



REVIEW OF EXHIBITIONS

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Cheol Yu Kim and Mark Milloff at CUE Art Foundation

For its inaugural exhibition last fall, the CUE Art Foundation in Chelsea showed works by Mark Milloff and Cheol Yu Kim. According to its mission statement, CUE aims to display the work of two emerging or under-recognized artists every month; for each exhibition, a seven-person rotating advisory committee nominates and selects two curators who mount the work of an artist of their choosing.

Independent curator and writer Debra Bricker Balken presented the work of Rhode Island-based artist Mark Milloff. Growing up in Florida, Milloff (b.1953) was drawn to the sea and, later, to *Moby-Dick* (in his artist statement he claims to have read the novel nearly 30 times). His mixed-medium installation, *Drawn Up Toward Heaven by Invisible Wires* (2003) – the title is an excerpt from the novel – is a convoluted meditation on the book. Its central element is a vast, wood-framed pastel on paper whose waterlogged drama recalls Géricault's *Raft of the Medusa*. The whale surges out of the water on a diagonal, cutting through the picture, tossing men into the sea and capsizing the *Pequod*. To the right and left of this central image were two large sail-like elements; a fan placed behind each fabric swath created a soft, waving effect. Phrases from the book and various images of the sea were projected from behind onto the cloth so that they were visible from the front. On the floor before

the pastel were two wooden coffins. Perhaps it is fortuitous timing for Milloff, but it seems possible, as Balken states in her catalogue essay, that a presentation of Ahab's tragic encounter with the whale might be read as something of a morality tale by today's viewers.

Selected by photographer Nikki S. Lee, Cheol Yu Kim's seven drawings and single paper cutout (all 2003) are, in contrast to Milloff's agitated theatrical presentation, strangely serene. Kim, who lived in a small Korean village near the DMZ until relocating to New York in 1999, makes intricate drawings (pen on paper or ink and watercolor on paper) teeming with abstract forms derived from missiles, mushroom clouds, warplanes, parachutes, aliens and UFOs. Though filled with military imagery, the works maintain a sense of playfulness. There is a lack of gravity about them – not only do the forms float gracefully across the picture plane, but Kim seems to have a lighthearted fascination with these shapes, repeating them over and over again. One of the five drawings titled *Delta Quadrant* (52 ½ by 96 inches) – the title refers to an area of uncharted space in the TV show *Star Trek* – is a multilane, buzzing, outer-space thruway crowded with sci-fi shapes rendered in atmospheric blue. Kim displays a childlike delight with outer space and a mature concern with form and content. The three fine black ink drawings, each titled *Drawing for Sculpture*, look like Ernesto Neto's billowing biomorphic sculptures rendered in two dimensions.

Even more impressive was Kim's giant paper cutout suspended from the ceiling near the gallery's end wall. Contrary to appearances, the cutout was not made in the traditional fold-and-cut technique; rather, the artist drew shapes on paper, cut them out by hand and then used the pieces as templates throughout this work and the watercolors. The cutout, at about 116 by 176 inches, is a delicate and immense project that, like Milloff's, demonstrates the artist's single-minded devotion to his subject.

-- Jessica Ostrower

Right, Cheol Yu Kim:
Delta Quadrant, 2003,
Ink and watercolor on paper, 52 ½ by 96
inches; at CUE Art Foundation.



Below, Mark Milloff:
*Drawn Up Toward
Heaven by Invisible
Wires*, 2003, mixed mediums,
12 by 38 by 8 feet; at CUE.

