from the machines.

SL: Sounds pretty romantic. As a musician, what's the difference between classical and contemporary to you?

MG: For me, I distinguish between contemporary and classical based more on characteristics that arbitrary, a priori definitions. Contemporary classical art, is, therefore, not inconceivable. Classical art is, in my view as a musician, anything that favors balance, clarity and symmetry above all else. The work itself is the object in which "beauty" is rooted – something diametrically opposed to the Romantic concept of aesthetics in which beauty is rooted in the experience of the viewer. Contemporary simply refers to work that is being produced today – hence my use of the oxymoron "contemporary classical."

SL: What is the most impressive moment in your work (job)?

SP: When I started working it was very impressive and great when people use a software I made to do their work successfully and told something good about it to me. Also, our team recently released the Video Ads product and the service has been very successful and the impact also is huge for both the company and users. I was very happy to see that my work impacts the world.

MG: As a performing artist, the most impressive moments are those moments when I reach a zen-like "flow state" where I am not playing the music, the music is playing me. It is in moments like these that I feel like I have communicated something meaningful and human to the audience.

SL: That's what I'm saying to my paintings. Zen approaching. After all, our happy moments depend on users, listeners, and viewers' reactions. Also, we're a producer of creation, at the same time, we're a user.

SL: During collaboration with me, how did you feel in terms of creating some artwork?

SP: When Sunyoung asked me to make a simple animation, I did not know what I can produce. I didn't know much about art and how to express emotions with my programming skills. We started with very simple scenarios and Sunyoung suggested many ideas and I started seeing something I never imagined. I saw simple moving rectangles became meaningful by delivering some messages. I also started seeing connections between different movements and objects. All objects, sounds, and movements became a story and tells something. It was an amazing experience and I enjoyed very much. It was very special when I saw the final video we made together and would want to do more as much as I can keep up.

*MG: I found my collaboration with Sunyoung to be very rewarding on both a personal and an artistic level (I do not distinguish between the two). During my studies as a musician I have become keenly aware of how isolated the different fields are within the arts. There is very little cross pollination of ideas between the visual arts and the performing arts. Like the cogs in the machine, traditional academic study in the arts is very much devoted to keeping the machine running while never questioning the nature of the machine or its purpose. This is contrary to the entire history of the arts. One need only look to the great artistic movements and painters that arose in France in the late nineteenth century. Artists like Manet and the impressionists all read Baudelaire and other poets influenced musicians like Debussy and Faure. A key to the power of these artists and their ability to speak sincerely about the human condition is summed up best in the words of Baudelaire from his 1863 essay, *The Painter of Modern Life*. The modern painter, writes Baudelaire, is "the painter of the passing moment and of all the suggestions of eternity it contains." To paraphrase Goethe, music is like liquid painting. My collaboration with Sunyoung is something that gave me a lot of pleasure and I would like to continue it. I think that interdisciplinary work is where the future of arts lies and I hope that Sunyoung continues to work with other artists outside of the visual arts.*

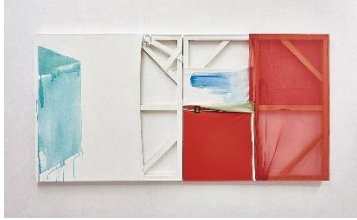
Special Thanks to:

Paul Robert, electronic music composition, Soc-Hwan Park, computer programming from Silicon Valley.

Matthew Gartshore, piano performance.

Appendix B

Image Lists



<Fig.1>



<Fig.2>



<Fig.3>



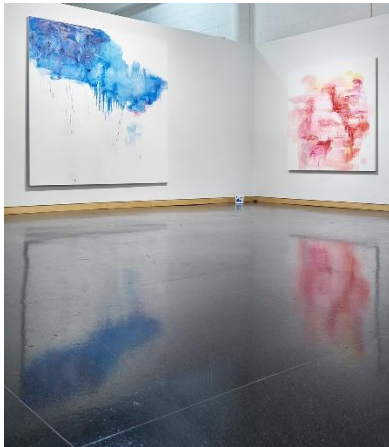
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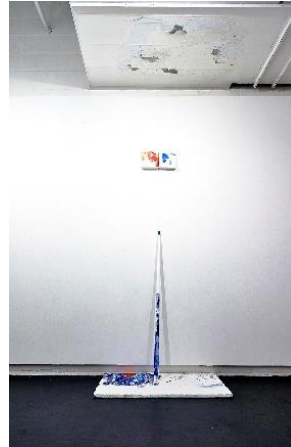
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<Fig.6>



<Fig.7>



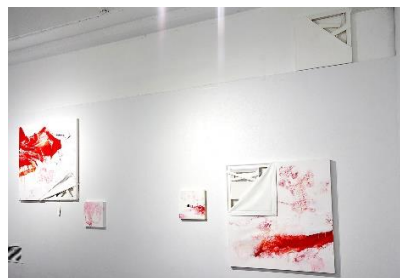
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<Fig.9>



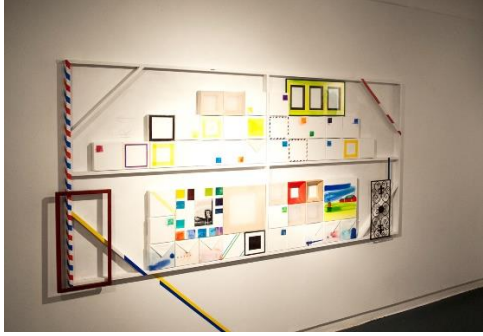
<Fig.10>



<Fig.11>



<Fig.12>



<Fig.13>



<Fig.14>



<Fig. 15>



<Fig. 16>



<Fig. 17>



<Fig. 18>



<Fig. 19>



<Fig. 20>

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Vita

Currently based in New York, Sunyoung Lee was born in Korea. She received her B.A. in English Literature from Busan National University. Turning to the more visual forms of language, Lee then studied Painting and Aesthetics at Hongik University in Korea. After graduating summa cum laude from Hongik, Lee came to the United States to explore the possibilities of contemporary abstract painting and completed her M.F.A. in painting at Syracuse University. Her accomplishments include multiple exhibitions in New York, Michigan, California, and Korea. Lectures in Asian art history and studio classes in CA, NY round out her activities.

Lee has developed a radical artistic language based on literature and Eastern Philosophy. Healing, reconciliation and universal humanity are central to her artistic identity. As an artist from Korea, divided country in the world after East and West Germany reunited at the end of the Cold War, Lee considers it her calling as an artist to dedicate her work to uniting humanity. Though she works within abstract expressionism, the personal emotion and experiences aroused by this style are part of a broader social context. Themes about humanity are often thought of as romantic, timeless, age-old relics. Post-modern art, arousing and instant, connects the viewer with these themes. The zeitgeist yearns for a Renaissance. Lee's work is a Re-Renaissance created especially for post-modern people who crave humanity.