

Kim Yun Shin

London: *Add Two Add One* | February 27 – March 22, 2025

New York: *Divide Two Divide One* | April 3 - May 31, 2025



Kim Yun Shin, *Add Two Add One, Divide Two Divide One* 2002-750, 2002

Lehmann Maupin is pleased to present a two-part solo exhibition of work by pioneering Korean artist Kim Yun Shin, which will span the gallery's London and New York locations. Surveying the artist's oeuvre and including both paintings and sculptures from the 1970s to the present, *Add Two Add One*—which marks the artist's debut exhibition in the United Kingdom—will be on view at Lehmann Maupin's temporary space at No.9 Cork Street in London from February 27–March 15. Shortly thereafter, *Divide Two Divide One*, Kim's first major solo exhibition with Lehmann Maupin in New York, will be on view from April 3–May 31. Named for Kim's iconic sculptural series *Add Two Add One Divide Two Divide One*, the title derives from the philosophical concept of yin (division and fragmentation) and yang (addition and integration), which informs Kim's process—she “adds” her soul into the solid wood and “divides” the space between the bark and inner wood to create a complete whole. Both exhibitions will probe the scope of Kim's historic career, tracing her artistic and thematic development, and thus, her connection to the natural and spiritual worlds around her.

This two-part exhibition comes on the heels of a breakthrough year for the artist, who joined Lehmann Maupin's program in early 2024, marking Kim's first commercial gallery representation in her nearly seven-decade career. Also in 2024, Kim's work was prominently included in *Foreigners Everywhere*, the 60th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, curated by Adriano Pedrosa. Kim's work is included in museum collections worldwide, including recent acquisitions by the Singapore Art Museum, the Harvard Art Museum, and the Seoul Museum of Art; most recently, a historic sculpture from the late 1980s was acquired by the Guggenheim Museum in New York and will enter the permanent collection.

Growing up amidst the backdrop of Korea's tumultuous history in the 20th century, Kim Yun Shin has established herself as a formative figure in the post-war South Korean art scene, overcoming societal norms to carve out a space for herself as a first-generation woman sculptor. Despite facing challenges in a male-dominated field, she ventured to Paris to pursue her artistic aspirations, taught at various universities, and co-founded the Korean Sculptress Association in 1974 to support emerging artists. Partly influenced by her nomadic early life, her work reflects a fearless exploration of diasporic cultures—from France, Mexico, and Brazil, to her adoptive home of Argentina, where she established Museo Kim Yun Shin, the first Korean immigrant art museum. Now, at 90 years of age, the artist resides in Paju, South Korea, where she continues to produce work in her studio.

Her artistic practice, which encompasses sculpture and painting, is also deeply rooted in encounters with the natural world. Kim's sculptural work engages with the fundamental qualities of materials and nature, navigating themes of confrontation, introspection, and coexistence. Using solid wood as her primary medium, she visualizes the intersection between nature, time, and history, reconsidering the very essence of human existence. Her early sculptures from the 1970s are deeply rooted in traditional Korean hanok architecture, which uses a distinctive technique that joins wooden blocks without nails. Her colorful paintings, meanwhile, are marked by distinctive surface fragmentation; across her compositions, large sections gradually divide into smaller shapes. The resulting artworks evoke a primordial energy, at once expansive and concise, concentrated and diffused. For Kim, painting offers the opportunity to explore sculptural concepts in a two-dimensional format.



Kim Yun Shin, *Song of My Soul 2010-100, 2010* (detail)

London: *Add Two Add One* | February 27–March 15, 2025

In London, selections from several series will be on view, including works from the 1970s to the present. In the artist's acclaimed *Song of My Soul* paintings, Kim creates by process of addition and reduction, using a knife to apply and scrape off paint. These invented "scapes"—land, sea, sky—convey an embodiment of Kim's emotional and spiritual connection to a place, rather than any formal geographic location, emphasized via the repeated title *Song of My Soul*. In *Song of My Soul 2010-100* (2010), for example, geometric shapes in earth-toned hues scatter across the picture plane over a textured background, like autumn leaves over dry grass. Similarly, Kim's more recent sculptural series *Tree Full of Songs*, where she paints on cast bronze, functions as an expression of the artist's spiritual energy. In these more recent works, such as *Tree Full of Songs 2023-8V1* (2024), the aesthetic of Kim's paintings is translated into three dimensional space, bringing her practice full circle.

New York: *Divide Two Divide One* | April 3–May 31, 2025

In New York, *Divide Two Divide One* will similarly include selections from several of Kim's historic series, with works dating from the mid-80s to the present. Sculptures from Kim's ongoing *Add Two Add One Divide Two Divide One* series are assemblages of terracotta-hued natural wood—algarrobo, indigenous to South America—stacked vertically and scarred

with angular notches and planes. The resulting sculptures, as in *Add Two Add One Divide Two Divide One 2015-20* (2015) and *Add Two Add One, Divide Two Divide One 1993-498* (1993), appear like sprouting plants or gestural figures, evoking both human and animal forms. Several stone iterations of this series will also be included in the New York exhibition, including *Add Two Add One, Divide Two Divide One 2002-750* (2002) and *Add Two Add One, Divide Two Divide One 1989-216* (1989), crafted from quartz and onyx, respectively; the exhibition will also include paintings from Kim's ongoing *Song of My Soul* and her more recent *Waves of Joy* series. Notably, *Song of My Soul 2015-49* (2015), one of the artist's largest paintings to-date, was recently included in the solo exhibition *Kim Yun Shin: Letters from Argentina* at the Leeungno Museum in Daejeon, South Korea in 2024.

Across both exhibitions, Kim's paintings and sculptures locate the essence of her unique diasporic experience amidst the grounding consistency of a spiritual connection to the natural world. Decades of creative production unfold from one series to the next in both London and New York, paying homage to Kim's journey from turbulent beginnings during the Japanese colonial period and Korean War to becoming a trailblazer in Korean contemporary art and reflecting the artist's personal resilience and commitment to artistic innovation.



Kim Yun Shin, *Add Two Add One Divide Two Divide One 2015-20*, 2015 (detail)

Kim Yun Shin (b. 1935, Wonsan, North Korea; lives and works in Seoul, South Korea) is a multidisciplinary artist known for her dynamic sculpture and painting, which often unfold through a series of interactions with nature. Growing up amidst the backdrop of Korea's tumultuous history in the 20th century, Kim has established herself as a pioneering figure in the post-war South Korean art scene, overcoming societal norms to carve out a space for herself as a first-generation woman sculptor. Despite facing challenges in a male-dominated field, she ventured to Paris to pursue her artistic aspirations, taught at various universities, and co-founded the Korean Sculptress Association in 1974 to support emerging artists. Partly influenced by her nomadic early life, her work reflects a fearless exploration of diasporic cultures—from France, Mexico, and Brazil, to her adoptive home of Argentina, where she established Museo Kim Yun Shin, the first Korean immigrant art museum. Her journey from turbulent beginnings during the Japanese colonial period and Korean War to becoming a trailblazer in Korean contemporary art reflects the artist's personal resilience and commitment to artistic innovation.

Across six decades, Kim has developed an aesthetic that engages with the fundamental qualities of materials and nature, navigating themes of confrontation, introspection, and coexistence. Central to her artistic expression is the use of solid wood, a primary medium through which Kim envisions the structural and spiritual elements of antiquity and the primordial world. In doing so, she visualizes the intersection between nature, time, and history, reconsidering the very essence of human existence. Her early sculptures from the 1970s are deeply rooted in traditional Korean hanok architecture, which uses a distinctive technique that joins wooden blocks without nails. In her *Stacking Wishes* series, the artist also explores traditions of vertical stacking in Korean and Latin American totemism. This notion of organic connection and her interest in East Asian philosophy merge in her iconic *Add Two Add One, Divide Two Divide One* series, which she began in the late 1970s. The terms “add” and “divide” originate from the philosophical concept of yin (division and fragmentation) and yang (addition and integration). Through a meticulous yet intuitive process—in which Kim “adds” her soul into the solid wood and “divides” the space between the bark and inner wood to create a complete whole—the artist delves into raw materiality and uncovers a newfound vitality.



Trained as a lithographer in Paris, Kim's practice extends to painting and engraving—mediums which allow her to explore sculptural concepts in a two-dimensional format. Her paintings are marked by distinctive surface fragmentation; across her compositions, large sections gradually divide into smaller shapes. Here too, her process involves addition and subtraction. Kim adds pigment to her surfaces, then uses a palette knife to scrape off the paint, generating geometric patterns as she works. Drawn to the indigenous trees and stones of Argentina, as well as to South American totemism, Kim witnessed a striking resemblance in color and pattern to that of Korean totemism, which distinctly influenced her early experimentation with painting on canvas and on her wooden sculptures. The resulting artworks evoke a primordial energy, at once expansive and concise, concentrated and diffused. Kim's oeuvre speaks to a sense of harmony and stability that underlies the natural state of being.

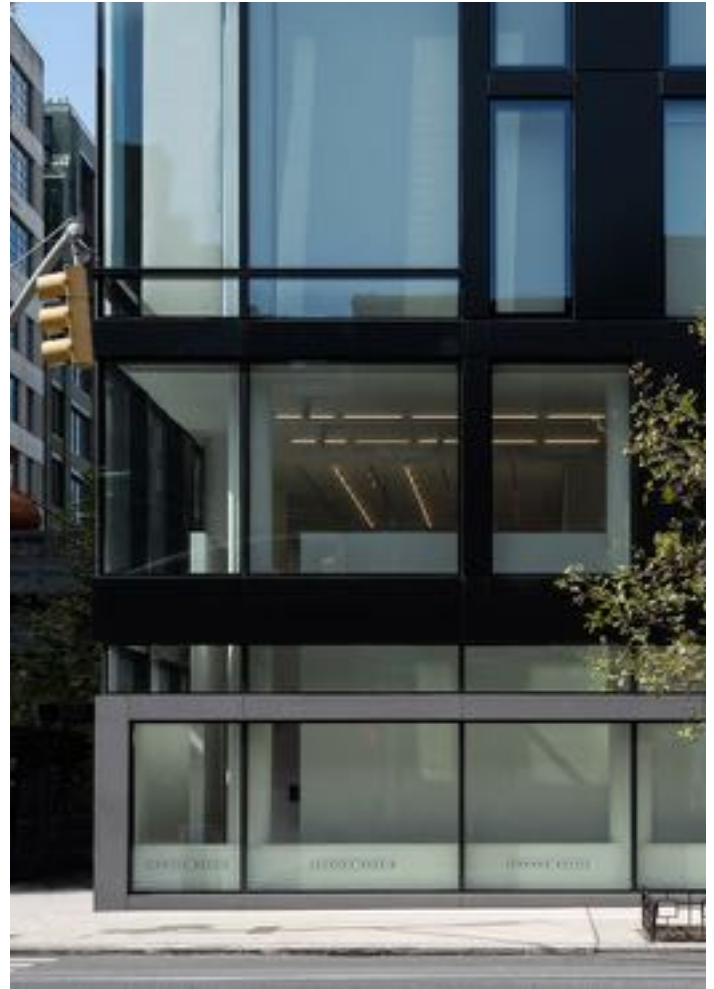
Kim received her B.F.A. from Hongik University in Seoul, South Korea, in 1959 and studied sculpture and lithography at the École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris, France, in 1964. Returning to Seoul in 1969, she taught sculpture at Sangmyung University as a professor until 1983 and participated in the 12th São Paulo Biennale in 1973. Despite having a successful career, the artist decided to move to Argentina in 1984 to expand her artistic practice. In 2008, Kim founded the Museo Kim Yun Shin in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Select recent solo exhibitions of Kim's work have been organized by LEEUNGNO Museum, Daejeon, South Korea (2024); Lehmann Maupin, New York, NY (2024); Park Soo Keun Museum, Yanggu, South Korea (2024); Kukje Gallery, Seoul, South Korea (2024); Nam-Seoul Museum of Art, Seoul, South Korea (2023); Whitewave Art Center, Seoul, South Korea (2022, 2015); Gallery Banditrazos, Seoul, South Korea (2022), E2Art Gallery, Los Angeles, CA (2022); Korean Cultural Center, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2022, 2021, 2018); Korean Cultural Center, Warsaw, Poland (2019); Korean Cultural Center, Madrid, Spain (2019); Centro Cultural Pilar, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2017); Cabildo, Córdoba, Argentina (2016); Museo Municipal de Arte Moderno Mendoza, Mendoza, Argentina (2015); Hanwon Museum of Art, Seoul, South Korea (2015); María Elena Kravetz Gallery, Córdoba, Argentina (2010); and Museo de Arte López Claro, Azul, Argentina (2009).

Select group exhibitions featuring her work include *2024 Sculpture in Seoul: The Strange Encounter*, Yeollin Songhyeon Square, Seoul, South Korea (2024, forthcoming); *Art at Americas Society*, NY, New York (2024, forthcoming); *2024 ARKO Selection: ZIP*, ARKO Art Center, Seoul, South Korea (2024); *Stranieri Ovunque – Foreigners Everywhere*, the 60th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia (2024); *Diálogos artísticos: KIM Yunshin y Mari Puri Herrero*, Korean Cultural Center, Madrid,

Spain (2019); *15 Korean Abstract Painters: Yesterday and Today*, Ahn Sang Chul Museum, Yangju, South Korea (2015); *Green Life*, Korean Cultural Center, Washington, D.C. (2012); *STONE LAND*, Iksan International Stone Culture Project, Iksan, South Korea (2012); *Encuentro*, Korean Cultural Center, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2011); *International Sculpture Symposium*, Rosario, Argentina (2007); *Exhibition of Korean Artists in South America*, São Paulo, Brazil (2006); *Korean-Spanish Sculpture Symposium*, Icheon, South Korea (2003); *Beijing International Sculpture Symposium*, Beijing, China (2002); *The 7th International Sculpture Symposium*, Rosario, Argentina (2001); *The 3rd International Sculpture Symposium*, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2000); *Exposición Grupal de la Asociación Artes Plásticas Coreana*, Buenos Aires, Argentina (1998); *Galería de Arte La Candelaria*, Buenos Aires, Argentina (1995); *'95 Korean Women Artist Festival*, Seoul Museum of Art, Seoul, South Korea (1995); and *Museo de Arte Moderno*, Mexico City, Mexico (1992, 1991).

Kim's work is in numerous international public and private collections, including Museo de Arte Moderno, Mexico City, Mexico; Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires, Argentina; Museo de Arte López Claro, Azul, Argentina; Central Post Office, Rosario, Argentina; Beijing International Sculpture Park, Beijing, China; National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Gwacheon, South Korea; Park Soo Keun Museum in Yanggu County, Yanggu, South Korea; Seoul Museum of Art, Seoul, South Korea; Hanwon Museum of Art, Seoul, South Korea; Korea Land and Housing Corporation, Seoul, South Korea; Asan Social Welfare Foundation, Asan Medical Center, Seoul, South Korea; Korean-Spanish Sculpture Park, Gwangju, Gyeonggi-do, South Korea; and Central Sports Park, Iksan, South Korea.

Artist portrait by Lee Woojeong.

**Lehmann Maupin**

Rachel Lehmann and David Maupin co-founded Lehmann Maupin in 1996 in New York. Since inception, Lehmann Maupin has served as a leading contemporary art gallery with locations in the U.S., Europe, and Asia. For over 25 years, Lehmann Maupin has been instrumental in introducing international artists in new geographies and building long-lasting curatorial relationships. Known for championing diverse voices, the gallery's program proudly features artists whose work challenges notions of identity and shapes international culture. Today, the gallery has permanent locations in New York, Seoul, and London, as well as team members based in Hong Kong, Shanghai, Singapore, and Palm Beach. In recent years, with growing opportunities in new markets, the gallery has opened seasonal spaces in Aspen, Palm Beach, Taipei, and Beijing.

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