

CHRISTINE PARK GALLERY

Mathew Tom: *The Pure Land*

14 December 2018 – February 9 2019

Private View & Reception

Thursday 13 December 2018, 6-8 pm

515 West 23rd Street, New York, NY 10011

Tuesday to Saturday, 11am – 6pm & by appointment

For immediate release

Christine Park Gallery is pleased to present the first solo exhibition by New York-based multi-disciplinary artist Mathew Tom (b. 1984). This exhibition showcases Tom's most recent works from his painting series, which explore images from what has traditionally been known as the diametrically opposite worlds of "East" and "West," each with its own separate cultural and visual traditions. Through his paintings, Tom examines the concept of so-called East-West dichotomy and its cultural intersection and unveils how an image that may begin in one part of the world can transform into one that is universally recognized.

Culling from art history, Tom edits and reinterprets historical artworks. These reimagined images, separated from their original context, become hazy dream-like fantasies. With a Chinese father and an American mother, Tom is deeply interested in the notion of being "Asian" and ways to reconcile two opposing cultures.

Tom's training in Korean *Minhwa* painting in Gwangju, South Korea has greatly influenced his current style. With paintings that feature a tiger from a Japanese folding screen from 1630, cherries from a European botanical illustration, a young woman from a Chinese 1930's advertising poster, vases from the Chinese Ming Dynasty, a model from 18th century London, and a pair of hands from a German Medieval painting, Tom portrays images that hold symbolic significance for Eastern and Western cultures.

Questioning notions of cultural appropriation, Tom traces the transference of artistic trends between the East and West and its broader meaning in our current globalized society. Manipulated and repeated through history, these images become universal and survive through the centuries. Tom wonders if it is possible for individual images to become universal through repetition. *What is really East, and what is West?*

About the Artist

Mathew Tom (b.1984) is a New York-based multi-disciplinary artist. He has been developing a world in which he combines elements from Asian traditional painting and European classical painting to create his own utopia called "Society of Friends". Figures and animals are part of a larger mythology within his works that is in pursuit of the idyllic community he desires. In a world where everyone is in such perpetual bliss, even tigers have transcended their animal instincts and have joined the society as well.

Deeply interested in the power of images, Tom ponders the supernatural abilities a painting can express and if these images can transcend geographic borders and cultural borders and exist independently from their original context.

About the Gallery

Christine Park Gallery is a young gallery dedicated to supporting both emerging and established international artists. Located in West Chelsea, New York's burgeoning art hotspot, the gallery has an extensive programme of solo shows, conceptually curated group exhibitions, and special installations. With a constantly developing roster of innovative artists the gallery prides itself on exhibiting works in a range of media, seeking to provoke cross-disciplinary debate and extend the boundaries of the current contemporary art scene.

Our vision is to provide a platform to allow artists to develop and gain greater recognition. Therefore, as well as providing a commercial space that artists can use as a canvas to realise their projects and present their works to the public, we actively foster relations with art foundations, public museums and private clients.