

Simon Raab Exhibition

24 February – 25 March 2012
Michael Schultz Gallery

Surface Tension, a solo exhibition of Simon Raab who showcases paintings on metal plates, is being held at Michael Schultz Gallery Seoul. This is the first time that the artist, who was born in France and grew up in Canada, is being introduced in Korea. In the exhibition, 20 flat and three dimensional pieces which encompass his work are being presented. You can appreciate portraits which are based on historical facts but which were reinterpreted, abstract pieces which emphasize changes in colors and patterns, and recently created sculptures.

Simon Raab majored in engineering in college and once led the life of a scientist. However, a few years ago, he became a painter after being influenced by his uncle, a famous painter in Canada. He integrates scientific principles, which he studied for a long period of time, to his work. He uses metal plates, such as steel and aluminum, to create paintings whose surfaces are transparent and luminous. His method of work is also unique. First, transparent color layers are created with acrylic polymer paints on the metal plate. Then, varnishes composed of transparent epoxy and polyurethane are applied to the plate. A thin cellophane-like layer is formed on the surface of the plate. Afterwards, curves and wrinkles are made on the surface by crumpling or changing the plate and hitting the plate with a hammer. The surface that undergoes this process maintains clear colors, emanating diverse lights, similar to a prism that has rainbow spectrums, due to the irregular curves. Also, despite the fact that his paintings are on flat surfaces, they have three dimensional qualities similar to reliefs. As a result, the shape of a painting looks different depending on the direction of light.

The artist attributed a new term “parleau” to his paintings. The term is a combination of the French word “par,” which means to “go through,” and the French word “l'eau,” which means „water“, to suggest that his paintings are similar to the “shape of light which passes through waves.”

Simon Raab was born in Toulouse, France in 1952. Then, his family immigrated to Canada. Presently, the artist lives and works in Santa Barbara, United States. He received a Ph.D degree in mechanical engineering from McGill University in Montreal. In 1982, he established a global company called FARO Technology. After becoming an artist, he held his first solo exhibition at Peter Zimmerman Gallery in Germany in 2009. Since then, he has participated in numerous exhibitions in Germany, Great Britain, Austria, Italy, and the Netherlands. He plans to hold a solo exhibition in China in the near future. This exhibition in Korea seems to be an important first step for the painter in Asia.