

Susan Eley

Fine Art

Bountiful

Eunju Kang & Fumiko Toda

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Susan Eley Fine Art, Hudson

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July 20—September 3, 2023

Opening Reception: Saturday, July 22, 5-7PM

SEFA Hudson is delighted to present *Bountiful*, a two-person exhibition with recent work by Eunju Kang and Fumiko Toda. We are pleased to feature the work of two AAPI women artists in *Bountiful*. The show is on view from July 20th to September 3rd, with an opening reception on Saturday, July 22th from 5-7PM where both artists will be present.

This exhibition coincides with SEFA's participation in Upstate Art Weekend 2023. UAW showcases over 130 cultural organizations, recognizing the art and culture in the Hudson Valley and the Catskills. The prestigious event is curated by Helen Toomer and unites the museums, galleries and non-profits of the region as a celebration of the art communities of Upstate. This self-guided tour from July 21st to July 24 includes participants such as Art Omi, Storm King Art Center, LABSpace, Turley Gallery, September and Alexander Gray Associates.

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Bountiful is a visual representation of the word itself, which is defined as “large in quantity; abundant; giving generously” by the Oxford Language Dictionary. Artists Kang and Toda certainly succeed in this mission. They provide visitors with a wealth of imagery and color, of detail and expression. The exhibition is an ode to the blossoming of plants and the proliferation of insects that flourish in summer. Kang and Toda enhance our experiences of nature by capturing its abundance visually—through an acutely sensitive use of both detail and abstraction. They remind us what the earth has to offer in its various life forms in all of their stages of existence.

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Eunju Kang recently debuted as a solo artist with SEFA at the Gallery's NYC venue in Fall 2022. After moving to the US from Korea, the artist received a BFA in painting from UC Santa Barbara and a second BFA in illustration from Pasadena Art Center.

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In her Hudson show *Bountiful*, Kang's practice will be represented by monoprints and large watercolor paintings on paper—reflecting the artist's unique minimalistic expression of the still life genre.

In terms of subject matter, Kang favors working from observation—whether painting a vase of flowers, the view from her studio window or, most recently, still lifes composed of single flowers, fruits and vegetables. Her works depict flora from lemons and apples, to ferns and flower blossoms. The depictions are situated on a white background, which gives a special presence of place to the individual objects. In her “Watercolor” series, the fruit and leaves float and dance in the void allowing us to access their forms and hues—their inherent beauty.

Kang states: “I appreciate all these things I find in nature—be they in full bloom or decaying. I don't judge what I see, but want to give each object the attention it is due. I find that my intense focus on a tiny flower or stem helps me to control and organize my world—it is a glimpse into honesty.”



Fumiko Toda has been working with SEFA since her first exhibition in 2010. She studied at the Sugii Art Institution in Mie and graduated from Kyoto University of Art and Design in 2000. In 2001, Toda moved to New York City, where she studied painting, figurative drawing, and printmaking at the National Academy of Fine Art.

Her paintings and prints have an obsessive quality of intricate details. Toda often includes insects—notably ants and butterflies—and other small creatures in her compositions. In the exhibition *Bountiful*, viewers witness a repetition of forms and patterns rendered in vibrant color. Yet, this repetition feels generative rather than reductive—a celebration of the natural world

To the artist, these beings also have a biographical significance. Toda found observing wildlife to be a calming reprieve during her childhood. The artist grew up in a rural community outside of Kyoto, Japan. Initially, she was frightened by the insects. She decided to explore her discomfort by engaging deeper rather than turning away. In her “Butterfly” series, every creature that she renders is different. Within her printmaking process, she employs a single plate for a series, but then manipulates the plate and the ink in between each pass through the printing press. Thus, the works—while connected at their base—are ultimately as varied as the ecosystems that surround us.

Toda states: “My paintings are representative of the world I would like to see around me. I am inspired by nature and everyday life that I find intriguing. My artworks usually have many layers of colors, imaginaries and thoughts, but ultimately my love of color makes my painting. I look for surprise, joy, freedom in my life through art-making.”

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Eunju Kang

BIOGRAPHY:

Eunju Kang was born in 1962 and raised in Daegu, Korea. She moved to California at 14 years old with her mother and two sisters in the 1970s. Kang was always an avid doodler, often in her textbooks, which became a helpful communication tool as she adjusted to her new life. Since the early 1990s, Kang has lived and worked in NYC, painting, printmaking and turning her doodles into a successful business with her sisters.

Kang earned fine art degrees at UC Santa Barbara and Pasadena Art Center College of Design where she graduated with distinction. She has been awarded residencies at The Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown (FAWC), the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts and the Vermont Studio Center. She has taught at the L.A. County High School for the Arts, the ArtCenter College of Design and the School of Visual Art in NYC. Her fine art is in private collections around the world. Her illustration work has been used in packaging and ad campaigns by Godiva Chocolate, Aveda, Simon & Schuster and many others.

Kang's lifelong passion for monoprinting began in Santa Barbara. She has continued to explore the medium, often incorporating collage and detailed sketches or painting.

ARTIST STATEMENT:

My love for watercolor painting and monoprinting never ends. Each day is a surprise—something spontaneous, both intended and not intended. On my daily bike ride, I find beauty in nature and in everyday life, sometimes in the most mundane places. As I get older, I stop and take in what I see: colors, shapes, flowers, sky. All of these images come with me to the studio. I add, subtract, blur, clear and then the surprise of it all comes—a simple gesture both deliberate and not deliberate. This unexpected outcome drives me every day.

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Fumiko Toda

BIOGRAPHY:

Fumiko Toda was born in 1981 in the Mie Prefecture and raised in the countryside in Japan. This love and appreciation for nature worked their way into her artwork.

Toda studied at the Sugii Art Institution in Mie and graduated from Kyoto University of Art and Design in 2000. In 2002, she moved to New York City. The artist has studied printmaking at the National Academy of Fine Art where she received numerous scholarships and awards.

Toda has been exhibiting worldwide and her works are in both private and public collections around the world. Recent exhibitions include Zia Gallery, Chicago; Pipal Fine Art, China; Kui Yuan Gallery, China and Susan Eley Fine Art, NYC.

Working in mixed media allows her to create different layers of acrylic paint, ink drawing, collage and printmaking in the overlay of various surfaces and visual effects resulting from this process. She suggests the passage of time and recollection of memory.

ARTIST STATEMENT:

I grew up near a pond, where she would observe nature for hours. My paintings are representative of the world I would like to see around. I am inspired by nature and everyday life that I find intriguing. My artworks usually have many layers of colors, imaginary and thoughts—but ultimately my love of color makes my painting. I look for surprise, joy, freedom and other important things in my life through art-making.