

Esther Schipper

뒤집기 / **Dui Jip Ki**

With works by Haneyl Choi, Hyunsun Jeon, Hong Joo Kim, Suyeon Kim, Taek Sang Kim, Jin Meyerson, and Donghyun Son
July 7 – August 19, 2023
Esther Schipper, Seoul

Dui Jip Ki / 뒤집기

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July 14 – August 31, 2023
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Esther Schipper is pleased to announce **Dui Jip Ki**, a two-part exhibition of contemporary Korean art presented this summer at our Berlin and Seoul galleries.

Curated in close cooperation with Esther Schipper, Seoul, **Dui Jip Ki** brings together artists across five generations who work in a variety of media. The exhibition is a celebration of the gallery's long-standing relationship with Korea, coming just shy of the first anniversary of the opening of our location in Seoul.

The work of all eight artists (seven in Seoul) connects in specific ways to the rich history of Korean contemporary art. Engaging critically with social and political ideas, employing alternative conceptual strategies, addressing subverted identities and parallel histories, or renewing traditional techniques and materiality, the works in **Dui Jip Ki** can be taken as an aesthetic journey of origin, development, and emergence.

The exhibition's title, **Dui Jip Ki**, a term taken from an action and its corresponding associations, relates to the heterogeneity of artistic practices on view. In Korean the act of flipping something over to the other side is referred to as 뒤집기, Dui Jip Ki, and has multiple applications; it can be said of something domestic, such as turning over a pancake, but may also refer to a change of mind, an opening to alternative ideas. It is also the term used in traditional Korean wrestling for turning and pinning down an opponent through back-breaking strength to claim victory.

The established narrative of the development of Korean culture during the last fifty years has been characterized by dichotomies. The social-political origin of contemporary Korea and contemporary art within Korea is formed by oppositional contrasts such as North vs. South and Abstraction (Dansaekhwa) vs. Social Realism (Minjung).

The artists exhibited in **Dui Jip Ki** have found ways to work within long established media of painting and sculpture in highly original and alternative ways. Four conceptual groupings structure the exhibition: 1. Alternative origins, artists that found ways to work outside of the two established schools of Minjung and Dansaekhwa: Hong Joo Kim. 2. Transformative materiality, artists that allow nature and natural processes to create work: Lee Bae and Taek Sang Kim. 3. Subverted Histories, artists whose personal histories and identities have been purposefully lost or hidden: Jin Meyerson and Haneyl Choi. 4. Young artists who are using the Korean Idea of New Tro or New Retro to create innovative work with traditional

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methods: Donghyun Son, Hyunsun Jeon, and Suyeon Kim.

Born in 1945, Hong Joo Kim remained outside of the two dominant postwar art movements. His practice is experimental and varied and has gone through physical and conceptual explorations that include performance, assemblage, sculpture, installation, eventually returning to painting. On view will be works from his series of meditative paintings of abstract and plant forms that are both a conceptual gesture and a celebration of craftsmanship.

Both Taek Sang Kim (b.1958) and Lee Bae (b. 1956) represent a second generation of evolution within Korean contemporary art. Both artists employ elemental and alternative conceptual transformational strategies within their artistic processes, creating a bridge between post-war monochrome painting and contemporary art. Taek Sang Kim engages with a transformational process of water, air, fabric, and paint to create richly saturated paintings that don't give away their sophisticated conceptual environmental process, eventually arriving at a pure and simple autonomous form. Lee Bae's work honors the rituals and traditions of Korean folk culture and craft. Using wood, fire, and Hanji (Korean Mulberry paper) to produce sculpture, installation, drawing, and assemblage, charcoal represents a central transformational material in his practice.

Jin Meyerson's (b. 1972) experience as a displaced Korean adoptee to the US is at the core of his artistic practice. Meyerson's paintings bridge the established languages of abstraction and figuration, drawing from critical conversations about crisis, recovery, and renewal. Haneyl Choi (b.1991) is a pioneer of sculpture and Queer identity as one of the first openly gay artists in Korean contemporary art history. Constructed from ready-made found objects, printed plastics, coded symbols, digital and video elements, Choi's work constantly transcends the boundaries of what it means to be a sculptor.

In the generations born in the 1980-90's, many women have achieved critical and commercial recognition. Hyunsun Jeon and Suyeon Kim have led the way in establishing the rise of female artists in a traditionally male-dominated society. Along with Donghyun Son, these artists are linked by alternative approaches to traditional materials and concepts. Hyunsun Jeon (b. 1989) has invented a unique pictorial language that employs a distinct chromatic palette. Drawing on varied scales of representations, her formal vocabulary is suspended between symbolic geometry and suggestive landscape. The geometric forms in her paintings are often echoed in the three-dimensional structures in which she stages her works. Suyeon Kim (b. 1986) employs a wide range of layered conceptual strategies to create her paintings, most recently conceiving of an environmental intervention to produce paintings by suspending a brush and letting the wind move it across the canvas. Donghyun Son (b. 1980) employs a deliberately eclectic combination of formal and conceptual themes in his work. His practice veers imaginatively between Eastern and Western aesthetic sensibilities, at times using the basics of oriental landscape painting to deconstruct it.

We thank Jaeho Jung and Gallery 2 for their generous collaboration on this project.