

THREE DEVILS BY THE BEDSIDE

JEONGSU WOO

우정수:
머리맡에
세 악마

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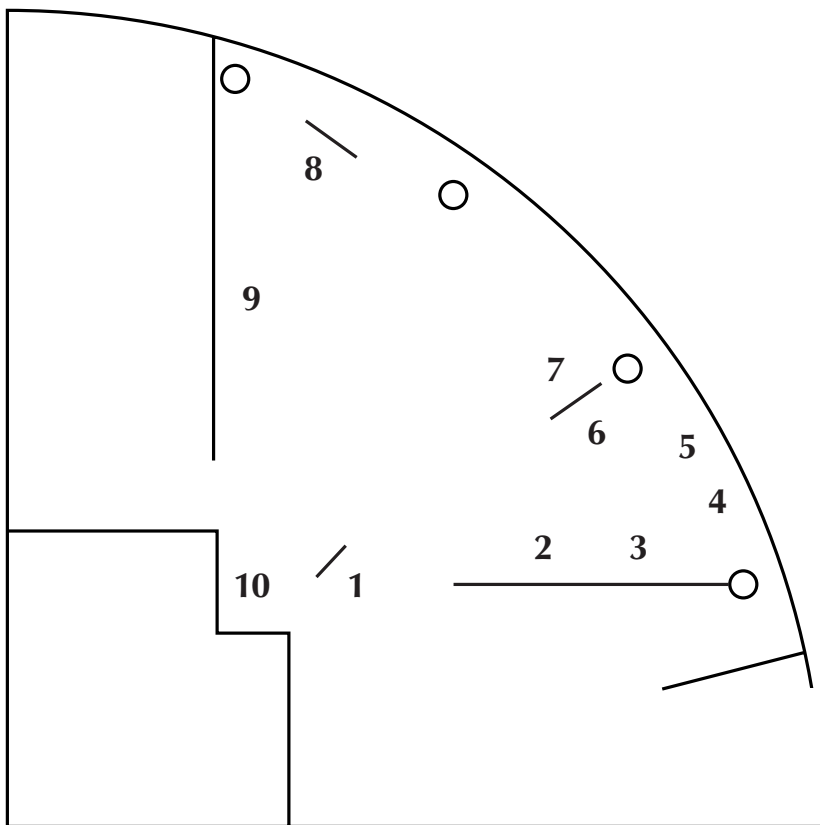
Jeongsu Woo references visual images and narratives from different eras, including illustrations from medieval scriptures and philosophical texts, major works in art history, and characters from fiction and comics. Deconstructing and allegorically reconfiguring their contexts and narratives, Woo has been exploring new possibilities in image narrative. This exhibition begins with Woo's research on insomnia. Woo came across the story of a medieval knight who suffered from insomnia for years due to three devils at his bedside, only to be miraculously cured when he encountered a monk at Canterbury Cathedral.

Woo's new series, *Three Devils by the Bedside* (2023–2024) presents a sequence of fragmented images, like a dream after a sleepless night. The ten canvases are arranged in two rows creating one large image with sewn pattern fabric. Within this overlapping framework, Woo repeatedly shows the figure of "Mr. Painter," who may be considered as his persona. This figure is depicted as unable to sleep, working busily in front of the easel, and being tempted by the devils to calm his anxieties. Meanwhile, Woo transformed the devil characters that appear everywhere into a new narrative by partially adapting illustrations from Goethe's *Faust* and scenes from Goya's paintings. These excerpts from various images support Mr. Painter's life story, but they also configure that story in new ways, creating an effect where narratives seem to arise endlessly within the painting.

While the other figures—Mr. Painter, the devils, and the different characters from the historical paintings that Woo calls upon—represent their own events, the character holds up his foamy beer glass like a sort of McGuffin as he appears through the images, staring forward nonchalantly. Discovering both this character and what it signifies is another pleasure this exhibition offers.



Explaining that he finds it “interesting how connected lines can become images and stories,” Woo describes his work as “paintings that originate in lines.” Lines form surfaces that create new spaces in turn, and as color is added, these become paintings where new stories unfold. *Jeongsu Woo: Three Devils by the Bedside* explores Woo’s experiments that are noteworthy for the way he creates a form of cynical parody of contemporary society while staying true to the allegorical function of painting.



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The Ground, Art Sonje Center

- 1 **Mr. Painter #1**
2024, Acrylic, fabric collage
on canvas, 116.8 × 91 cm
- 2 **Three Devils by the Bedside #7**
2024, Acrylic on canvas,
160 × 160 cm
- 3 **Three Devils by the Bedside #8**
2024, Acrylic on canvas,
160 × 160 cm
- 4 **Mr. Painter #4**
2024, Acrylic on canvas,
72.7 × 53 cm
- 5 **Mr. Painter #3**
2024, Acrylic on canvas,
72.7 × 53 cm
- 6 **Three Devils by the Bedside #9**
2024, Acrylic on canvas,
160 × 160 cm
- 7 **Three Devils by the Bedside #10**
2024, Acrylic on canvas,
160 × 160 cm
- 8 **Three Devils by the Bedside #6**
2024, Acrylic, fabric collage
on canvas, 170 × 170 cm
- 9 **Three Devils by the Bedside**
2023–2024, Acrylic, fabric
collage on canvas, 261 × 970 cm
- 10 **Three Devils by the Bedside #11**
2024, Acrylic on canvas,
120 × 120 cm

Jeongsu Woo (b. 1986) draws upon narratives and imagery from illustrations, mythologies, and episodes of epic theater across different periods, reimagining and rearranging them on canvas. Using bold, free brush strokes, the artist employs printmaking and drawing techniques to playfully and satirically depict the contemporary world. He skillfully presents alternative perspectives of images, diverging from their historical contexts. Woo's significant solo exhibitions include *Palindrome* (BB&M, 2022), *Where Is My Voice* (DOOSAN Gallery Seoul, 2020), *Tit for Tat* (DOOSAN Gallery New York, 2020), and *Calm the Storm* (Kumho Museum of Art, 2018). He has also been featured in numerous local and international group exhibitions, such as *Flowing Moon, Embracing Land* (Jeju Biennale, 2022), *Young Korean Artists 2021* (National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea, Gwacheon, 2021), *Fortune Telling* (Ilmin Museum of Art, 2021), *Compulsion to Repeat* (Seoul Museum of Art, 2019), and *Imagined Borders* (Gwangju Biennale, 2018).

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THREE DEVILS BY THE BEDSIDE
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The Ground, Art Sonje Center

Coordination
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Opening Hours

12:00–19:00

(Closed Mondays)

Admission Fee

10,000 KRW	25–64 years
7,000 KRW	19–24 years, over 65 years
	Art Pass cardholders
5,000 KRW	9–18 years
Free	8 and under
	Visitors with disabilities
	ICOM · CIMAM · SCM
	cardholders

Docent-guided Tours

Dates	Friday–Sunday 14:00, 16:00
How to book	Online or on-site reservations

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