

Anton Kern Gallery

Hein Koh: *On the Edge of a Precipice*

May 6 – June 18

Opening Reception: May 6 from 6 – 8pm

For Immediate Release

Anton Kern Gallery is thrilled to present Hein Koh's first exhibition at the gallery, *On the Edge of a Precipice*, on the third floor. The show consists of new paintings, drawings, and a hand-painted bronze sculpture. Cast in the largest scale of bronze by the artist to date, the figure is a carrot sitting, smoking, and thinking. Koh's exhibition is one of deep psychological investigation and catharsis, with her cruciferous characters as the vehicle for expression of humanity's – and especially women's – experiences.

A female Broccoli character is the protagonist in Koh's paintings and drawings, embracing a sexy defiance of her fundamentally healthy nature and the expectations that come along with it. Koh returned to painting in 2020 after a long sojourn as a sculptor. Two years later, the expressive narrative of her two-dimensional work has evolved into increasingly complex compositions and scenarios. The Broccoli woman is partially autobiographical, but also represents more universal themes on womanhood and motherhood. Broccoli woman dons knee-high boots, smokes and drinks—while grappling with insomnia; contemplating her place in the universe; sleeping alone in an empty bed; and facing her own hidden inner world, desires, and fears. The fun, cartoonish nature of the character is a foil and metaphor for what she represents—the contemporary complexities and dichotomies women experience; a variety of joys and difficulties.



Hein Koh, *Struggling*, 2022
Oil on canvas
84 x 60 inches (213.4 x 152.4 cm)

The Broccoli woman is a vibrant green with lush red lips and nails. Her distinct coloring is a slightly unnatural shade of green and becomes another level of metaphor for the unnatural expectations placed on women. Her face is strong but neutral: a kind of everywoman akin to a mannequin. The emotional expression of the paintings and drawings plays out in the variety of situations Broccoli woman is placed in. Her neutrality, much like a mannequin's, lets the viewer picture themselves in these scenarios, allowing both a projection of one's own feelings, as well as offering an opening to empathize with her experiences. Each painting and drawing finds her navigating emotional depth, death, and chaos.

Sometimes joining the Broccoli woman in this body of work is a new character, The Shadow. It acts in multiple ways: as both a partner for her to interact with; in the Jungian sense of one's own shadow (and facing it); and as a metaphor for the idea of aging and becoming a shadow of one's former self. The darker nature of the work is grounded, however, in a fundamental optimism. The Broccoli woman accepts, even embraces, her shadow. Likewise, Koh is unafraid to express the fear and uncertainty of middle age, the disillusionment that can come with all that goes on in the world today, and the existential questions that arise as a result. The Broccoli woman is on the edge of a precipice, but there seems to be something new and exciting beyond it.

For additional images and information, please contact: press@antonkerngallery.com.

Hein Koh lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. She graduated from Dartmouth College with a dual B.A. in Studio Art and Psychology, and received her M.F.A. in Painting from Yale University. Her work has been reviewed in Artforum, Time Out New York, Art F City, Hyperallergic, Juxtapoz Magazine, and The Brooklyn Rail, among numerous others. In 2019, she completed a major public art project at Rockefeller Center, comprised of sculptures and murals, in partnership with the Art Production Fund. In 2021, she had solo exhibitions in Europe at Semiose and Allouche Benias, and in the US, at the SCAD Museum of Art in Savannah, GA and our WINDOW in Tribeca. In New York, she has also had solo exhibitions at Marvin Gardens and the Tennis Elbow at The Journal Gallery. Recent group shows include “Hungry For Time by Raqs Media Collective,” Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, Vienna, Austria, “Future Planets,” curated by James Williams, Longwood Center for the Visual Arts, Farmville, VA, and “The Shoo Sho,” curated by Julie Curtiss, at Anton Kern Gallery, WINDOW, New York, NY.

Gallery Hours

Tuesday through Saturday
10am – 6pm

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