

## KIMSOOJA

### *Meta-Painting*

Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York

April 12 - June 14, 2024

Tanya Bonakdar Gallery is pleased to present Kimsooja's first solo exhibition with the gallery on view April 12 through June 14, 2024. This marks Kimsooja's first solo exhibition in New York in almost 20 years.

Since the early 1980s, Korean conceptual artist Kimsooja has used performance, film, photography, sculpture and site-specific installations to poetically meditate on the notion of painting through the language of cultural traditions in her native land, as well as the human condition via principles of "non-doing" and "non-making." This exhibition features examples from several major bodies of work including *To Breathe* (2003-2024); *Bottari* (1992-2024); *Deductive Object* (1990-2024); and *Meta-Painting* (2019-2024).

The *bottari*—a traditional Korean bundle used to wrap and protect personal belongings—has become a central form, both physically and conceptually, in Kimsooja's practice. Representative of essential belongings and a nomadic lifestyle, the *bottari* is also a metaphor to refer to the universal concept of home and migration, but also to a transitory state.

Extending the *bottari* concept to the exterior and interior of the gallery, a two part iteration of *To Breathe* wraps the gallery space in various forms of light, offering a transformative experience and a meditation on painting that embodies the artist's enduring interest in the dualism of life and art. As light enters through the gallery's windows, it becomes refracted by a special film that transforms the natural light into iridescent landscapes that change throughout the day. In the main exhibition space, a mirrored platform folds the architecture of the gallery and offers the viewer a chance to engage more deeply with the surroundings, giving them space for reflection and contemplation. In the center of the platform, light is projected from above, creating a floating tableau of color which slowly progresses through the visible spectrum. By painting with light, Kimsooja expands the traditional notion of painting, transforming the surface into an ever-changing color field.

In the upstairs gallery, a series of new *Meta-Paintings* are suspended from the ceiling and accompanied by wrapped bundles of the same material, echoing the *bottari* form. With the *Meta-Paintings* Kimsooja continues to explore the fundamental principles of painting and its origins. In 2020 at the Wanås Konst Sculpture Park in Sweden, Kimsooja created linen spun from flax that she had planted, cultivated, and harvested. Created in conjunction with this project, these works reconstruct painting as a life-generating cycle, the unpainted canvas investigates the conceptual relationship between painting, agriculture, and textile.

Kimsooja's sculptural wrapped painting *Deductive Object* suggests a totality that alludes to birth and death. The ovoid shape was inspired by the Brahmanda stone ("cosmic egg") which in Indian mythology is believed to stand at the origin of creation. Conceptualized as a painting that does not reveal its surface, the deep black absorbs ambient light so the mirrored surface below enfolds the physical space around it.

*Deductive Object: (Un)fold* comes in the form of handmade hanji (Korean rice paper). The crumbled rice paper has absorbed the shape of the artist's hand as it formed the paper into a sphere and subsequently unfolded it. These works are on view alongside *Meta-Painting*, a sculptural stack of 500 sheets of handmade hanji, which takes almost a year to dry into the textural slab.

Across all mediums and with material acuity, Kimsooja ponders what is human—life, death, loss, yearning, beauty, routine, growth—connecting the individual experience and global concepts with a discernible perception of the everyday, gaining insight into our existence and the world in which we live.

Born in 1957 in Daegu, Korea, Kimsooja lives and works in Seoul, Paris, and New York. Since the 1980s, Kimsooja's work has been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions in major international museums, as well as in more than 40 biennials, triennials, and large-scale site-specific projects. In 2013, Kimsooja represented Korea in the 55th Venice Biennale. Currently in Paris, Kimsooja's *To Breathe – Constellation* is on view at Bourse de Commerce - Pinault Collection.

Other recent solo exhibitions include *Thread Roots*, Museum De Lakenhal, Leiden (2024), *(Un)foldng Bottari*, Humboldt Forum, Berlin (2023), *Weaving The Light*, Cisternerne, Frederiksberg Museums, Copenhagen (2023); *Sowing into Painting*, Wanås Konst, Wanås, Sweden (2020); *Traversées/ Kimsooja*, Poitiers; *Kimsooja: Archive of Mind*, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts (2019); *KIMSOOJA - Archive of Mind*, MMCA, Seoul, Korea (2016); *Kimsooja: Thread Routes*, Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, Bilbao, Spain (2015); *Kimsooja - To Breathe*, Centre Pompidou-Metz, Metz, France (2015); *Unfolding*, Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver, Canada (2013); *Kimsooja: A Needle Woman*, Miami Art Museum, Miami, Florida (2012); *Kimsooja: A Needle Woman*, Baltic Center, UK(2009); *Kimsooja*, Magasin III, Stockholm(2006) *Kimsooja, Journey into the World*, EMST, Athens (2005); *Kimsooja, Conditions of Humanity*, MAC Lyon, PAC Milan, Museum Kunstpaladt, Dusseldorf (2023-2024); *Kimsooja, A Needle Woman*, Kunsthalle, Bern (2021); *Kimsooja, A Needle Woman*, MoMA PS1, New York (2001), among others.

Permanent and long-term installations are on view at the Metro station at Mairie de Saint-Ouen, Paris, France (2023); Metz Cathedral, France (2022); Oude Vest, Leiden, The Netherlands (2022); Leeum Museum of Art, Seoul, Korea (2021); Yorkshire Sculpture Park, UK (2019); Herning Museum of Contemporary Art, Herning, Denmark (2017), Mariposa Land Port of Entry, Nogales, Arizona (2012); and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Seattle, Washington (2011).

Kimsooja's work can be found in the permanent collections of Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, California, MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge, Massachusetts; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D.C.; Leeum Museum of Art, Seoul, Korea; Seoul Museum of Art, Korea; Kunstmuseum Bern, Switzerland; The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Japan; K21 Kunstsammlung, Dusseldorf, Germany; M+, Hong Kong; The National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea; Museo d'Art Contemporanea Castello di Rivoli, Turin, Italy; Musée d'Art Contemporain, Lyon (FNAC), France; Musée MAC/VAL, Val de Marne, France; Museum of Modern Art, St. Etienne, France; MUDAM, Grand Duke Jean Museum of Modern Art(MUDAM - Luxembourg), Luxembourg; Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, Australia, Art Gallery New South Wales, Sydney, Australia, EMST, Athens, Greece; Folkwang Museum, Essen, Germany; among many others.