

# Koo Jeong A: Annual Journey

## 22 Apr 15-29 May 15

Koo Jeong A will present a new series of large watercolour paintings depicting various large rock formations for her second solo exhibition, *Annual Journey* at Pilar Corrias. These new works are a continuation from Koo's 2013 work *Consciousness Dilatation* that was commissioned for the Real DMZ Project 2013, a contemporary art project based on research conducted on the demilitarised zone (DMZ) separating North and South Korea.

*Consciousness Dilatation* comprised an installation of various sized basalt rocks, which Koo had collected together with local residents from the fields surrounding Cheorwon, a small military town just South of the border. The rocks were then spread in a constellation-like form across the DMZ Peace Plaza. The constellation format was key as there is no beginning or end within it, instead it is all about how elements connect and relate to one another – both through the material and metaphorical stratification of the existing rice fields and rocks, the memory of the Korean War, and the DMZ as an ecological park.

According to the Ramsar Convention, the DMZ is a protected conservation wetland. As the Korean War led to the division of the Korean Peninsula, the subsequent demarcation of the DMZ as zone of geological and ecological resources between the two countries means that no ecological material can leave the zone. For Koo this state also creates a type of void. It is the void, or the space in between the rocks, that contains their power.

Known for her minimal and poetic installations, Koo makes works that are seemingly casual, yet at the same time remarkably precise, deliberate, and considered. In these new large scale watercolour paintings Koo returns again to the rocks and what they symbolize to her, capturing smaller voids and, from the larger constellation, the relationships that exist between the basalt rocks. The element of air and the invisible force of the winds is key to Eastern philosophy - the paintings start from the depiction of the air, which is drawn first in strong colorful brushstrokes and surrounds the density that the rocks inhabit.

For Koo the void is a metaphoric matter. The artist quotes Alejandro Zambra's short novel *Bonsai* (2011), which considers the void in a similar way. At the end of the story the lead character Julio learns how to glide the void by taking a taxi and asking the driver to drive in any direction until his time is up on the meter. The void is the unknown and infinite possibility.

Koo Jeong A (b. 1967 in Seoul, Korea) lives and works everywhere. Following *OTRO*, a glow in the dark skate park the artist realised in France in 2012, she has recently been commissioned by the Liverpool Biennial and Liverpool City Council to design a new wheels park for Everton Park in Liverpool (opening 2015). Her work is currently included in the exhibition *Repetition and Difference*, Jewish Museum, New York (13 March – 9 August 2015). Major solo exhibitions of her work include: *Koo Jeong A: 16:07*, Kunsthalle, Dusseldorf (2012); *Constellation Congress*, DIA Art Foundation, Dia:Beacon, Beacon, The Dan Flavin Art Institute, Bridgehampton (2010); *Koo Jeong A*, Aspen Art Museum, Aspen (2008). Significant group exhibitions include: *Burning Down the House - 10th Gwangju Biennale*, curated by Jessica Morgan, Gwangju (2014); *Real DMZ Project 2014*, Cheorwon-gun, Gangwon-do, Seoul (2014); *Media Landscape – Zone East*, Liverpool Biennial, Liverpool (2010); International Art Exhibition of the Venice Biennale, Venice (2009, 2003,

1995); *Il tempo del postino*, Manchester International Festival, Manchester (2007); *On Reason and Emotion*, 14th Biennale of Sydney, Sydney (2004); *Singular Forms (Sometimes Repeated)*, Guggenheim Museum, New York (2004); *Manifesta 3*, Ljubljana (2000); Gwangju Biennale, Gwangju (1997); *Do it*, curated by Hans-Ulrich Obrist, Independent Curators Incorporated, New York (1997); *Manifesta 1*, Rotterdam (1996).