

Susan Eley
Fine Art

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

November 6, 2018

LISA PRESSMAN & SOONAE TARK

A Two-Person Exhibition



November 15-December 27, 2018

Opening Reception: Thursday November 15, 6-8pm

Susan Eley Fine Art is pleased to present ***Lisa Pressman & Soonae Tark: A Two-Person Exhibition***, opening with a reception on Thursday, November 15, 6-8 pm. The exhibition, comprised of over two dozen encaustics and oil paintings by New Jersey-based artist Lisa Pressman, and 18 acrylic paintings on canvas, acrylicite and mixed media studies on paper by Korean-born artist Soonae Tark, will remain on view through **December 27, 2018**.

This is Soonae Tark's first major exhibition with SEFA, having participated in the group show "Korean Art Now " (2015). We are delighted to once again collaborate with curator Heekyoung Song, whose gallery Artflow focuses on contemporary Korean artists, to feature Tark's paintings.

Lisa Pressman exhibited with SEFA in the group show "Making Their Mark" (2011), the two-person show "Mapping a Place" (2014) and most recently at Art Toronto 2018.

**LISA PRESSMAN
ABOUT THE WORK**

Lisa Pressman's paintings on view are recent, however they reflect and refer to 30 years of her content and mark making. Recurring themes of hash marks, vertical mark making, and symbols containers are present. Shapes emerge that appear as maps, boats, portals that symbolize navigation and movement, and also suggest holding on and containment. The hash marks and vertical lines mark the passage of time for the artist, as the act of making the mark is in itself an act of time keeping.

Pressman works in various media. The oil paintings require a different approach as they dry more slowly than the encaustic work. As such, the oils sit with the artist often for

months before they are complete, allowing her to reenter the painting, continuing to scrape and reapply paint, gradually building a surface that speaks to her. The oil paint, built in layers, creates a gritty surface that seems lit from within. The encaustic paintings allow Pressman to create numerous layers in succession as each layer dries quickly. The vivid, gem-like colors of the pigment have broad appeal and the paintings glisten and shine.

SOONAE TARK ABOUT THE WORK

Soonae Tark's studio in Sunnyside, Queens is awash in color. Canvases in bright orange, blue, hot pink and red line the walls. Tark's signature painting is made up of a bright colored background furnished with towers of geometric forms, each a different size, shape and color.

Tark's repertory of shapes includes oblongs, rectangles, squares, wedge-shaped triangles and circles. Each shape is lovingly hand drawn, never perfectly symmetrical and always imperfect, reflecting the realities of an imperfect world.

Tark stacks one shape atop the other as if playing with blocks, building an environment with invented forms that may teeter but never fall. The kinetic energy of each painting usually has a vertical thrust, but sometimes, shapes head east-west, bringing our eye side to side. Tark seeks a balance in each artwork, but in so doing wants us to see the precariousness of this balance. "I want viewers to sense the tension that this invented world might fall apart, but you know the balance is rock solid and won't," explains the artist.

We are pleased to also include a series of Tark's daily drawings, executed for the past 20 years (1996-2017). In this daily practice, the artist works out the formalistic details of this delicate balance of piling form upon form.

LISA PRESSMAN BIO

Lisa Pressman, American abstract painter, was born in Elizabeth, New Jersey in 1958; she earned a BA in Art from Douglass College of Rutgers University and an MFA from Bard College. Recent shows include Susan Eley Fine Arts, Causey Contemporary, and The Curator Gallery, all in New York, NY; the Hunterdon Art Museum, Clinton NJ; Telluride Gallery of Fine Art, Telluride, CO; Addington Gallery, Chicago; and The Jen Tough Gallery, Benicita, CA. Her work is included in numerous private and public collections and has been exhibited extensively throughout the U.S. and abroad. She has a solo museum

show planned at the Mulvane Art Museum, Topeka, KS. A core instructor for R&F Handmade Paints in Kingston, NY, Lisa is also a workshop instructor for Gamblin Artists Colors. She is an annual presenter and instructor at the International Encaustic Conference in Provincetown, MA and teaches workshops in both encaustic and oil and cold wax media in the U.S. and Europe.

LISA PRESSMAN ARTIST STATEMENT

In my all of my work, I play translucent and opaque layers of paint against each other, drawing, layering, covering up, sanding, and scraping leads to the discovery of the image. The history of the process then becomes inseparable from the exploration, through image, of time and memory. The paintings become an abstract story that cannot be read literally. The work draws from a place of “not knowing” Images are revealed that many people have lost sight of, images that communicate to a place deeper than words. The paintings invite a deep, visceral response that evolves over time; they have a life of their own.

Each painting in this show reflects my belief that color and light can change the world. On a visit to Tuscany, my senses were so hyper-stimulated by all that I saw that I could barely eat or drink. That’s the power that color, light and shadows have over me, and it’s the way I respond, in paint, during these challenging times. Many of my paintings are layered with repetitive marks. For example, the double stroke of the X or the repeating brushstroke cancels what is below, pushing earlier layers away. This creates a tension, a physical feeling of depth and a psychological mystery. Through markmaking and color I navigate my perspective on my life and the world around me.

SOONAE TARK BIO

Soonae Tark continues to exhibit her reductive, colorful geometric work in galleries, museums, and public spaces. Her list of awards includes two Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant, the Adolph & Esther Gottlieb Foundation Grant, a National Academy Museum Abbey Mural Painting Fund Fellowship, and an Individual Artist Initiative Award from the Queens Council on the Arts. She completed two compelling permanent public artworks for the City of New York, including a glass mosaic mural on the platform of the Buhre Avenue subway station through the [MTA Arts for Transit Commission](#), and a public two-story mural work, titled “*Love You*,” (2008) was placed in New York City’s P.S. 306, commissioned by the Department of Cultural Affairs [Percent for Art Program](#). Her joyful celebration of color and delight was featured on the cover of Mayor Bloomberg’s [New York City's Mayor's Management Report](#) (2009). Most recently she has been awarded a public art commission for the Barack H. Obama Magnet University School, New Haven, CT. She has had solo exhibitions in the United States, Korea and France. Her work has

been included in over 100 juried and invitational group exhibitions across the United States and was exhibited at the U.S. Ambassador's residence in Seoul, Korea (2009 to 2012) by the Art in Embassies Program, Department of State, Washington DC. *The New York Times*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *New Jersey- Herald News*, *Louisiana Magazine- The Advocate*, *Queens Chronicle* and many others have favorably reviewed her work. She has been featured in [Marquis Who's Who in American Art](#) (ongoing since the 29th Edition, 2009) and [New American Paintings](#), Juried Exhibition in Print, with inclusion of her work on the back cover. She has her BFA from Dongduk Women's University in Seoul, Korea and her MFA from the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Lyon, France. She lives and works in New York City.

SOONAE TARK ARTIST STATEMENT

While working in France, I reached a point at which I felt compelled to seek out new influences and inspirations. In 1996, I moved to New York City, and it made me want to forget everything I knew about art and start over. My previous work in France was mostly on large canvases and consisted of an accumulation of actions, layering colors with differently-sized brushes, stroke-over-stroke until the moment the image was right. I felt the energy of New York City and was inspired by its diversity, its complexity and the sprawl of its urban landscape. I felt nurtured by this energy and began to create art with a new intention. I made art by building, or piling, opposite forms such as a vertical line over a horizontal line – over and over with different colors and brushes on limited paper size to control myself. Through my daily practice, I produced thousands of drawings that expressed a building up of these opposite actions and tensions.

I continue to work on canvas, wood, paper and Plexiglas. I build images systematically on flat colored surfaces, using very precise forms and colors of different weights which are placed together to create a perfect, yet precarious, balance. I enjoy exploring new materials and working with color and form, using rigid lines to playfully create three-dimensional effects on a flat surface. I like to challenge myself through daily practice.