

KIM KEUN TAI
KOAN

金根泰：公案

SOLUNA
FINE ART

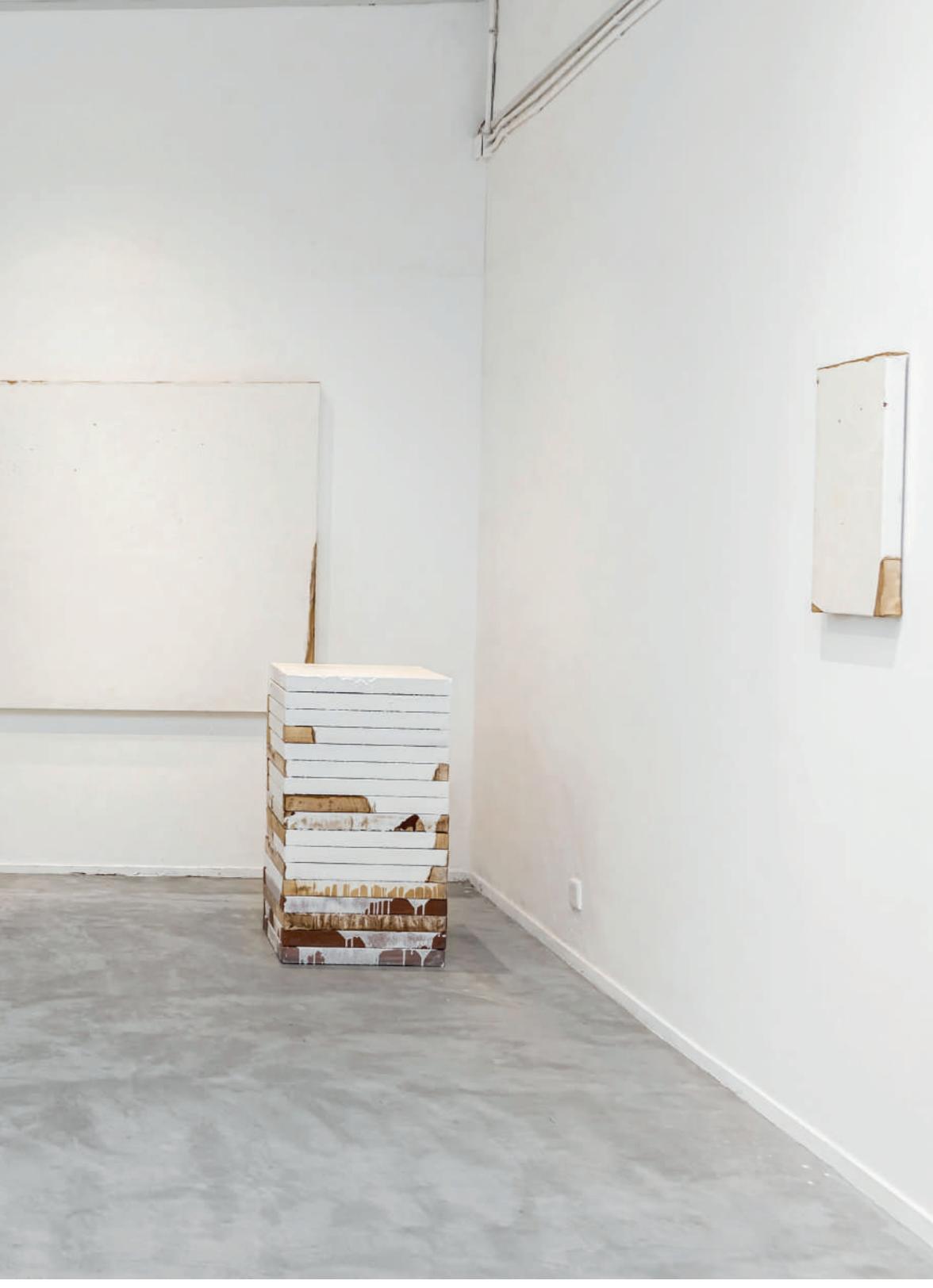
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KIM KEUN-TAI: KOAN
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Curation by Rachel Lee
English content by Charlotte Lin
Chinese content by Sharon Zhang
Edited by Colin Kwok
Public relations by Charlotte Lin, Sharon Zhang

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Soluna Fine Art is delighted to present Kim Keun-Tai's solo exhibition 「KOAN 公案」 in Hong Kong. This exhibition showcases Kim's work with his approach towards the Asian wisdom and philosophy. With organic earth elements, his work focuses on seeking true definition where the origin of the material was found. In this exhibition, Kim embraced the enlightenment he captured from the Earth material, transformed it onto the canvas with his unique method of creation. 「KOAN 公案」 will be on view from 11 March 2021 to 30 April 2021, with an opening on 11 March, 2-8PM.

KOAN 公案 pronounced Kōan/gong'an, refers to a story, or a dialog that happened in the process of achieving enlightenment of the Zen masters in ancient times. It is a paradox that requires meditation to train the Zen masters to ultimately abandon their reliance on reasoning and push them to acquire a sudden enlightenment.

Kim Keun-Tai makes his works through kneading diluted stone powder and pouring it on the canvas, then tilting it and letting it flow, allowing his material to 'draw' on its own while guided by the artist's will. It reveals the artist's intention of 'let things speak for themselves'. What does it mean to 'let things speak for themselves'? Is that the renunciation of perceiving the subject as an artist? Or is it the most passive form of an 'active' statement that aims to let go of the artist's consciousness, rather than giving up?

Kim started his artistic career during a time when the world was deeply embroiled in new upheaval, movements of modernism and social realism were involved lively. As a result of the era, he found his artistic practice taking root in philosophy, harmony and calmness. His creative process conveys an almost sterile asceticism that is reflected in his art. When looking at the object from eye-level, a horizontal relationship is formed and no hierarchy is established. Human relationships are also expressed in the same way in terms of equality. Kim Keun-Tai gazes at things in a horizontal way and emphasizes this view of equality, where the enlightenment was found.

The peculiar technique of pouring thin layers of stone powder medium onto the side of the canvas and then tilting the canvas back and forth to spill the dough is a conscious movement that frees paints from the artist's consciousness and gives autonomy to the substance. Kim's methodology is not only the minimization of artistic actions performed by the artist, but also the active attitude of objects which dominate the narrative from bottom up.

Despite the paradox of a lively stillness, the critical factor in his work is 'the sense of touch', which echoes throughout his work. This is why intersubjectivity and ecological

perspective stand out in his work. Kim Keun-Tai pays attention to nature. His silence here becomes more meaningful and valuable than eloquence - especially in a world rampant with garrulity, sophistry, and alternative facts. This solo exhibition 「KOAN 公案」 allows Kim to communicate with his viewers about a timeless Asian philosophy and wisdom on the canvas; in speaking primarily through organic earth elements, his works ultimately express the significance of material.

Soluna Fine Art 將於二零二一年三月十一日至二零二一年四月三十日於香港欣然呈獻金根泰的個人展覽「KOAN 公案」。

公案(音:Kōan/gong' an), 指講述古代禪師們開悟過程的故事, 是一種需要冥想的悖論, 用來訓練禪宗僧侶放棄對理性的最終依賴, 迫使他們獲得突然的直覺覺悟。

是次展覽中金根泰的作品, 展示了他對亞洲智慧和哲學的態度。透過使用來自自然的有機元素, 他的作品尋找著物質起源的真實定義。金根泰汲取了他從自然材料中捕捉到的啟示, 並以他獨特的創作方法將其轉化到畫布上。

金根泰作品中所使用的顏料是揉捏稀釋的石粉, 他將其倒在畫布上, 然後傾斜使其流動, 在藝術家的意願指導下, 顏料便自己「畫」出它的形狀。換句話說, 它揭示了藝術家「讓事物自己說話」的意圖。藝術家為什麼要「讓事情自己說話」? 這是藝術家對感知主體的放棄嗎? 或者它是「主動」陳述中最被動的形式, 目的是釋放藝術家的主體意識而不是放棄?

金根泰開始他的藝術生涯時, 世界正深深捲入新的劇變, 經歷著現代主義運動和社會現實主義的浪潮。作為那個時代的產物, 金根泰發現他的藝術實踐植根於哲學、和諧和平靜。他的創作過程傳達出一種近乎貧瘠的禁慾主義, 這反映在他的藝術作品中。當從視線水平觀看作品時, 便形成了一種水平關係, 而沒有鮮明的層級關係。在平等方面, 人與人之間的關係也以同樣的方式表達出來。金根泰以水平的眼光注視著事物, 強調這種平等的觀點並在其中得到啟示。

任由石粉在畫布上流動的獨特技法是一種有意識的運動, 使顏料從藝術家的意識中解放出來, 賦予物質自主權。由此可見, 金根泰的原則不僅是最小化藝術家的藝術行為, 而且包含自下而上主導敘事對象的積極態度。

儘管金根泰的作品中動態與靜態並存, 「觸覺」這一關鍵因素貫穿了整個作品。這就是為什麼主體間性和生態視角在他的作品中十分突出。金根泰關注自然, 在這個

充斥著喋喋不休、詭辯和扭曲事實的世界裡，他的靜默在這裡變得比雄辯更有意義和價值。是次展覽讓金根泰在畫布上向他的觀眾傳達出永恆的亞洲哲學和智慧，最終表達了物質的意義。

關於金根泰

金根泰，1953年生於韓國首爾，畢業於首爾中央大學。1988年，他舉辦了自己的第一次個展，此後他的作品先後在德國、日本、越南、香港和美國等地展出。當他的同時代人主要專注於創造被稱為高度寫實主義的形象時，年輕藝術家們試圖逆轉老一輩的抽象藝術，於是金根泰對單色畫表現出更多的親切感。儘管金根泰的名字經常與韓國單色畫運動聯繫在一起，通過深刻的哲學和美學研究，他一直尋求超越概念的極限。他始終忠於自己的興趣和性情，物質特征和媒介互動在其藝術發展中扮演著重要角色。從2005年到2015年，他全身心投入到創作和冥想中，作品有一段时间是对外界保密的。金根泰的作品逐漸受到評論家和收藏家的青睞，如今被認為是當代韓國抽象藝術最原始的形式之一。

The window opened to the earth

The meaning of the series < Discourse> by Kim Keun-tai

Yoon Jin Sup (Art Critic)

I.

There was an act in the beginning of the world. It is before the language was created. What would be the most primitive behavior of humans? That is what Kim Keun-tai wants to find. Through the dirt. His desire to return to the dirt is realized through the act of pouring stone powder, which is the raw material of ceramics, into a binder and pouring it onto the canvas, which is the most primitive act and it does not need any explanation. The reason why explanation is not necessary is that the primitive behavior is before language and beyond language. That's why I said at the outset, "There was an act in the beginning of the world."

Kim Keun-tai's work, which makes the desired shape while dilutely kneading stone powder and pouring it on the canvas, tilts the canvas around and lets it flow, takes the method of allowing objects to draw on their own along with the artist's will. In other words, it can be said that the artist's intention of 'let things speak for themselves' was revealed. What is "let things speak for themselves"? Isn't that the renunciation of the subject of perception as an artist? No, isn't it the most passive form of 'active' statement that tries to let go of the artist's consciousness, not giving up?

What does this paradox say? Isn't this the so-called generosity of restraining the eruption of passion and letting things shine themselves? This is why 'physical property' is important in Kim Keun-tai's work. The physical property is the name of the nature of an object, its existence has been degraded in the world of traditional paintings. Throughout the long history of Western painting, the expression of this property has maintained its name by relying on the contrast method, but faces a crisis with the invention of the camera in the early 19th century.

According to Plato, a painting corresponding to the shadow of a shadow is merely an illusion that makes it appear as though it does not exist by recreating the object. It was considered as deviating from the truth because it was three steps away from the original idea. For example, in Johannes Vermeer's <The Milkmaid> (oil on canvas/c.1660), the depiction of the texture of the rough clothes worn by a maid is an expression of physical properties through a representational technique.

However, it is just an illusion because it does not actually exist in the picture. Plato argues that this is why poets and painters spreading the lies should be expelled from the republic.

In a realism painting, the hierarchy is formed according to the angle of the observer's gaze. Looking down from a higher place creates a vertical hierarchy. In painting, the spatial perspective is a device of 'visual rationalization' that is set to express the close area large and clear, and the distant area small and blurry. On the other hand, the arts in the era of Go-gu-ryeo show that the ruling class and the dominated class are expressed according to their status. In other words, high-ranking royalty or nobles were expressed large, while commoners and slaves of low status were expressed small.

However, if you look at the object from the same eye level, a horizontal relationship is formed and no hierarchy is established. Human relationships are also expressed in the same way when grasped in terms of equality. It is like in a democratic political system in which all voters, regardless of status, exercise equal voting power. Kim Keun-tai emphasizes this view of equality. He gazes on things at a horizontal level. This point of view may have come from his deep engagement and practice of 'Ganhwaseon' for the past several decades. In one interview, he said:

Question: What does it mean to look at everything horizontally?

Answer: Let's take me and you as an example. There is a huge gap in time between us. But is it meaningful to count those gaps? What if I just kick it all off? Wouldn't I be able to be you anytime and be in your position? It is like Yeok-ji-sa-ji (a Korean idiom). That doesn't mean I can treat you poorly. Applying this idea to everyone is the first step in horizontal viewing. Developing this, I tried to find the act of 'to see' and its meaning horizontally as a painter who captures and draws images." (NOBLESS, from the January and February 2021 interview articles)

So what Kim Keun-tai devised is so-called 'horizontal drawing'. It is a way of drawing on the canvas laid down. He first tried this technique in 2000 when he was invited to the [Artist of the Year] hosted by Sungkok Museum of Art. It was a peculiar technique of pouring thin stone powder dough onto the side of the canvas and then tilting the canvas back and forth to spill the dough. It is a conscious movement that frees paints from the artist's consciousness and gives autonomy to the paints. It is evident that Kim Keun-tai's methodology is not only the minimization of artistic actions performed by the artist, but also the active attitude of objects upside down. The first precedent painted with the canvas laid down in world art

history is the “Dripping” technique in Jackson Pollock’s Action Painting. Following the so-called “automatism” of surrealism, Pollock poured the paint while stepping and running over a wide canvas. Pollock’s famous remark, “I don’t know what I did while painting,” suggests that he painted unconsciously. This is the end of the so-called easel painting. Kim Keun-tai also paints with the canvas laid down, but he is not unconscious. Rather, they draw with clear consciousness. He pours a lot of tin stone powder like porridge on the canvas and finishes the work at once. It reminds of the “one stroke theory” in calligraphy. As if a stream of water flows from a high place to a low place to find its place, the material is left to nature’s method. It is the manifestation of so-called ‘physical property’. While painting, there is one thing Kim Keun-tai does. When the stone powder dough flows and does not get caught in something, he opens the path with a brush. This minimal intervention is a factor that can be referred to as ‘painting’ in his work. If there is not even this minimal act, Kim Keun-tai’s work will deviate from the concept of painting and would require another name.

II.

Ceramic art is the most primitive genre of art in that it uses dirt. The potter sits in front of the wheel, shapes the bowl, and works with the soil all day. At this time, the most important is the so-called ‘the sense of touch’.

Kim Keun-tai uses stone powder, a ceramic material. The floor of his studio is covered with traces of the hardened stone powder porridge. Kim Keun-tai’s stone powder porridge work, which is made with only one try, requires the creation of a canvas base that is close to penance until it is achieved. It is the result of 40 years of his painting work. Only he knows the subtle know-how for his painting. The secret of the know-how around the manufacturing process for the best work based on nature, such as color and texture, the proper condition (viscosity) of the stone powder dough, weather, humidity, etc. comes from the long training and practice. It is in this area that he is hesitant to confine his work within the linguistic fence of ‘Dan-saek-hwa’. Then, what does Kim Keun-tai’s work ultimately aim? The general rhetoric usually overlaid on monochromatics, which aims at the color and texture of the skin of the Joseon white porcelain represented by the moon jar, is literally nothing more than an investigation. Such modifiers risk trapping monochrome in the frame of nationalism. As seen in Kim Keun-tai’s work, monochrome must be pushed further for aesthetic universality that the world can relate to.

III.

Going beyond so-called geometricism and expressionism. From the perspective

of Western art, you might be able to see 'the third way' which is deviated from the context of geometric abstraction and abstract expressionism (Alfred H. Jr. Barr), which was divided into the so-called post-Impressionist Paul Cezanne and Paul Gauguin. The key is to get out of sight and restore 'the sense of touch'.

Yes. Vision is a capture. This is the strategy that "Western modernity" took after the Renaissance. After the invention of perspective during the Renaissance, the West began to conquer the world on the rush of Enlightenment. Western imperialism conquered the other according to a grand project of visual capture of perspective. It was an active expression and action of a strong will for the world.

Kim Keun-tai pays attention to the sense of touch, not to the sight. Of course, the act of seeing the works has no choice but to rely on sight, but the more important factor in his work is 'the sense of touch'. This is why intersubjectivity and ecological perspective stand out in his work. In that context, Kim Keun-tai pays attention to nature. The reason he pays attention to nature is the consistency of nature. Through constant observation and approach to the elements that make up nature such as clouds, sky, rocks, mountains, waves, etc, he is asking 'ontological questions about the truth of nature'. His work is more meaningful in light of the recent corona crisis caused by human rebellion against the law of nature. Ultimately, Kim Keun-tai's <Discourse> series is a warning against human errors by the world delivered through Kim Keun-tai's body. It comes as a reminder of meaning through natural elements.

The hospitality of natural elements, including soil, practiced by Kim Keun-tai also contains disasters such as the devastation of nature and retribution of nature. It is at this point when artists including poets shine with their foreknowledge. Kim Keun-tai's work belongs to the "silent language". There is absolutely no word. It doesn't mean that it's never spoken. When recalling the proverb "Silence is gold," his silence comes more meaningful than eloquence. Especially in a world where garrulity, sophistry, and false claims are rampant like these days.

IV.

In the same interview article, Kim Keun-tai said:

"What is it like to see an image? (Omitted) Are we really seeing it right? What about seeing and judging? We think we see what we see, but that's not necessarily true. (Omitted) When we face the work, we intuitively feel something on the screen we see, but in the end, we always have to think about the power that makes us see it and the window we can see with." (From the interview articles in the January and February 2021 issue)

What does it mean by 'the window where you can see with'? We need to pay

attention to Kim Keun-tai's "physicality". A painter is a person who lends his body to the world to fulfill his dreams and visions. From that point of view, Leonardo da Vinci is the person who "lent" his eyes (body) to the world in order to allow people in the Renaissance to see the world from a perspective. Considering the fact that post-Renaissance paintings were compared to "windows", what should mankind now see the world through? I want to say that it is none other than the 'hand' and 'the sense of touch' from the hands. And I would like to invite you to look back on the "Earth," which is reminiscent of the sense of touch, that rich motherland. If so, how fortunate is it that Kim Keun-tai's work is from the dirt, the ground and the matrix of the world?



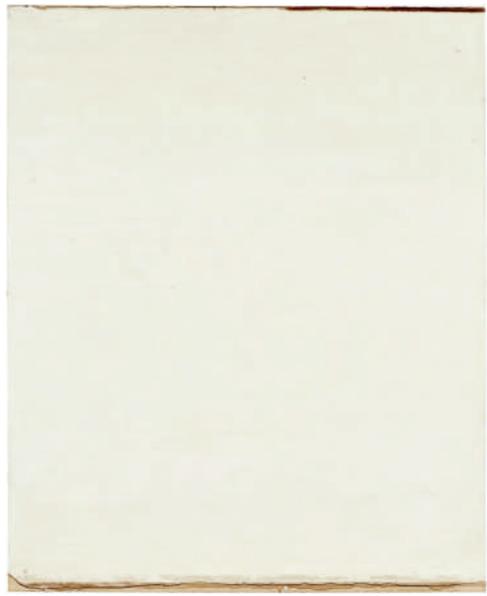
Discussion 2019-75,
2019, Mixed media on canvas, 53.5 x 30.5 cm



Discussion 2021-01, 2021, Mixed media on canvas , 162 x 130 cm

Discussion 2021-02, 2021, Mixed media on canvas , 162 x 130 cm

Discussion 2020-38, 2020, Mixed media on canvas , 162 x 130 cm





Discussion 2021-03 , 2021, Mixed media on canvas , 130 x 162 cm





Discussion 2021-04 , 2021, Mixed media on canvas, 130 x 162 cm





Discussion 2021-05

2021, Mixed media on canvas
117 x 91 cm



Discussion 2021-07

2021, Mixed media on canvas
117 x 91 cm

Discussion 2021-06

2021, Mixed media on canvas
117 x 91 cm



Discussion 2021-09

2021, Mixed media on canvas
117 x 91 cm





Discussion 2021-10, 2021, Mixed media on canvas, 72 x 91 cm



Discussion 2021-11, 2021, Mixed media on canvas, 72 x 91 cm

Discussion 2018-124, 2018, Mixed media on canvas, 84 x 30.5 cm
Discussion 2018-125, 2018, Mixed media on canvas, 84 x 30.5 cm



Discussion 2021-12, 2021, Mixed media on canvas, 91 x 72 cm







Discussion 2021-14, 2021, Mixed media, 50 x 50 cm

Kim Keun Tai 金根泰
(1953 born in Korea)

Education

1981 BFA, Painting, Chung-Ang University, Korea

Selected Solo Exhibition

2019 "KIM KEUN-TAI", Chosun Ilbo Art Museum, Seoul, Korea
2017 "KIM KEUN-TAI", Chosun Ilbo Art Museum, Seoul, Korea
2012 Discussion-wall, Godo Gallery, Seoul, Korea
2010 Discussion - Nature, Daewoo Gallery, Seoul, Korea
2004 Galerie Konrad Munter, Meerbusch, Germany
The Exhibition Project "Zugvogel" Georg-Meistermann - Meerbusch, Wittlich.
Stadtmuseum, Oldenburg
2003 Discussion - Nature, MANIF8!03, Seoul Arts Center, Seoul, Korea
2002 Discussion - Nature, Ye Mac Gallery, Seoul
Discussion - Nature, MANIF8!02, Seoul Arts Center, Seoul, Korea
Discussion - Nature, Expo Paris - Seoul, Maison des Metallos, Paris
2000 Discussion - Chosun Dynasty Ceramics, Sungkok Art Museum, Seoul, Korea
Discussion - The Earth, MANIF6!00, Seoul Arts Center, Seoul, Korea
1998 Discussion - Nature, MANIF4!98, Seoul Arts Center, Seoul, Korea
1997 Discussion Or Encounter, Gallery Savina, Seoul, Korea
1988 The 1st Solo Show, Young Artists Gallery, Seoul, Korea

Selected Group Exhibition

2021 Seon-ri Seon-gyeong, Noblesse Collection, Seoul, Korea
2019 Korea-Vietnam Contemporary Art Exchanges Exhibition, Vietnam Art Museum,
Hanoi, Vietnam
2019 澁 daam, Whitestone Gallery, Hong Kong
2019 Korean Contemporary Artist Exhibition, KCC, Hong Kong
2018 Untitled Miami, Choi&Lager Gallery, Miami
2018 Korean Dansaekhwa Artists, Lian Gallery, Seoul, Korea
2018 Art Central, UNC Gallery, Hong Kong
2017 The Road, Keun-tai KIM & Eberhard Ross, UNC GALLERY, Seoul, Korea
Three people Three colors Exhibition Choi&Lager Gallery, Seoul, Korea, Japan, Germany
KIAF, Gallery Françoise Livinec, COEX, Seoul, Korea
Art Elysées Art Fair, Gallery Françoise Livinec, Grand Palais, Paris
2002 EXPO Paris-Seoul, Maison des Métallos, Paris
2000 Artists of Tomorrow Exhibition – Sungkok Art Museum, Seoul, Korea
1998 Exhibition of International Exchange Between Korea and Austria, Vienna, Austria

- 1997 The 8th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh, Bangladesh Shipakala Academy
The 33th Asian Modern Art Exhibition, Japan
Exhibition of Seoul Artists' Methods, Seoul
Seoul Vector, Kwanhoon Gallery, Seoul, Korea
- 1996 Korea's First Exhibition of Local Young Authors, Seoul City Art Hall, Seoul, Korea
Yae Woo 40th Exhibition, Seoul City Art Hall, Seoul, Korea
- 1995 Korean Fine Arts Today, Seoul
- 1993 The 12th Korean Youth Artist Exhibition, National Fine Art Museum, Seoul, Korea
Austria - Korea National Exchange Project of Contemporary Arts, Pholten, Austria
- 1992 Seoul Spec Contemporary Fine Art Festival, Seoul, Korea
- 1991 The 10th Selected Korean Grand Art Exhibition, National Fine Art Museum,
Seoul, Korea
- 1990 Chung-Ang Modern Art Festival, Seoul, Korea
- 1988 Seoul Contemporary Art Festival, Seoul, Korea
Seoul-Worlds Contemporary Arts Exhibition, Seoul, Korea
- 1982 Paperwork 36 people Exhibition, KWANHOOON gallery, Seoul, Korea

Collections

Sungkok Art Museum

PyeongChang Organizing Committee for the 2018 Olympic & Paralympic Games, POCOG, KEB Hana Bank and more

About Soluna Fine Art

Soluna Fine Art is a gallery specialising in Asian fine art and objects with deep roots in South Korea. Our mission is to revitalise interest in Eastern aesthetics and philosophy by showcasing established and emerging artists and works of traditional value with contemporary interpretation. Works by artists represented by Soluna Fine Art can be found in private collections and institutions around the world. As well as exhibitions, our annual programme includes fairs, educational initiatives and multi-disciplinary collaborations on an international level.

Gallery opening hours: Monday - Saturday, 10am - 6pm

For press inquiries, please contact:

Charlotte, charlotte.lin@solunafineart.com, or +852 2955 5166

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關於Soluna Fine Art

Soluna Fine Art是一家來自韓國并精於當代亞洲藝術的畫廊，致力於展示成熟和新興藝術家的兼備現代詮釋意義和傳統價值的作品，激發人們對東方美學和哲學的興趣。Soluna Fine Art所代理的藝術家的作品均被納入世界各地的私人收藏和機構。除画廊內部的展覽之外，我們歷年也作為被邀請方參與國際的博覽會、教育計劃和多元的合作項目。

營業時間: 星期一至星期六, 早上十點至晚上六點

媒體垂詢:

Charlotte, charlotte.lin@solunafineart.com or +852 2955 5166

關注 Soluna Fine Art:

Instagram ([@solunafineart](https://www.instagram.com/solunafineart)), Facebook([facebook.com/SolunaFineArt](https://www.facebook.com/SolunaFineArt))





G/F, 52 Sai Street, Sheung Wan 上環西街52號地舖
+852 2955 5166 | contact@solunafineart.com | solunafineart.com