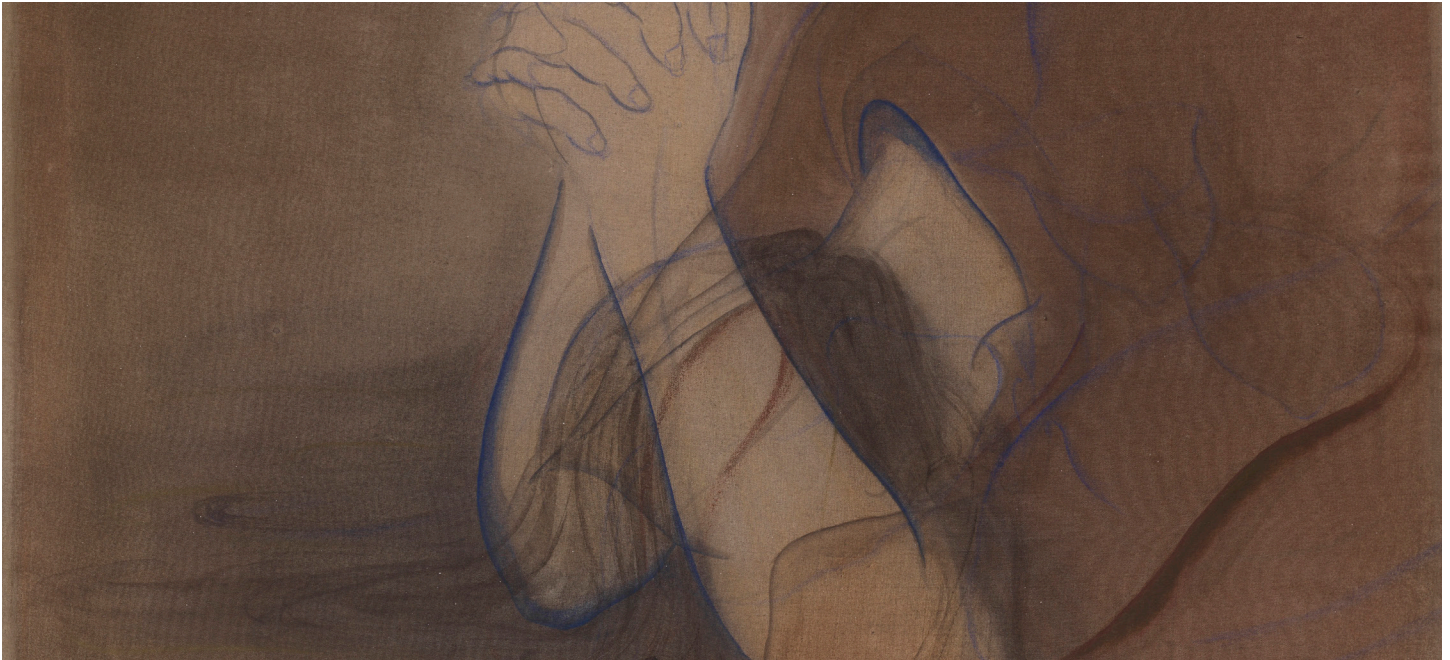


Joeun Kim Aatchim

Homed

June 17 - July 13, 2022



François Ghebaly is proud to present *Homed* by Joeun Kim Aatchim, the New York-based artist's first solo exhibition with the gallery.

It Gives Me Troubles (2019)

It gives me troubles
when my writer's mind turns me on at night.
More specifically,
It gives me a chain of troubles
If I do not make an action of writing
when my writer's mind turns me on at night.
Same kind of troubles when love occurs in one's mind
without loving action.

Wordsmith and multi-hyphenate artist Joeun Kim Aatchim is a prodigious diarist. For over a decade and across many seasons, she's used iPhone memos and handwritten notes to catalog her adult life: familial traumas, reconciliations, developments in her English second language, and ongoing negotiations as a South Korean immigrant. Aatchim often revisits this cache of linguistic and emotional raw material in search of artwork titles or poetic inspiration—sometimes in search of answers.

In 2017, drawing from nearly nine years of memos, Aatchim published her first print compilation, *Four of Mattresses Stacked on Misery*—equal parts epistolary memoir, logbook, and dream-journal. In subsequent reeditions, Aatchim dissects and adds to this original text, suspending her writing (and, by extension, memory) in a perpetual “draft” state. Her most recent distillation, *In Praise of Cry Breaks* (2022), will be printed in a special edition of 75 copies to coincide with *Homed*.

The exhibition title, like many of Aatchim's signature neologisms, is best described in the artist's own words:

Homed accommodates the drafts, those who have returned, and those who seek solace or are in willful solitudes. It is a psychological state of yearning to be settled; a state of relief in which one gasps and exhales, "Mom/Lord/Honey/My baby, I'm *homed*."

The experience of language—its flexions and failures—is an integral concern in Aatchim's practice as both author and visual artist. Like "homed," typos, errors, and mispronunciations become sites of double-entendre and poetic happenstance. In one poem from 2019, Aatchim likens her nonnative English to a "struggling husband" whom she gladly cherishes in his homeliness. The shifting, translucent organza surfaces on which Aatchim writes and paints (a metaphor for, among other things, the artist's partial inability to perceive three dimensions, also called stereoblindness) become similar spaces for semantic invention.

Aatchim's insistence upon play speaks to her reverence of drafts—the intermediate and indeterminate stages in her practice. Works like *Such Person* (2013-22) and *The Morning Squatter; A Funny Health Song with Pepe & Smiley Viskovitz* (2019-22) comprise many older, newer, and unfinished drawings, remixed into their final forms with materials from different seasons of the artist's life. A thin, bright silver ticket rack extends along the perimeter walls, framing the exhibition space. It's the sort found in restaurant kitchens, sometimes offices. For Aatchim, who adds to and withdraws from the rack in real time (mostly with sketches, poems, desiccated butterflies, and other ephemera), the ticket rack motif perfectly summarizes the perennity of drafts.

Across the exhibition, Aatchim's imagery is domestic and meditative. Gauzy silks and mineral pigments like lapis ultramarine and black jasper halo solitary scenes of grief, mother and child, and vespertine still-life. Each is a relic to the unassuming, unnamed labors through which we're "homed," and derive familiarity, if only temporarily, from uncertainty. The silk diptychs, *Bail Mother Melancholy (Sunday Garden Given Forgiven)* (2021) and the title piece *Homed (Unwilling and Never Not Awkward)* (2021-22), are stretched in a complex matrix of wood, brass, waxed cotton, and leather knots called *쟁틀매기 (jengteul-maegi)*. The apparatus originates in centuries-old Korean silk painting, and allows temperamental silk surfaces to acclimate to changes in humidity and temperature. Though traditionally used only as a temporary suspension, here they house the final diptych paintings, eternally attempting to make peace with their surroundings. They are one of many fruitful metaphors in Aatchim's *Homed*.

Lover's English (2019)

The way i learned to speak English for the first time was
lover's kind. You guess what kind of troubles it might
have caused.

Joeun Kim Aatchim (b. South Korea) is a painter and multimedia artist based in New York City. Aatchim received her BFA from New York University, as well as her MFA from Columbia University. Recent solo exhibitions include François Ghebaly, New York (2022); Make Room, Los Angeles (2022); Harper's, East Hampton (2021); and Vacation Gallery, New York (2019). Recent group exhibitions include Jeffrey Deitch, New York (2022); Harper's, New York (2022); Make Room, Los Angeles (2021); and The Drawing Center, New York (2019). Aatchim has received fellowships at Triangle Art Association (2021); Foundation for Contemporary Arts (2019); The Drawing Center (2018-20); Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture (2017). Aatchim will be featured in an upcoming group exhibition at François Ghebaly, Los Angeles in autumn of 2022.