

# BLUM

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Ha Chong-hyun**

**BLUM, Tokyo**

**October 28, 2023–January 6, 2024**

**Opening reception: Saturday, October 28, 5–7pm**

Tokyo, Japan, August 9, 2023—BLUM is pleased to present a solo exhibition of new paintings by Ha Chong-hyun. This is Ha's fifth solo show with the gallery and his second solo presentation at BLUM, Tokyo.

This exhibition presents eight new paintings from his ongoing Conjunction series, each manifesting his recent focus on vertical mark-making, subtle diagonal compositions, and gestural swipes across the canvas. Started in 1974, the Conjunction series explores the material fusion of paint and canvas through the artist's original *bae-ap-bub* (back-pressure) method, in which he presses viscous oil paint through the reverse of the canvas and brushes, smears, and scrapes the protruding field of paint on the surface to form abstract compositions that expose the essence of their component materials.

Through experimentation with the potential of monochrome, Ha Chong-hyun and his peers—Lee Ufan, Park Seo-bo, Kwon Young-woo, Yun Hyong-keun, Chung Sang-hwa, and others—came to be known as the Dansaekhwa movement. The reductive aesthetics of their work belied a greater interest in the methods employed. By variously pushing paint, soaking canvas, dragging pencils, and ripping paper, these pioneers refuted the conventions of ink-painting tradition and questioned the distinctions separating ink painting from oil, painting from sculpture, and object from viewer.

This solo exhibition at BLUM, Tokyo coincides with Ha's participation in *Only the Young: Experimental Art in Korea, 1960s–1970s* at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY. This is the first exhibition in North America to explore the work of artists who responded to the rapidly changing, globalizing sociopolitical and material conditions that shaped their country in the aftermath of the Korean War (1950–53). The survey will travel to the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA, in February 2024.

Ha Chong-hyun was born in Sancheong, South Korea, in 1935, and currently lives and works in Seoul. He has had numerous solo exhibitions, including retrospectives at the Palazzetto Tito (Istituzione Fondazione Bevilacqua La Masa), a Collateral Event of the 59th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia (2022) and the National Museum of Contemporary Art, Gwacheon (2012). Landmark surveys of the last decade include: *Beyond the Light of East and West*, Korean Cultural Center Los Angeles, CA (2021); *Korean Abstract Art: Kim Whanki and Dansaekhwa*, Powerlong Museum, Shanghai, China (2018); *Rhythm in Monochrome: Korean Abstract Painting* at Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery, Tokyo, Japan (2017); *When Process Becomes Form: Dansaekhwa and Korean Abstraction*, Villa Empain – Boghossian Foundation, Brussels, Belgium (2016); and *Dansaekhwa*, Palazzo Contarini Polignac, Venice, Italy (2015). His paintings are in the collections of leading institutions such as the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL; Fukuoka Art Museum, Fukuoka, Japan; Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art, Hiroshima, Japan; Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art, Seoul, South Korea; M+, Hong Kong, China; Miyagi Museum of Art, Sendai, Japan; Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; Museum of Modern Art, Toyama, Japan; National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Gwacheon, South

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Korea; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY; and the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan.

## About BLUM

BLUM represents more than sixty artists and estates from sixteen countries worldwide, nurturing a diverse roster of artists at all stages of their practices with a range of global perspectives. Originally opened as Blum & Poe in Santa Monica in 1994, the gallery has been a pioneer in its early commitment to Los Angeles as an international arts capital.

The gallery has been acclaimed for its groundbreaking work in championing artists of Japanese and Korean postwar and contemporary movements, such as Dansaekhwa, Mono-ha, and Superflat, and for organizing museum-caliber solo presentations and historical survey exhibitions across its spaces in Los Angeles, Tokyo, and New York. Often partnering with celebrated curators and scholars such as Cecilia Alemani, Alison M. Gingeras, Sofia Gotti, Joan Kee, and Mika Yoshitake, the gallery has produced large-scale projects critically examining historical movements and work including the Japanese Mono-ha school (2012); the Korean Dansaekhwa monochrome painters (2014); the European postwar movement CoBrA (2015); Japanese art of the 1980s and 1990s (2019); a rereading of Brazilian Modernism (2019); a revisionist take on the 1959 MoMA exhibition, *New Images of Man* (2020); and a survey of portraiture through a democratic and humanist lens (2023).

BLUM's wide-reaching program includes exhibitions, lectures, performance series, screenings, video series, and an annual art book fair at its base in Los Angeles. BLUM Books, the gallery's publishing division, democratically circulates its program through original scholarship and accessible media ranging from academic monographs, audio series, magazines, to artists' books

Across the three global locations, BLUM prioritizes environmental and community stewardship in all operations. In 2015, it was certified as an Arts:Earth Partnership (AEP) green art gallery in Los Angeles and consequently became one of the first green certified galleries in the United States. The gallery is also a member of the Gallery Climate Coalition, which works to facilitate a more sustainable commercial art world and reduce the industry's collective carbon footprint. BLUM is committed to fostering inclusive and equitable communities both in its physical and online spaces and believes that everybody should have equal access to creating and engaging with contemporary art.

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