

## Mario Jung

(S. Korean, b. 1949)

From Seoul, South Korea, **Myung “Mario” Jung is *the* impasto painter, par excellence, of field and vineyard landscapes**, inspired by the ‘wine countries’ of France, Italy, and California. ‘Impasto’ painting is the art of **mixing granular media** – chalk or marble dust, quartz grit, sand, etc. – **within oil pigments** to create thick, rich textures that are used to build up the canvas surface with low-relief extrusions, reminiscent of bas-relief sculpture. **Van Gogh** is perhaps the best known, **Grand Master** of impasto painting of all time.

Although oil paints have been known since ancient times, **the invention of ‘modern’ oil pigments**, based on the suspension of minerals in dryable uncton, is credited to **Jan van Eyck**, circa 1400. **Virtually unknown to classical Asian artists**, oil painting did not come to the attention of the Far East until the mid-19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, when Asian masters of ink painting and calligraphy began to travel to Europe to take up special studies in Western art at prestigious centers like the *École des Beaux Arts*, Paris. Conversely, occidental painters on sojourns to the Orient would expose Asia’s important aesthetes to oil craft – a kind of professors-of-art “exchange program.”

All this would come to an end with the rise of **Chairman Mao in Communist China** in the 1940s. For decades, thereafter, Western oil technique was banned and forbidden for its ‘kowtowing’ to capitalist interlopers. Even books on the history of Western art and technique were confiscated. Violators of this “Cultural-Revolution” rule were often imprisoned, corporally punished, or even put to death in extreme cases. Finally, in the mid-1970s – with the opening of Sino-U.S. détente under **President Nixon** – strictures were relieved. **Madame Mao** even went so far as to establish an organization called **OPRA: ‘The Oil Painters’ Research Association.**’ The trend spread throughout Asia, including to **Korea**.

It is out of this rich and rugged history of cultural isolation, conflict, and upheaval that Mario Jung (aka ‘Mario’) would dramatically take the **“Grand Prize of Western-style Painting” at the *Seoul Artists’ Association Exhibition of Fine Art in 1986***. One of today’s most lauded oil painters in the U.S., Mario has never looked back. Due to his astounding initial success, Mario would be invited to become a **member emeritus of the Seoul Artists’ Association**, to which he has now belonged for nearly 30 years.

Depending on the size of a canvas, a Mario painting today can use up to 12 tubes of paint for a single painting! Moreover, as a post-Modern master of contemporary art, Mario Jung is the first creative visionary to combine the **Op Art style** of that vibrant, hallucinatory 1960s movement with the revered and venerable tradition of **Renaissance perspective landscape painting**. It is this hybrid of unlikely forms – matched only by his outlandish conquest of the ‘exotic’ arts of the West – that has made **Mario one of the top-collected, popular oil painters of the 21<sup>st</sup> century**.

### SELECTED RÉSUMÉ

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| 1986        | <b>Grand Prize, Western-style Painting</b> , Seoul Artists’ Association<br>Elected, <b>member emeritus, Fine Artists of Seoul Artists’ Association</b> |
| 1987 - 1993 | Group Shows, <b>Korean National Art Exhibition</b> (annuals)   |
| 1993        | Molwoo Association Art Exhibit & HANKIIK Art & Culture Assoc. Exhibition   |
| 2003 - 2007 | <b>International Art Expo</b> , group show, Javits Center, NYC, NY   |