



## Hyunsoo Kim: *Unsung Heroes*

May 22 - June 22, 2024

H-flux Gallery is excited to announce the successful grand opening featuring the inaugural exhibition, "Unsung Heroes" by Hyunsoo Kim, which commenced on May 22nd, 2024. In this groundbreaking show, Kim, renowned for her paintings and objects, explores portrait photography using reclaimed natural materials. Challenging traditional human-centric portraits, Kim's innovative approach brings plants to the forefront, offering a refreshing departure from conventional portraiture.

Hyunsoo Kim's studio is a treasure trove of plant debris collected over the years, either personally gathered or sent by friends who discover unique branches and roots. These materials, imbued with memories from various places and time periods, undergo a transformative rebirth. For Kim, this process is a dialogue with nature and a playful exploration. The artist describes her creations as "unknowable, but within the confines of the possible," reflecting a blend of human, animal, and plant characteristics. However, her work intentionally transcends those categories to reach something that defies all categorization.

The portraits in "Unsung Heroes" evoke the grandeur of European court portraiture, traditionally used to symbolize power and elevate status. However, Kim's works shift the focus from flaunting status to highlighting the heroic qualities of the marginalized. Through these portraits, she honors the overlooked and the forgotten, presenting them in a dignified and noble manner.

Kim's intention to elevate the mundane to the sublime is deeply rooted in her childhood experiences in nature. Growing up in the mountains in a military family, she found solace and inspiration in the natural world. "Nature was my playground, a sanctuary that healed the pain of loss and growing pains," she recalls. The exhibition title, "Unsung Heroes," reflects Kim's effort to breathe new life into discarded plants, resonating with their silent stories and transforming them into symbols of beauty and granting them emotional depth. Through her work, Kim humorously envisions a world free of dominance and discrimination, where every being, no matter its perceived insignificance, can find its own unique beauty.

### About the Artist

Hyunsoo Kim (b.1975, Korea) studied oil painting at Ewha Womans University, where she earned her BA, and continued her education at the same institution, obtaining an MFA in painting and printmaking. She has held numerous solo and group exhibitions, including "Dangerous Play-Homoludens" at Placemak(Seoul), "Playing on the Border" at Kum-Ho Museum(Seoul), and "Dangerous Play" at K.O.N.G Gallery (Seoul). In 2024, Kim was shortlisted for the Sovereign Asian Art Prize and featured in the Sovereign Asian Art Prize Finalists Exhibition at H Queen's in Hong Kong in May 2024. Her works are known for their exploration of the theme of play, utilizing painting, collage, and drawing techniques to create dynamic, multi-layered pieces.



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