

KÖNIG GALERIE

LEIKO IKEMURA SOUL SCAPE SEOUL

KÖNIG SEOUL | 2 SEPTEMBER – 21 OCTOBER 2023

SOUL SCAPE SEOUL is the first solo exhibition by the Berlin-based artist Leiko Ikemura in South Korea, invited by König Seoul for this unique occasion. As with her poems, the sound play in the title is evocative of a multitude of ideas, embracing the idea of a landscape of our soul.

The show comprises paintings from the last decade until now, including a triptych, each of which are rendered on porous fibers such as nettle, jute, and paper. Additionally, SOUL SCAPE SEOUL features five sculptural works, ranging in medium from patinated bronze in HARE COLUMN II to works in cast glass. The more figurative nature of these objects is meant to align with the sprawling landscapes captured in the paintings, turning these complementary works into an immersive pictorial field.

The results on view in SOUL SCAPE SEOUL are the expression of many years of artistic research, such as Ikemura's singular use of glass in several of the sculptures, which offer a subtle and beguiling tension between the transparency of the medium and its gravitational force. This tension echoes the more pervasive one that has defined Ikemura's four decades of work, combining Japanese and European aesthetic traditions with a special eye to modes of representing and presenting the female body in both its singularity and universality. In Ikemura's art, traditional diversities between East and West, painting and sculpture, abstraction and figuration, find a harmonious equilibrium within the purview of the imagination and its capacity for remaking the world as it is given to the artist.

Ikemura embodies the transcultural influences that coarsen through SOUL SCAPE SEOUL and has done so long before specific attention was paid to practices that straddle cultures and spaces. The "soul scape" that appears in the exhibition's title is the term the artist uses to describe the experience of her inner life as a landscape, and the delicate palette and organic materials contribute to their realization in artistic form in this show.

For her first show in Seoul, the collection of works on display is both representative of the decades of work for which the artist has been awarded and acknowledged and indicative of new directions for which a path has not yet been laid. Each place is a unique constellation of forces and tensions, and the inner life is where these elements find new expression and reflect what is otherwise hidden from view.

Leiko Ikemura (b. in Tsu City, Japan) lives and works in Cologne and Berlin. Between 1970 and 1978, she studied in Osaka and then in Seville, Spain. From 1990 to 2016, Ikemura was professor at the University of the Arts (UdK) in Berlin, and since 2014, she holds a professorship at the Joshibi University of Art and Design in Kanagawa, Japan. Since the early 1980s, Ikemura has been producing a rich and imaginative body of work that spans both media and heritage, drawing equally from the traditions of her native Japan and those

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EXHIBITIONS

ZSÓFIA KERESZTES
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The Wall Behind the Windows
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of her adopted home in Europe. Ikemura's art is relentlessly open, using thematic and formal elements from a variety of sources to conjure landscapes and figures that are simultaneously rooted in this world and yet escape its limited purview. She is the recipient of many prestigious awards, from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology in Japan (2019); the Cologne Fine Art Prize (2014); the August Macke Prize (2009); and the Association of German Critics (2001), among many others.

Leiko Ikemura has been the subject of numerous international solo presentations, most recently at the Museo de Arte Zapopan, Guadalajara, Mexico; and Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin (both 2023); Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (2022); CAC La Ciutat de les Arts i les Ciències Valencia (2022); Sainsbury Center for Visual Arts, Norwich (2021); Kunsthalle Rostock (2020); Kunstmuseum Basel (2019); The National Art Center, Tokyo (2019), among many others.

Ikemura's work has been included in group exhibitions at Museum Frieder Burda, Baden-Baden (2023); The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, Japan; (2022-23); 9th Beijing Biennale National Art Museum of China, Beijing, China (2022); Singer Laren Museum, The Netherlands (2022); The National Art Center, Tokyo (2022), Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst, Cologne (2022); AMMA Foundation, Mexico City (2022); The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (2022); Shandong Art Museum, Jinan (2022); Aargauer Kunsthaus, Aarau, Switzerland, (2022); The Centre Pompidou, Paris, France (2021); ARTZUID 2021, Amsterdam Sculpture Biennial, Amsterdam, Netherlands (2021); Shiga Museum of Art, Otsu, Japan (2021); Musée Cantonal des Beaux-Arts Lausanne, Lausanne, Switzerland (2021); Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, Aichi (2021); Museum Folkwang, Essen, Germany (2021), National Museum of Ceramics, Leeuwarden (2020-21); Oita Prefectural Art Museum, Oita, Japan (2020); Blickachsen 12, Sculpture Biennale, Bad Homburg vor der Höhe, Germany (2019); and Museum on the Seam, Jerusalem (2019), among others.

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