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## Sangbin IM

### *Confluence*

February 11 to March 27, 2010

Reception: Thursday, February 11, 6-8 PM

Mary Ryan Gallery is pleased to announce its first exhibition of new work by Sangbin IM. IM's photographs are hyper-realistic visions that contrast our utopian desires with voracious consumerism. Through his dramatic digital manipulation of painting and photography, IM challenges our perceptions of the world around us.

To create a single work, IM takes hundreds of digital photographs of a scene or landmark over a period of time, which he then combines seamlessly with digital images of his own paintings of atmospheric elements (sky, water, or flooring, for example), to heighten the drama. The resulting image is an idealized and subtly enhanced view of our urban environment. At a first glance, these familiar settings may look real, but upon close inspection, the artifice becomes apparent. IM's work aims to blur the boundaries of illusion and verisimilitude through exaggeration of scale, color saturation and painterly textures.

Lush greenery surrounds a turquoise lake filled with boaters, set against a magnificent, if over-abundant, New York City skyline in *Central Park-NY-2* (2009). This painterly photograph, an idealized rendering of a site familiar to so many New Yorkers, is a perfect example of the dualities that inform IM's work: the real and the virtual, the original and the manipulated, the analog and the digital.

*People-MoMA* (2009) depicts a mass of people, photographed from several floors up, all making their way toward the entrance of the Museum of Modern Art, which itself is suggested only by barely visible glass doors and the edge of MoMA's atrium balcony. The people--brightly colored strategically placed against IM's enhanced backgrounds--seem to be rushing toward the gap between the two panels of the diptych. With the museum's collection removed from view, the work shifts its focus to the relationship between people and architectural space, the cultural site, and the collective museum-going experience--as the artist says, "the modern spectacle of appreciating art."

Three examples from IM's "Metropolitan Museum Project," a series of nine works, will also be on view. In a different approach to commenting on the modern museum, IM, acting as 'curator,' completely reconfigures different portions of the museum's permanent collections. He re-sizes the works based on his personal preference, changes the displays, lighting, and color saturations, while hanging the works in a massive salon-style grouping that nearly fills the picture plane. IM makes each of the works in the series the same size, which gives each cultural collection equal attention. Here IM explores the role of the museum and its effects on the public's perception of art history.

Please contact Jordan Karney for more information at 212.397.0669 or [jordan@maryryangallery.com](mailto:jordan@maryryangallery.com)

Sangbin IM (b. 1976) lives and works in New York City. Originally from Seoul, Korea, IM came to Yale University on a Fulbright scholarship and graduated in 2005 with an MFA in painting and printmaking. IM's work has been exhibited internationally, most recently in a group exhibition at the ICAM | IE-YOUNG Contemporary Art Museum in Korea. Since 2006 he has been teaching at Columbia University while completing his doctorate.



*People- MoMA, 2009*  
Lambda print (diptych)  
31-1/2 x 72 inches (top)  
13-1/2 x 72 inches (bottom)