

# The Korea Times

## Rising international artists' first exhibitions in Korea

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Installation view of London-based artist Emma Hart's "Big Mouth" exhibition, at the Barakat Contemporary in central Seoul / Courtesy of Barakat Contemporary

By Park Han-sol

With the year nearing its end, Seoul has invited a number of notable rising international visual artists for their first solo exhibitions in the country, largely through globally renowned galleries that have begun expanding their presences in the region.

Barakat Contemporary in central Seoul has brought in the curious installations borne from the hands of London-based artist Emma Hart.

In the exhibition titled "Big Mouth," which runs until Jan. 23, the 2016 recipient of the Max Mara Art Prize for Women addresses questions of social class and hierarchy through ceramic sculptures equipped with mischievous humor.

The focus of her latest sculpture series lies in people's daily use of verbal and nonverbal language — intonation, accents, vocabulary and gestural behavior — especially in relation to her working-class background and her interaction with other artists within British society.

Seeing how such means of communication can easily turn into factors of judgment and discrimination, the artist explores her own internal conflict that she is not being herself, feeling like a "fraud" as she tries to fit in.

One of Hart's sculptures on display, "Big Mouth" (2021), comprises targets reminiscent of faces. In the eyes of the viewers, a relatable situation soon unfolds, where one becomes the target of other people's judgmental stares — visualized as a row of arrows stuck on the wall — when their desperate attempts to blend in through affectation and insincerity fail.

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