

- June-Bum Park -

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sometimes art literally lies at our feet. This is certainly the case with the easily overlooked video work "Parking" by the Korean artist June-Bum Park: it consists of a video projected onto the wall of paper. The fact that the observer does not encounter the work from the front but looks down on the action from above makes sense, because this corresponds to the perspective of the camera.

June-Bum Park went to a high-rise building next to a car park and from above he filmed all the everyday movements. Cars drive back and forth, park and drive away. People walk along the path, coming from the right or the left, get into their cars or get out of them, either alone, in pairs or in small groups. The day-to-day life of a car park is determined by permanent coming and going and in a certain sense it mirrors us ourselves and our lives which normally follow fixed paths—with order and disorder roughly in balance. We do not know whether the artist thought about these things while he was watching the car park. The fact is that he has interfered in the proceedings by means of a simple and yet momentous gesture. By means of a video trick, June-Bum Park has processed the filmed material: he has copied his own hands into the film in over-dimensional size, and he has made them the real directors of the scene. The result is the startlingly realistic impression that it is the hands which are pushing the pedestrians from one side to the other, picking up the cars from above and parking them or driving them away; or to put it another way; as if the land of the Lilliputians, just as described in "Gulliver's Travels", had become reality.

Really we all did the same thing when we were children, and we know the picture when we played with cars, dolls, Lego or Play-mobil: our hands, which were enormous in proportion, moved and controlled the little toys. "Parking" is like a playful reminiscence of childhood days – but with the power of an adult who has once again raised the real world to a play area, where destiny can be manipulated just as we feel.

The game the artist plays by shifting the dimensions is at the same time a game with reality. The events shown on the video create a picture puzzle. Inexorably we the observers project ourselves alternately into these gigantic-seeming hands, that is, into the person who controls the processes in their regularity and who acts like a higher power; and then on the other hand we see ourselves as part of the miniaturised world of tiny people and objects, controlled from above like marionettes.

With this short film, the artist has created a playful and remarkably relaxed picture of the course of events. We must call his point of view relaxed, because the young art student, who was born and lives in Seoul, operates in a city of almost 10.3 million inhabitants with an average population density of over 17,000 people per square kilometres. Seen from above, it is an immense and permanently moving ant colony. It is natural to think that one can see this endless rush and bustle as a metaphor for life itself. In June-Bum Park's video we see the Asian view of life, which does not emphasise the severed gap between self-determination and determination from outside, but which constantly allows both experiences to flow together.