

**Exhibition: KOAN 公案**

**Date: 11 March 2021 – 30 April 2021**

**Opening: 11 March 2021**

Soluna Fine Art is delighted to present **Kim Keun-Tai's** solo exhibition 「KOAN 公案」 in Hong Kong. This exhibition is a collaboration with Art Chosun from South Korea. This exhibition showcases Kim's work with his approach towards the Asian wisdom and oriental philosophy. With organic earth elements, his work focuses on seeking the true definition of the origin of the material. 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.

## About Kim Keun-Tai

**Kim Keun-Tai** (b. 1953, Seoul, Korea) graduated from the Chung-Ang University in Seoul. Kim had his first solo exhibition in 1988, and he has since had works exhibited both at home and overseas: Germany, Japan, Vietnam, Hong Kong and the US. While he is often associated with the Dansaekhwa (單色畫) movement, through deep philosophical and aesthetic research he has always sought to go beyond the conceptual limits. At a time when his contemporaries were primarily preoccupied with making figuration known as hyper-realism, the young artists' attempt to reverse the older generation's abstract art: Kim showed more of an affinity towards Dansaekhwa (單色畫).

He remained loyal to his own interests and temperaments, the realm in which material characteristics and interaction of medium played a significant role in artistic development. Between 2005 and 2015, he devoted himself entirely to work and meditation and his work remained confidential for a while. his artwork gradually came into favour amongst critics and collectors. It is now considered one of the most original forms of contemporary Korean abstraction.



# SOLUNA

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## 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

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