

THE POSSIBLE EMERGING

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EUROPA

Youjin Moon's South Korean work is nearly as cold as *Threshold* (USA, 2013, 19'), as ice exactly represents the crystallization of ethereal and evanescent matter. However, unlike *Threshold*, this work upholds a certain level of sensibility that goes beyond mystique, and that intersects with both Asian and feminine spaces. It is as if *Europa* (South Korea, 2015, 12') unrolled in an only fluid movement of internal resonance, thereby exhibiting its ethos. Ice, moreover, acts as metaphor for the nature of form — or attributing form to something that has no shape, like water. This treatise on form is popular among experimental directors like Epstein in *La Tempestaire* (France, 1947, 22'), Clipson in *Bright Mirror* (USA, 2013, 9'), and Brakhage in *The Mammals of Victoria* (USA, 1994, 34').

In short, water is distinctive, with no specific form, and Youjin Moon transforms the shapeless, abstract nature of water into something material and concrete. A solid shape, while receiving water, may become shapeless even when we perceive the configuration of form. *Europa* appears to stimulate the perception of those who watch it, as the director offers a new and original image, even though this image takes shape from the public's perception. They perceive originality when an image challenges their perception. For example, ice may appear to be ice, but in *Europa* it is a shapeless form of water, rendered solid. The ice acts as the possibility of form given shape via public consciousness — all because the audience perceives it as such.

Consequently, the figures onscreen acquire a meaning that would have otherwise been impossible to clarify: a fundamental indefiniteness that is truly primordial. Moreover, such indefiniteness relies on a bond between the visible and the invisible; and by visible, we mean something that has a specific shape, and that can be experienced with the senses. Invisibility, on the other hand, implies shapelessness, and it is the invisible that crystallizes the image of *Europa*. This image is original, and comes to life as the audience views the movie. Members of the audience may feel differently about themselves due to the film's manipulated perception of vision, which is contrary to what typically happens in reality.

About halfway through the film, the vaginal representation is one of the few — and possibly the only — representation of what cannot be seen: the shapeless giving birth. It is something that extends beyond the visible, and that moves the focal point in an asymptotic and indeterminable way. Similarly, the finale unfolds similar to a Takashi Makino's movie, and a panicked reception plays out in a heartbeat, as if the universe is an eternity instead on an infinite space, and that such an eternity involved those who reside within it. Otherwise put, those who observe this universe from the outside, those who see it objectively, cannot understand it. Thus, for them, it burns up in a mere moment, between few more than nothing and nothing at all.

This is why *Europa* is a masterpiece. Unlike tawdry poetics such as Grandrieux, Youjin Moon does not show the shapeless, but rather what lies beneath the shape. *Europa* is not like *White Epilepsy* (France, 2012, 68'); it is not given form, nor is it opposed to form. Rather, it affirms that space and time are broken up amidst self-perpetuating forms.

This exactly leads to the generation of another universe, a new dimension that is not in any way transcendent to the one in which we live. Youjin Moon shows what is familiar and known — the same universe that hosts us — but she shows it only after discovering the shapeless form that alters our perception. Our perception beckons us to accept the possibility of a different universe, one that appears identical but is perceived differently: such perception calls us to engage, as this is the moment the shapes take on new forms; they are constantly changing. It is the becoming of what it appears, the possible emerges where, at last, every thing is never the same because we are not the same but we pass countless possibilities for a single and short-lived event: the aphasia, the cinematographic turmoil before the inexplicable that is the fullest and unique cosmically receptive realm of existence.