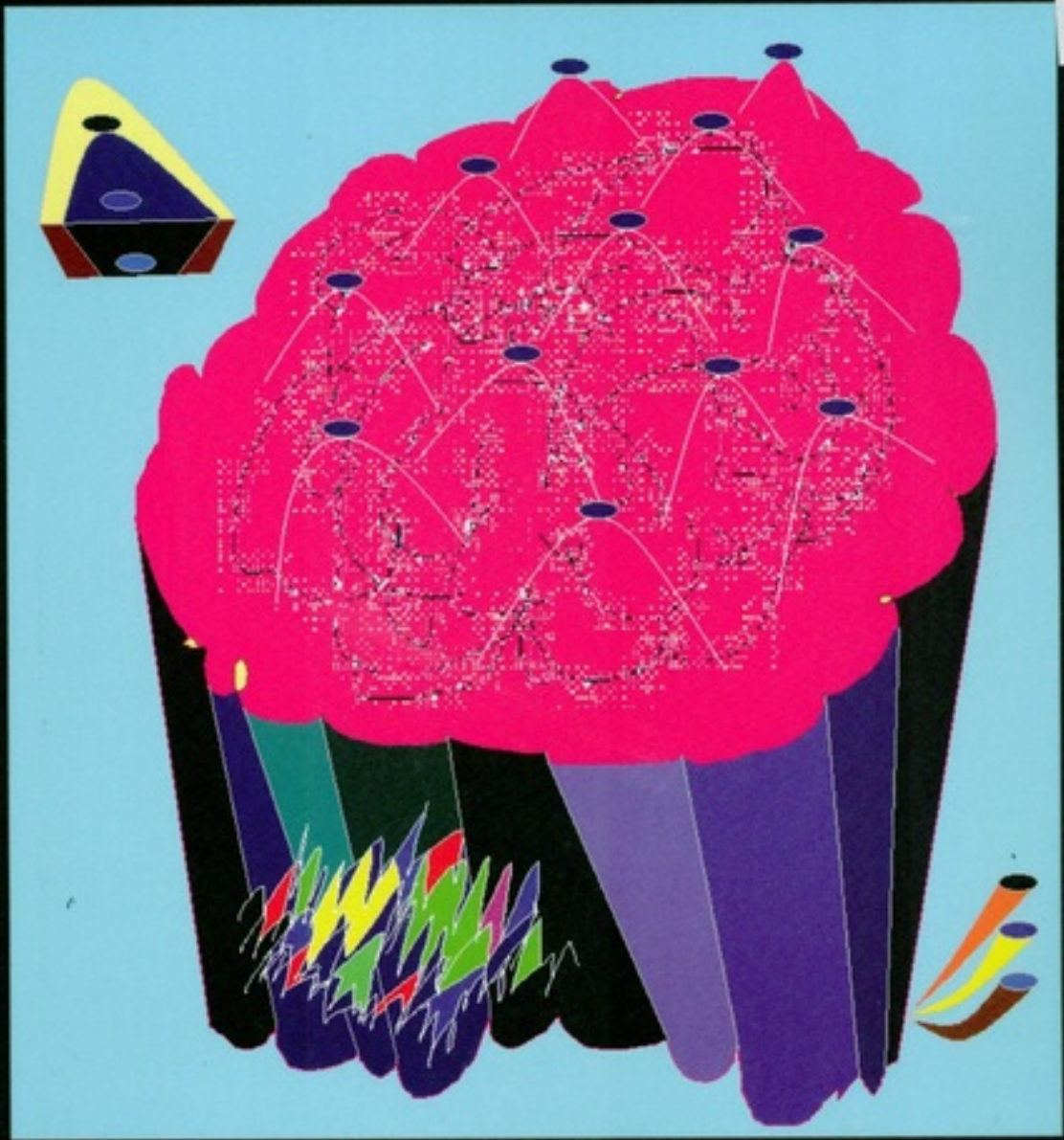


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**at DOCUMENTA (13)** \* **Art Taipei** \* **Reviews**

darkness and anxiety upon their children. Such are the human contradictions possessed by the patriarch in almost every culture. The traditions may differ but the presence of the father plays an essential role, whether present or absent. Such feelings are the content and motivation in the ink drawings and collages by Korean artist Eunsook Lee in the exhibition entitled *Dad I still remember you*.

What is striking about Lee's work is her ability to use contour lines to capture an incident between various figures on the page. While she is clearly gifted as a figurative artist, her line depends less on immediate observation than on memories as a young girl when her beloved father was suddenly taken from her, depicted in *I could not say good bye to my dad* (2012). Her drawing—which I understand as the basic structure of her work—depends largely on line and space, less from a Western point of view of perspective than a traditional Korean one. This is revealed in a drawing of an interior of a chapel or a schoolroom where children are seated. It is repeated in a different way when the large, looming male figure moves up through the clouds holding his happy infant aloft. Each of these drawings involves the use of both imagination and memory.

Lee's collages also deal with a field of flattened perspective as, for example, in the blue galaxies with a constellation of a father and child collaged in torn



**Eunsook Lee, We used to look at the stars together, 2012, collage on paper, 57 x 79 cm.** Image: Courtesy of the Artist and Pink Gallery.

paper that represents an infinite sky in *We used to look at the stars together* (2012). Another collage—also in blue—shows a cut-out figure of a young girl standing in front of a window at night, waving at the stars, as if sending a greeting to her father.

Eunsook Lee's work is filled with anecdotes and allegories—as in a tall yellow grass field where the adult lifts the child up amid a group of other children as a large insect moves across the sky. The artist also depicts scenes from her infant years as her mother carries her from behind (Korean style) or where he lies prone on her belly, perhaps waiting for a bath or diaper.

There are drawings of growing up, going to school, marriage, playing with her own children—as her life goes on. Occasionally crowds of people are drawn in various

situations—often imagined incidents in crowded cities or on boats, as in *The path we are going together* (2012) and *To higher place* (2012). On other occasions, a child will be observed in a solitary situation, as for example putting a found insect in a large jar.

There are also pen-and-ink drawings of groups of children dancing in circles, suggesting a kind of celebration of life, the continuation of life. Finally, I would say these are drawings of hope and exhilaration. They do what the best of art always does: they suggest feelings that are both sophisticated and understated.

**Robert C. Morgan**

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## SINGAPORE

*The Winston Ob Travel Awards at the Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore, LASALLE College of the Arts*

**W**isdom claims that the proverbial journey is more meaningful than its destination. Just as skill and technique are only parts of the artistic journey, the *Winston Ob Travel Awards* affirm that there is an art to the journey itself—and, ultimately, that journey can stimulate art.

For 13 years now, *Winston Ob* travel grants have been awarded to select students from the Faculty of Fine Arts

at LASALLE College of the Arts in order to expand not only personal experience, but also artistic awareness. This year, seven artists completing their final studies traveled to countries of their choice in order to recalibrate their artistic focus, both literally and figuratively. *The Travelogue* exhibition, curated by the school's Institute of Contemporary Arts, embodied their experiences.

Five students each received a *Travel Practice Award*, which permitted the artists to embark on their journey without prior commitment to a particular aesthetic or thematic goal; most of these works, however, came to investigate the rift between expectation and reality through various permutations of deconstruction and recreation.

Singaporean Karen Heng Shan Li (b.1990) is a multi-disciplinary artist whose crystal-beaded, lotus-petal chandelier, *Taiwanese Decadence*, embodies the lovely dissonance she found in Taipei, where Buddhist temples can be found alongside unexpected bouts of architectural Victoriana. Painter and printmaker Chen Shitong (b.1985) calibrates color etchings to align with his imagined Hong Kong and one founded in experience. His five delicate abstractions are grounded by the region's map and studded with elusive photographic images of the place; *Ming*, one of these golden-brown tracteries, comprises exquisite, perplexing tonal shards.

Painter Bradley Foisset (b.1979) references his father's military experience in the Vietnam war. The American artist's wanderings in that country are encoded within *From the woods themselves it goes into the axe*, an uneasy assemblage of found objects, including an evocative diary and a vintage gunsight, through which we view the grainy image of a military helicopter; these are offset by eight unsettling color-saturated photo-collages that reek of war and nostalgia. Swiss Jessica Gabrielli (b.1991) uses similar color and pattern to convey the aggressive beauty and rhythm of a Muay Thai gym in Thailand. Her eight pastels on



**Eunsook Lee, I could not say good bye to my dad, 2012, drawing on rice paper, 63 x 80 cm.** Image: Courtesy of the Artist and Pink Gallery.

board, *To the Beat of the Sarama*, resonate with the harsh pulse of the sport's accompanying music. Gabrielli's blurred fighting figures dissolve gradually into macro-movement; vertical overlaid lines suggest sensory static that forces perception into abstraction. More purely abstract is *Homage*, four fluid acrylic and oil paintings by Singaporean Luke Heng (b.1987) that are defined by gorgeous masses of translucent blue-blacks and thick, stony creams. Like Gabrielli and Foisset, Heng dissects and reassembles pattern and mass; in this case, the dramatic silhouettes of the Indonesian temples that punctuated his travels.

Two travel grants designated as *Research Awards* are selected based on detailed proposals; this year's winners each submitted photographic projects. Canadian Joshua Lui Chan (b.1989) went to Japan and returned with an untitled collection of startling black-and-white panoramas that echo the tonal absolutes of Heng's jagged abstractions. Chan dismantles long horizontal landscapes to fabricate Zen-like jigsaws of sky, horizon, and foreground. *Collection of Rocks 16.07.12* has 48 close-up images of single stones found in Nepal;



**Luke Heng, *Homage series*, 2012, oil on canvas, dimensions variable. Image: Courtesy of Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore.**

Norwegian Hedda Roterud Amundsen (b.1989) memorializes their context with concise handwritten notes on each, which range from the systematic ("16.07.12 07:00-18:00 hrs.") to the humorous ("Piece of a brick. Dirty. Made my purse smell like urine. Kept it.") This tidy collection of inertia is thus transfigured into a detailed, discursive diary of the senses—and sensibilities—associated with each specimen. Shelves of the actual rocks are a mute geological display.

As this accomplished group of young artists continues

to refine their work, they will encounter varying notions of artistic reality; with deepened awareness, they may wrest those realities further into alignment with personal expectation. It will be well worth following them on their artistic journeys.

**Marybeth Stock**

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### ***Kaomise* at Nikei Fine Art**

**F**or nearly 400 years, Kabuki troupes in Japan have celebrated the

opening of each theatrical year by introducing the new season's lineup of actors in elaborate *kaomise* or "face-showing" ceremonies. In a similar fashion, Nikei Fine Art showcased its own troupe of artists during its inaugural exhibition in August, titled *Kaomise*.

Nikei Fine Art features works by 15 renowned and emerging artists, including Toko Shinoda (Japan), Kukoku Tamura (Japan), Nait Sano (Japan), Chen Jianghong (China), Rikizo Fukao (Japan), Nobu Yamanaka (Japan), Kazu Miyamoto (Japan), Terence Teo (Singapore), Foo Yong Kong (Malaysia), Jean-Paul Decroix (Belgium), Ryo Yoshikawa (Japan), Shinichi Nakazawa (Japan), Laila Azra (Indonesia), Zhou Hao (China), and Jun Ogata (Japan).

The Nikei collection arguably revolves around the works of Toko Shinoda (b.1913): her austere lithographs and *sumi* (ink) paintings serve to define and calibrate the gallery's vision. Standouts include the cool surge of *Flash of Gold* (1964) and the vertiginous strokes of *Kobaku* (Red-White) (2011). In both, Shinoda's distinctive sweeps of *sumi* and pigment emerge from gleaming gold and silver leaves, respectively. Rikizo Fukao (b.1946) reinterprets these sweeps in oil, creating burly macro-visions reminiscent of Japanese syllabary, or deconstructed origami. His dynamic red-on-black *Compositions* (2006) are powerful, mechanized interpretations of movement, while a more delicate mobility is seen in the subtle romanticism of Jun Ogata (b.1962), whose warm acrylics pulse with fragile, tentative life.

Working in *sumi*, pigments, and pastel, Kukoku Tamura applies a frenetic minimalism to his imagery. *Mother Nature: A (I)* (2008) is an ink-swept dance that can barely contain itself, and his *Ancient Fantasies - Blue Image* (1999) is a joyful explosion of *sumi*, pigment, and pastel. Zhou Hao (b.1960) takes a more contemplative approach. Zhou studied in Japan, and this influence articulates his *sumi* works on paper: he plays with



**Above left: Bradley Foisset, *From the woods themselves it goes into the axe*, 2012, collage and photograph, 42 x 29 cm. Above right: Hedda Roterud Amundsen, *Collection of Rocks 16.07.12*, 2012, mixed media, dimensions variable. Images: Courtesy of Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore.**

