

Mun Min's work

## Anonymity and individuality, Persona and identity

### Kho, Chung-Hwan's Art criticism

The figure most familiar to modern people would be quadrangle. The living environment is quadrangle and the same for the living tools. Under such a circumstance, it would be nice to see the quadrangle as a typical icon to tell us about his life's behavior, which penetrates the modern man's quality of life. In fact, naturalist Hundertwasser once defined curves as natural lines and straight lines as civilized lines. Thus, the quadrangle, made with straight lines, deserves to be the symbol of civilization and the epitome of modern people living in the age of civilization.

Living in quadrangles like this, it seems that even our consciousness will be tamed in the quadrangle despite ourselves. The sculptor Mun Min shaped the portraits of people conscious in the quadrangle as a human body sculpture constructed in quadrangles. Furthermore, they call them portraits of modern people. What does this mean, consciousness tamed by quadrangle here, thus, consciousness built from quadrangle? Here, the quadrangle is more than just a figure but symbolizes the frame. Moreover, the frame represents an invisible opportunity of oppression, such as norms that society and systems restrict individuals, common sense and rationality, morality and ethics. And people live a life that fits themselves into that frame.

Thus, the artist's Human Body Sculpture, built with quadrangles, represents the portrait of a modern man who lives a life that fits himself to one frame or another, perhaps a suppressed life, and in the midst of it, loses himself. The life of losing oneself here, in general terms, is a life of losing personality. And a sense of loss can be a typical symptom and that of modern people. The extreme sense of loss can be a testament to his modernity. Again, so the artist's sculpture is the person who lost themselves in highly institutionalized social norms (represented as a quadrangle, therefore as a frame) and is the embodiment of the gloomy portrait of a modern man who has lost one's individuality.

In his recent works, the artist tries to paint, not sculpture. Rather than a full-scale painting, it is more like drawing or ESKIS, seeking to expand the area of expression. So ostensibly, the media and the genre have changed, but it can be seen as an extension of the previous work and an extension and

deepening of the theme consciousness of the previous work in a quadrangle-represented social frame. (Portrait of a modern man living a lost life within the social frame represented by quadrangle).

What is unusual is the stamping technique applied to paper. Stamping technique? It is a technique that sculpts a particular pattern on a hard supporter like wood and then prints the image as it is on paper, like in the past rice cake pattern. In that a plate is introduced as an intermediate process, it is strictly more like print rather than painting, and at least it can be seen as a case of applying the plate method. Nevertheless, the artist maintains the nature of the painting in that he takes the form of monoprint (a masterpiece of painting) without plate as in ordinary print. In summary, the artist's latest work, which applied the stamping technique on paper, is a monoprint without a plate, given the media's specificity, which is located between print and painting, or as a combination of print and painting.

As such, plates are essential, but the artist introduces relatively soft silicone instead of hardwood. In the artist's previous works, we can see the unique texture (represented by the texture of modern people's wounds, trauma, and trauma) on the surface of a metal (including iron and stainless steel) constructed from quadrangle, which was carried out with silicon. Once a silicon seal with such a soft texture has been made into a plate, it is stamped on the paper. Here, the soft nature of the silicon plate is essential, and it is possible to obtain accidental effects and various textures through force control when the plate is pressed against the paper. (Generally, prints are made with a press, but the artist does it thoroughly by hand.) Maybe each person wanted to express a different personality and difference.

Thus, a plate for fingerprints and that for ears are made. That said, it is not easy to identify fingerprints and ears in the artist's work. Fingerprints are more complicated than ears, but we can take it as a substitute for an atypical texture on the surface of a silicon plate. Rather than as a practical motif, whether it be a fingerprint or an ear, we should pay attention to the message that the artist wants to convey through it.

Observing the message, fingerprints will express different personalities and differences for different people, just like the plate's surface texture. On the other hand, the ear has quite different meanings; perhaps the thinnest part of the body is the ear. It is more semantically than really, but it is usually said that people who listen well to others, those who are easily influenced by what others say, and that people who live a life that fits themselves to what others say (Sometimes in the name of common sense and justice, the norms that institutions impose on individuals?) are likely to have thin ears. Therefore, in the artist's work, the ear is a satire of

modern people's quality of life with thin ears. At the same time, it would be good to see it as a recommendation to keep and preserve individuality as a mandate to close ears and be faithful to oneself.

So, the artist uses a soft-textured silicone plate to stamp people's faces. It's a face, but it's not easy to recognize a face in a painting. The regular features and details are omitted, suggesting that the general outline suggests a face shape. At first glance, it looks like indiscreet rubble, but even though it is a drawing, the sense of mass and volume reminiscent of the sculpture is substantial.

Not to mention, such implied faces represent identity. Moreover, identity is twofold. As such, dual identity reflects the images of modern people divided by Persona and identity, respectively. Here, Persona is a social and institutional entity. As the term Persona itself comes from a mask's meaning, it is a subject of a mask.  $\neg$ As such, modern people have to wear one or another mask to live a social life. It is a mask that hides and wraps oneself, and another self hidden behind the mask is the identity. Therefore, you never have seen or known me. Sometimes, hiding behind a mask for too long can make us forget that there was such another subject. As such, identity is unfamiliar to you, and sometimes it can be unfamiliar to me.

The artist suggests a series of restrained and ascetic facial expressions in black and white monotonous and a series of colorful expressions in various colors. Here, the former corresponds to the Persona of the divided entity, the latter to the identity. In fact, the black-and-white monotone series seems to see an anonymous mask with an expressionless look on its face. Perhaps it represents a portrait of a modern man hidden behind anonymity, a kind of masked portrait. On the other hand, the face series expressed in color symbolizes the individuality behind the mask with a relatively colorful expression and the individual subject suppressed by the mask subject (which itself is identified with an anonymous subject).

Through this dual portrait series of modern people divided into personas and identities, respectively, the artist probably satirizes the quality of life of modern people who wrap and hide with anonymity, while calling for the task of breaking the mask of anonymity to restore individuality and true self (Purusha in Buddhism).