

My Father is at His work,

Incheon Art Platform Theorist Matching: Cha, Seungean

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Art Critic

For Cha, Seungean's works that she calls (referential) "woven painting¹⁾ herself, I suggest the narrative transformation in the path of thinking that has yet to address. It does not matter if this narrative transformation is (deliberately) understood as recontextualization. For example, when looking at how the woven weaving painting of Cha Seungean was incarnated, the direction of the narrative does not testify to its nature from the present meaning of its manifestation - in relation to the immediate belief in shape-, but upholds the justification implied by its (present) manifestation from the conditional meaning of its nature. In other words, I do not cling to interknitting and inferring the nature, such as medium, techniques, and forms restored to the woven painting, but focus on witnessing the emergence of woven painting and its calling through medium, techniques, and the nature of forms [at the risk of a word called *nature]. At this time, I decided to insert a hyphen (-) between two words that were tentatively united with the intention to separate the woven painting into two and at the same time to integrate them into an equal one.

Cha, Seungean's works are usually done by hand weaving using a loom. At this time, it seems that the series of her weaving have a clear goal from the start. She constructs a screen with clear recognition of the boundary of the edge under the conditions for combining with canvas frame. For example, by studying and discovering the production method of "Twill97cmFrame" (2013) through "Frame12P-1" (2012) bluntly imitating the canvas frame from "Agnes-Patch" (2012) that has marked the full-out start of the referential woven weaving painting, she has held on to the premise that the conditions for uniting hand-woven fabrics and standardized canvas frames are inevitable. Even though the powerful effect of handiwork sometimes greatly stresses the aspect of decorative textile crafts reminiscent of tapestry, the vertical weight by gravity due to the firm support of the canvas frame and the two-sided texture of the fabric enhances pure visual immersion which was temporarily offset, getting out of the situation in which it is finally unfolded as fabric itself, just like modernist abstract paintings did. However, in the woven painting of Cha Seungean, such an immersion does not continue to the end and is soon challenged. It is because of the lattice of the frame reflected

1) In her artist's written in 2017, Cha, Seungean wrote that "I make paintings by the method of weaving with reference to modern abstract paintings in Korea and the West under the title of "Referential Woven Painting".

semi-transparently like a traditional window frame behind the fabric or a part of the canvas frame exposed behind the (consistently) thin fabric, which seems to be incomplete sometimes. The partial intervention of intentionally “missed weaving” can lead to visual alienation that hinders immersion. The visual tension created by such a series of crossings, almost without exception, leads to the question of “what on earth is the true nature?” Cha Seungean already calls it ‘woven painting’.

Here, I decided to emphasize the implications of the horizontal union called ‘woven painting’ to loosen up the hierarchical meaning of this rigid compound, which is often understood as “painting by the technique called weaving”. This is also an attempt to explain some beliefs that came up in my mind at some point in time while I have been witnessing and guessing the revision and renewal of the past revelation and present targets that occur unexpectedly in the union of the two. For example, it may accompany figuratively somewhat reform-based theological thinking in which each of them attempts a referential renewal of their status on the different natures, the transcendent autonomy and secular accomplishment (which may not be distinguishable) between the two. Based on the theological thinking that the truth of the salvation revealed by the transcendental narrative was radically accomplished and will come again in the secular real space, it attempts to accommodate the intrinsic unity between the disparate two inhabiting the practical weaving technique of craft intended to promote the belief in “old modernity” of painting as an autonomous being and its secular liberation. In other words, it is to gauge the possibility of mutual re-recognition of craft and painting in a new narrative transformation through the unity between technique and form called weaving and painting. The hand labor dwelling in the fabric like a stain is strengthened and is hardly revealed in the woven painting of Cha Seungean. The situation might have been different if it had been unfolded alone in the eyes without any support, but the extremely difficult process of labor on the surface of the fabric tensioned by the standardized canvas frame us overwhelmed by a series of pictorially accomplished results. But it is momentary and such illusions (for disappeared labor) cultivate unhappy doubts in the strict minds leaning upon norms and religious percepts. When one’s own sublime nature which the repetitive labor of a disciplined body will achieve through its integration and conversely the traces of mythically applied labor manifest in the being which was once defined as transcendental sublime, impure doubts help renew the faith in wonderful graces.

Someone might think it is excessive metaphor that is hard to imagine. I am attempting to explain the woven painting of Cha Seungean as new narrative for understanding and theological events as a metaphor again. In the Bible, when Jews began to persecute Jesus about his healing the sick on the Sabbath, Jesus answered them, “To this very

day My Father is at His work, and I too am working.”, testifying the (equivalent) qualification of the Son doing the same work as the Heavenly Father on earth. ²⁾ At this time, the meaning of the Creator's sacred rest and the almighty sign of healing are supported at the same level of secular physical labor (work). Furthermore, it draws a scene in which each nature that is given and received while three different status collide closely is renewed by the unified sense. The purpose of reconsidering and structuring the context of this narrative is to newly estimate the narrative references that can be implied by the woven painting of Cha Seungean. In short, the structure of the woven painting of Cha Seungean seeks some sort of narrative to renew the concept and reality between the two by the horizontal unity of “weaving” and “painting”. Therefore, in the context of the unity, abstract painting and textile craft refer to each other about its nature, showing a process of renewing and proving itself. It reaches some equal agreement through the topic called “labor” as if the absolute belief in the transcendence of religious percepts and holiness that defined the Heaven and the Sabbath were renewed as being experiential and entity by the “work / labor” of the Son incarnated in the secular world and the Father in the Heaven. For example, in the woven-painting, Cha Seung-eun wanted to know that it was substantiated by the “labor” of the body to test belief, revelation, chance and time while its holiness adheres to the canvas, (as written in her artist’s note), although she was referring to shapes/forms representing abstract and transcendent spirituality in approaching painting. While referring to Korean and foreign abstract artists such as Agnes Martin, Richard Tuttle, Lee Ufan and Rhee Seundja, etc., Cha Seungean compared contemporary pictorial events that equally integrated the tedious and repetitive movements and unrealistic forms of abstraction emphasized by them with a series of theological events, and placed the holy spirit that the “labor” of the secular body will eventually reach in an equivalent place.

Then, let’s look at the calling of the renewal of the weaving technique referring to the painting in the woven-painting. By referring to the aspect that abstract painting artists reach a stage of spiritual enlightenment through repetitive and tedious labor, Cha Seungean has drawn a series of similarities that the process of weaving implies as a referential exclusive possession of the sublime. In other words, the characteristics of the mentality substantiated by labor in a series of abstract paintings referred to as the work of Jesus equally qualified as his Son does not impair the holiness of the Sabbath are achieved by same procedure in the fabric before it is united with the canvas frame. As the transcendental and sublime spirituality gain faith on the premise of tedious and repetitive labor, the tedious and repetitive labor in the process of weaving is renewed as its equivalent by the truth of sublime entity it referred to. The woven painting of Cha

2) For detailed contents, refer to the John 5 of the Bible.

Seungean that has appeared this way is cultivating its belief based on the calling - the renewal of the nature by the horizontal unity of the two through theological thinking and constant reference.