

Arario Gallery Seoul, Group Exhibition
Forêt



KIM Soun-Gui, *Forêt 1, Forêt 2*, 1998-1999, Pinhole camera, analogue c-print, 167 x 123 cm each, diptych ©KIM Soun-Gui and Arario Gallery

Title	Forêt
Date	25 May - 17 July 2021
Location	ARARIO GALLERY SEOUL 84, Bukchonro 5 gil, Jongro gu, Seoul, Korea

Arario Gallery is pleased to present "Forêt", a group exhibition featuring works by artists who participated in this year's Art Basel Hong Kong and Frieze New York OVR featuring works from the early 70s by central figures of Korean modern art, such as UM Tai-Jung and CHOI Byungso; contemporary drawings by NOH Sangho, who recently joined Arario Gallery; sculptures by Kohei NAWA, one of Japan's leading sculptors;

and a painting by Christoph RUCKHÄBERLE, a member of the New Leipzig School, Germany. The exhibition transcends time and space through the presentation of modern and contemporary works by 14 artists.

The title of the exhibition "Forêt" derives from KIM Soun-Gui's photographic work "Forêt" (of which the first edition is placed in the Centre Pompidou collection). As a forest reveals itself by embracing the codependency and diversity of the various living organisms within its ecosystem, modern art, and anything we call contemporary art, reveals itself in the works of artists. Contemporary art has a specific flow from country to country, which embraces yet another stream of institutions and galleries specific to each nation. The identity of such art museums and galleries is formed by the gathering of represented artists and artworks. This exhibition brings together the artists who not only have worked with Arario Gallery to present their respective diversity, but also implement the values pursued by Arario Gallery, including 'experimental spirit', 'art historical presentation', and 'new experimentation' of works.

In the exhibition, "Birds of Heaven", which UM Tai-Jung—the pioneer of Korean abstract sculpture and the father of metal sculpture—worked on with a desire and challenge to create a new sculpture at the age of 31 in 1969 is presented with "Reclining Figure 1" (2020-2021) by GWON Osang, who forged a new realm of photographic sculpture in the 1990s. CHOI Byungso's conceptual photography "Untitled 9750000-2" (1975/2020), which was exhibited at the "Daegu Contemporary Art Festival" in 1975, will also be shown alongside KIM Soun-Gui's landscape photographs, "Forêt 1", "Forêt2" (1998-1999), taken by the artist in a remote French country forest. LEE Jinju's work "Unseen" (2019), which focuses on the various intimate moments of her experience as a mother, artist, and woman, is in juxtaposition with "Monument of Hanbok" (1998), an abstraction of the hanbok skirt, symbolically expressing the patience and sorrow of Korean mothers. Kohei NAWA's "Ether" (2021), which resembles the motion of water dripping, coexists with UM Tai-Jung's "CARYATID-85" (1985), inspired by Constantin Brancusi's "Endless Column", revealing the meaning of the sculptures going beyond time and space.

Arario Gallery has continued to deal with the values that contemporary art should pursue and the values that artists should pursue with artists from various generations, nationalities, and backgrounds. This exhibition provides an opportunity to reconsider the role and value of art as well as experiencing works of historical, experimental, and individual value.

Participating Artists**UM Tai-Jung** (b.1938)

UM Tai-Jung's work begins with the material, thereby occupying physical space, yet allows the manifestation of unseen spaces. This invisibility, formed in relation to the viewer, lies between time and eternity, space and non-space, creating space within space. These works, which come into existence through tireless handiwork, go beyond not only the material but also traces of the body.

PARK Youngsook (b.1941)

As one of Korea's most important first-generation women photographers, PARK Youngsook has played a major role in the Korean feminist movement. Through portrait photography, the artist aims to reestablish the notion of womanhood, which has often been a target of subversive exclusion in society. By situating the woman's body in the forefront of her works, PARK challenges the notion of inequality, oppression, and power dynamics of the patriarchy. The artist's enduring passion for bettering human rights as both a woman and an activist is illustrated through the visual representation of women found throughout PARK's practice.

JUNG Kangja (1942-2017)

In the 1960s and the 70s, when the Korean military government and ideologies were in conflict, JUNG Kangja confronted sociopolitical issues through various formative experiments. Introducing politics into the context of art by using the body in performances was an attempt to not only challenge but also reflect on the discriminatory nature of the social system. JUNG has received considerable attention for shedding light on the dynamics of gender ideology and sexual politics through the central placement of women's bodies in her works.

CHOI Byungso (b.1943)

The 1960s, in which CHOI Byungso studied at university while beginning his practice as an artist, was a tumultuous era that simultaneously experienced the political turmoil of the May 16 military coup d'état and the Yusin Order (Revitalization Reforms) as well as economic stability and hope from the Saemaul Undong (New Community Movement). While some young artists were able to come into contact with the experimental and social trends of international art; experimental works and exhibitions were subject to repression under the military dictatorship. Various experimental attempts that had been underway since the late 1970s were naturally driven by a resistance to formalist art, rebelling against the subsiding insularity of abstract art.

KIM Soun-Gui (b.1946)

In 1982, KIM went backpacking to various countries of the world, exploring the culture and arts of the East and the West. While in New York, she associated with video artists such as Nam June Paik, Ko Nakajima, Ira Schneider and Frank Gillette and presented multimedia works combining objet and video. From the late

1980s, she dealt with issues related to the spread of global capitalism and structural changes in society due to the Internet through her works. She produced artworks, which took a critical viewpoint of civilization in which the value of capital takes priority over all other values, highlighting the U.S. invasion of Iraq, and carried out interviews with world-renowned aestheticians including Jacques Derrida and Jean-Luc Nancy, to discuss the values and roles of art in the neoliberal era.

WON Seungwon (b.1972)

WON Seungwon transforms hundreds of photographic snapshots, take by the artist herself, into fantastical images through exquisite computing work. The imagined spaces speak of time, and by extension, the relationship between each individual of a collective. WON's work, composed of her distinctive views based on realism and the unfamiliarity of delicate imagination reveals the profound and heavy subject of human nature through humor, while evoking a sense of nostalgia. The narrative found in these images begins to infinitely expand onward like a three dimensional picture book that delivers subtle emotions through the unfolding of time and space, page after page.

GWON Osang (b.1974)

GWON Osang is a sculptor who constantly questions the identity of the sculpture, attempting to converge new structural forms with experimental media. The "deodorant type" series is sculpted from 'ISO-pink (hardened Styrofoam)', in order to break the notion that sculptural works must be heavy. The outer edges are covered in hundreds of photographs directly taken or collected by the artist, expanding the boundaries of sculpture through the presentation of unconventional materials.

Kohei NAWA (b.1975)

Kohei NAWA's practice focuses on the unique surface treatment of sculptures as well as phenomenological questions about the nature of the object. This exhibition will showcase the artist's "Ether" series, a sculpture produced by 3D modeling, which visualize liquid droplets falling from the sky to the ground. Observing the falling liquid, the artist discovered a form that occurs when gravity proceeded downward and faced the anti-gravity that was pushed into the air. Standing like an endless pillar, the sculpture feels weightless due to the effects of opposing forces such as gravity and anti-gravity.

CHEN Yujun (b.1976)

CHEN Yujun's works use the emotion between the individual and his or her hometown as a way of exploring the concept of family and identity in the context of immigrants from generation to generation. Many people from his hometown immigrated to Southeast Asia. These "immigrants", who continue to work towards adapting to the new cultural environment, balance the conflict between external influence and personal identity. CHEN's works visually represent sociological narratives through the depiction and examination of specific individuals, showing the transformation of individual identity and internal transformation, and their impact on contemporary culture. CHEN's practice attempts to provide a profound interpretation of people's

self-awareness in the face of continual change to culture and society.

KIM Inbai (b.1978)

Resembling the human body, KIM Inbai's sculpture series acts both as a sociocultural indicator and as an abstract instrument through maximizing the basic elements of sculpture such as dot, line, volume, and texture. Through these processes, KIM's sculptures become the main point of contact with the external world, while occupying a special point of constant transformation internally, which make the viewer face a strange situation bordering on familiarity and unfamiliarity as well as the conscious and subconscious.

LEE Jinju (b.1980)

LEE Jinju captures the beauty, joy, wounds, trauma, and cruelty of various moments found within our memories. Finding various allegories and motifs within her own subconscious, LEE reinterprets these elements, layer by layer, which adds to the delicacy and depth of the artist's works. LEE's practice is not fixated on what is visually seen, but rather attempts to give up on the act of seeing as such.

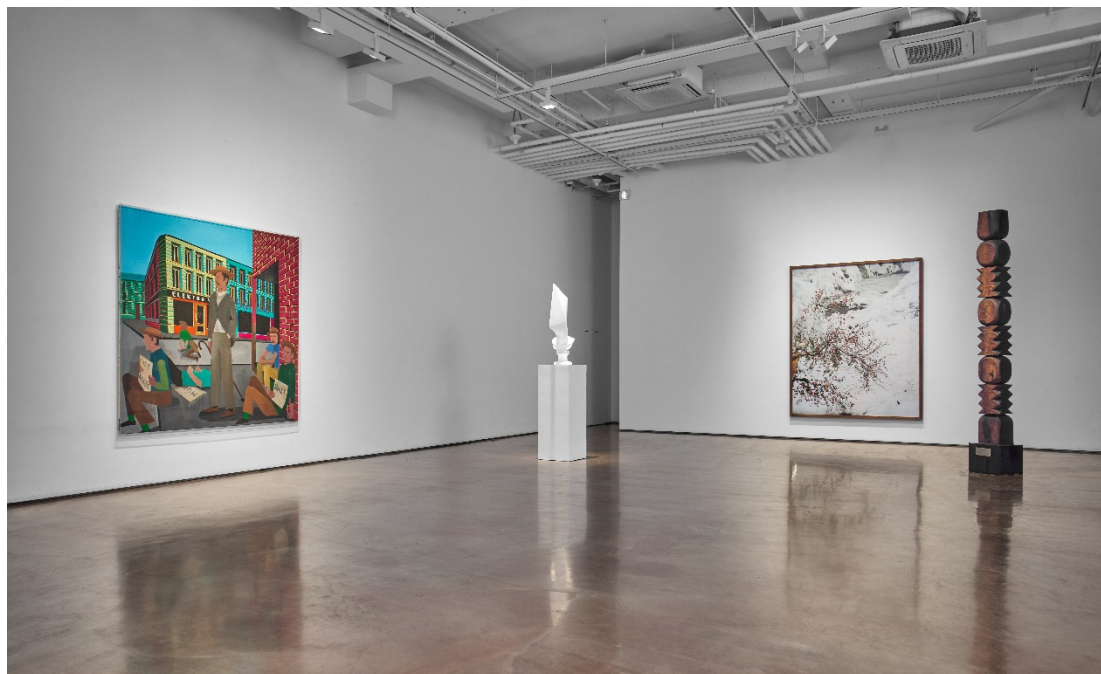
NOH Sangho (b.1986)

NOH Sangho is an artist who unravels cross-sections of popular culture and social media through his own worldview. He captures and collects images he encounters from the Internet, magazines, and social media, and reconstructs them through his own interpretations combining color and composition; taking an intermediary attitude of simultaneously consuming and producing images. By drawing a certain amount of sketches each day, the artist practices the art of "daily drawing". Using carbon paper to first produce a sketch, then filling the drawing out in color, the artist's unique way of creating works reflects the artist's philosophy of exploring the flood of images found in popular culture, which we encounter daily.

[Appendix 1] Major works



Installation view of *Forêt*, Arario Gallery Seoul, 2021



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