[HOMO UTOPICUS](http://www.hadacontemporary.com/group-exhibition-2/)

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HADA Contemporary is pleased to present a group exhibition showcasing meticulously constructed enigmatic hybrid spaces inviting the viewer to the non-existent utopia of mind.

According to the study by Cosimo Quarta, on anthropological bases the species ‘homo’ has been characterised, since its origins, by its ‘restlessness’, by the ‘search for new possibilities’, thus moving beyond purely sensible data, to go beyond immediate perception and therefore to ‘fore-see’ that which is ‘not yet’ actually visible, that is, perceivable by the senses.  This restlessness continuously urges humanity to explore and accomplish things that had never been done before. Thus, Pfeiffer argues that human restlessness represents ‘for cultural evolution what genetic mutation represents for organic evolution, and built-in source of novelty and increasingly complex patterns of life – the source, indeed, of the human spark’. As cultural evolution as well as organic evolution originates from the imperfection, mutation and errors, there are always slip-ups, social mutations, in the working of human laws and institutions. And the self-feeding restlessness of humanity ensures the sort of failure that makes cultural evolution and survival possible.  Humanity remains therefore suspended between a fiercely desired perfection and the knowledge that it will never be truly reached.

This incapability of satisfaction generated through the perpetual gap between ‘is’ and ‘ought to be’ encourage our habit of portraying our society as desolated contemporary urban space where violence, anxiety and lonesomeness populates. The utopian is not an accidental and transient fact, but essential character of the human species. Then what is the purpose of art in this exhaustive decaying world? The purpose of art has been discussed throughout the history of philosophy and nearly every major philosopher has commented on art, including Aristotle, Plato, Kant and others. In recent era, art has enjoyed its elevated status and the importance as a medium that enables to nurture interdisciplinary discourses, debates and creativity via archives and education and instigate communication under the diverse artistic platforms as museums and galleries. Despite the fact and the effort to promote ‘public’ understanding and enjoyment of art, restricted and confined psychological accessibility regardless of physical accessibility limits the experiences of art thus questioning its purpose. Intriguingly, in his most recent essay ‘Art as Therapy’, Alain de Botton argues that art ‘can reawaken us to the genuine merit of life’ through changing how we experience the world. Among the numerous and conflicting definitions of art therapy since the mid-20th century, it is generally agreed to describe the therapeutic application of art making rather than seeing and often used to a wide range of people with difficulties, disabilities or diagnoses.  Broadening its application, De Botton arises the possibility of its therapeutic influence on a wider public through open and active psychological participatory spectatorship.

Piet Mondrian considered art as ‘a pro-active attempt to establish a utopia on earth’ through his abstract neoplastic paintings to reveal a non-material, universalist utopia based on the balancing of archetypal opposites during the turn of the 20th century when nihilism was pervasive and ideological impasses were exacerbated by the outbreak of the series of cruel events.  The ‘non-existence’ of utopia, far from leading to nihilism and to desperation, leads humanity towards hope, spurring it towards moral and structural transformation, and therefore towards the construction of a society that is to be, as far as is possible, better than the one in which human beings find themselves living.  The visual presentation of non-existing fantastical hybrid space and the utopian nature of the artworks in this exhibition generate not only the opportunity for the audiences for sincere retrospection of oneself and worlds, but also imaginary space where viewers create their own utopia of mind.

Curator, Sun Chung

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