

# BLUM & POE

Los Angeles, New York, Tokyo

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Anna Park**  
*Hello, Stranger*

**Blum & Poe, Tokyo**  
**September 1-October 9, 2021**

August 2, 2021, Tokyo—Blum & Poe is pleased to present a solo exhibition with Brooklyn-based artist Anna Park. This is Park's second presentation with the gallery.

Anna Park is from South Korea but spent her formative years in the US state of Utah—an experience that often positioned her on the outside, looking in. This early lesson in seeing permeates Park's compositions today. Teetering on the brink between abstraction and figuration, Park's charcoal drawings examine the human condition from a voyeur's distance, magnified through recurrent archetypes, tropes of Americana, and the performativity of social interaction.

Working initially from a sketch, Park develops and unpacks imaginary scenes with the support of her extensive personal image archive, mostly stock images sourced from the internet. These scenes often begin as universally recognizable moments or symbols that the artist then complicates with the introduction of additional layers of imagery that reveal and conceal. What unfolds are restless visions of smeared faces, wrestling limbs, ruched fabrics, and speed streaks—works that recall the vigorous energy of the graphic novel and the radical fragmentation of Cubism.

In the large-scale multi-panel drawing *Mind Over Matter* (2021), Park conjures the Western genre in a grand narration of her subject's act of falling. The cowboy is in passive free fall, the unseating of a symbol of nativist America and the myth of masculinity caught in freeze-frame. The violence and shock from sudden impact reverberate through the composition with smudged charcoal strokes. In *Hello, Stranger* (2021), the artist casts a woman peering towards her viewer as she curls her hair, engaged in the ritual of preparing for a social event. The figure is surrounded by a flurry of shapes and gestures, swaths of swirling chaos that seem to originate from the subject's own head and body, visualizations of anxiety and insecurity run rampant. We catch the subject in mid-transformation as she exchanges one persona for the next. Park's portrayals are social commentaries on the contemporary experience, depictions of the world as a stage and the self-aware performances that occupy it.

**Anna Park** (b. 1996, Daegu, South Korea) lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. Her work has been featured in the group exhibitions *100 Drawings from Now*, The Drawing Center, New York, NY (2020); *Art on the Grid*, Public Art Fund, New York, NY; *Drawn Together Again*, Flag Art Foundation, New York, NY (2019); among others. She received her BA from Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY and her MFA from New York Academy of Art, New York, NY. She is

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the First Prize Winner of the AXA Art Prize (2019) and the Grand Prize Winner of Strokes of Genius 11: Finding Beauty (2019).

## About Blum & Poe

Blum & Poe was founded by Timothy Blum and Jeffrey Poe in Santa Monica in September of 1994 as a space to show local and international contemporary art in all media. Blum's extensive experience in the Japanese art world combined with Poe's keen knowledge of emerging artists in Los Angeles, together resulted in an international program of influential artists. Throughout a twenty-six-year history, Blum & Poe has shaped the trajectory of contemporary art by championing artists at all stages of their careers—cultivating the lineages that run between emerging and established practices, and working with artist estates to generate new discourse surrounding historical work.

In 2003 the gallery moved to a larger space in Culver City, and in 2009 Blum & Poe purchased and renovated its current 22,000 square foot complex on La Cienega Boulevard. In this location the gallery has since held museum-caliber surveys, examining the historical work of such movements as the Japanese Mono-ha school (2012); the Korean Dansaekhwa monochrome painters (2014); the European postwar movement CoBrA (2015); Japanese art of 1980s and '90s (2019); a rereading of Brazilian Modernism (2019); and a revisionist take on the 1959 MoMA exhibition, *New Images of Man* (2020). To produce these exhibitions, Blum & Poe has worked with celebrated curators such as Joan Kee, Mika Yoshitake, Sofia Gotti, and Alison M. Gingeras.

In 2014, Blum & Poe opened galleries in New York and Tokyo to focus on intimately scaled projects in tandem with an expansive program of exhibitions, lectures, performance series, screenings, and an annual art book fair at its base in Los Angeles. In 2015, Blum & Poe was certified as an Arts:Earth Partnership (AEP) green art gallery and consequently became one of the first green certified galleries in the United States. Blum & Poe's own publishing division focuses on sharing aspects of its program via original scholarship and accessible media ranging from academic monographs, audio series, magazines, and artists' books. In 2020, the gallery launched Blum & Poe Broadcasts, an online platform showcasing artists' projects in conjunction with physical installations or as standalone digital endeavors.

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