

Kwang Lees pictures become alive between day and night.

The waning daylight blurs colours and veils forms until they disappear. It lets our eyes struggle until darkness finally prevails. The images of reality are cloaked by night and become invisible to our eyes.

In Kwang Lee's paintings, the Berlin lakes and the landscapes of Davos shine in a mysterious light. This light is not an observed one, like the Impressionists' object of study, nor an artificial mise-en-scène. Objects seem to glow from within. Their intrinsic essence shines through, making them look both familiar and strange. It is a perceived light which Kwang Lee brings to expression. Darkness robs her of the most important sense of a painter, and strenghtens her inner feeling for the hidden essence of things.

On the smooth mirrors of the lakes, the artist sets this light in a dialogue with itself. The water surfaces form nature's canvas. On them we observe, entranced, the reality surrounding us. Due to the refraction of light it appears new to us, in an unusual proportion. The water's movement dissolves the static quality. Kwang Lee's pictorial compositions direct the viewer's gaze time and again to the still and yet stirring mirrors. They are the recipient for the real core of her work: water.

*“The highest Good resembles water.
Water is good: it benefits the ten thousand beings
and does not contend with them.”¹*

Her reflections don't create tensions. They live in the calmness issuing of the certitude of carrying an intrinsic truth within them. The lakes are vessels filled to the brim with water. This element gives existence to the surrounding entities. Its strength is to be felt by the close interplay of colours and the composition uniting the reflection with its environment.

In Kwang Lee's creations both the Asiatic philosophical body of thought and the Western painting tradition are united in a masterly way. Although she was taught a rigorous analytical approach to painting in the Düsseldorf Academy of Art, in her personal standing she rather turns to a unifying approach. Wassily Kandinsky and his fellow campaigners had to fight hard for the acceptance of a painting that doesn't depict objects, as an expression of the spiritual and transcendental, and this association has become deeply rooted in our Western thought. Asiatic painting never had to distance itself from the depiction of things. And Kwang Lee doesn't have to either!

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translation by Verena Alves-Richter

¹ Lao-tse, Tao-Tê-King, Das heilige Buch vom Weg und von der Tugend. translation, remarks and epilogue by Günther Debon. Stuttgart 2012, chapter 8, p. 1