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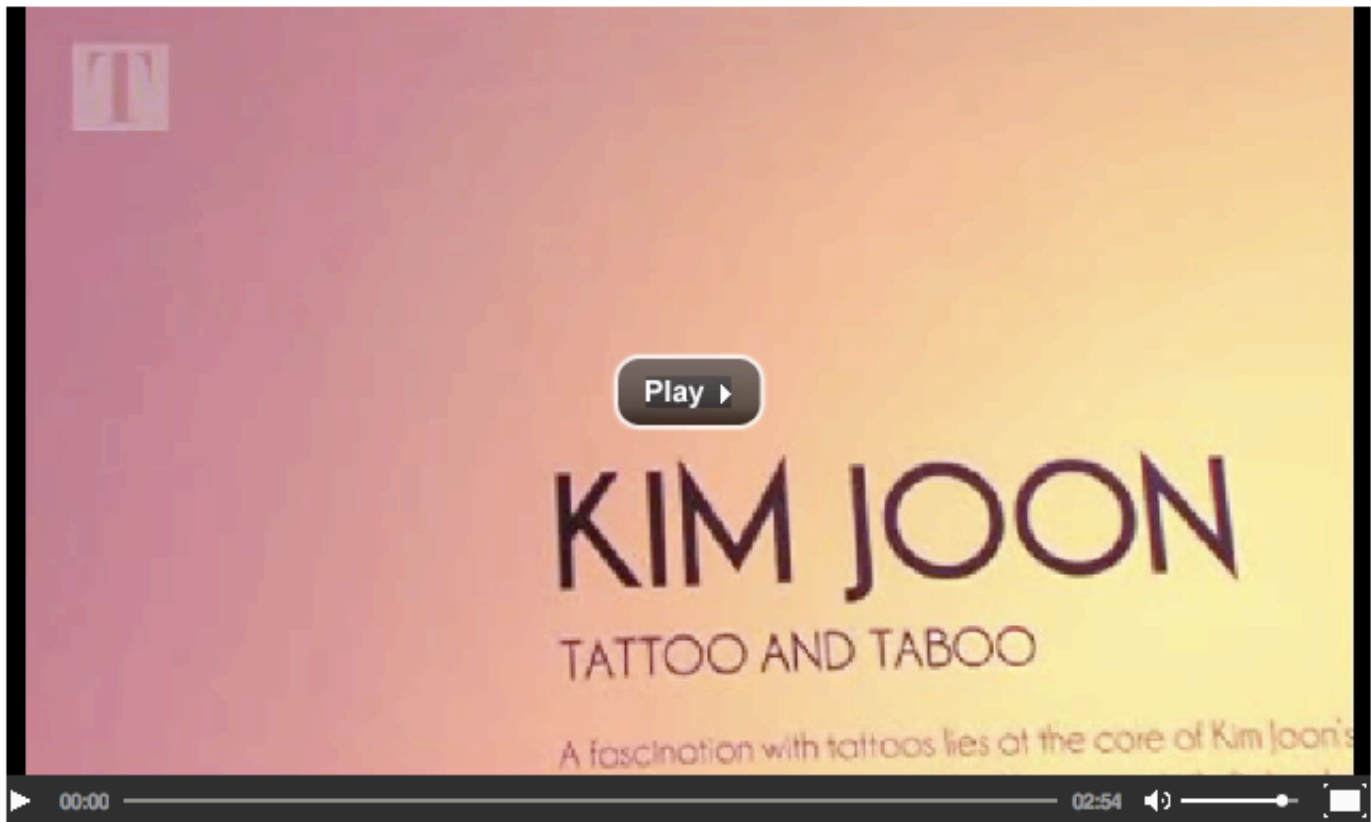
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## Tattoo and Taboo

Watch our video of Korean artist Kim Joon telling us about his exhibition and how his ink-covered, undulating nude bodies enveloped with prints from luxury brands reflect our hidden desires

BY TAMARA DE GUZMAN, 9.DEC.2009





Tattoos are taboo in Korea - but it's a Korean artist named Kim Joon that's become well versed in the art of body painting. The emerging artist started tattooing during a stint in the military and later, as he decided to pursue his career as a painter, became focused on the subject of human bodies. Now, his digital prints utilise graphic animation to create three dimensional nude bodies on which he grafts on skin from things like snakes, human bodies and even fabrics, then embedding them with patterns from luxury brands coupled with Asian motifs. His work has included brands like Vivienne Westwood, Breitling, Montblanc, Ferragamo, BMW, and Chanel has even

commissioned one his most recent works (right). In October, his work *Bird Land - Armani* sold at Sotheby's Hong Kong for almost HK\$140,000. Pop culture references are also common in his work, from Donald Duck and Aerosmith to his tribute to Michael Jackson, *Neverland*.

Kim was recently in town for the opening of his first exhibition in Hong Kong, *Tattoo and Taboo*, at Sundaram Tagore Gallery, and talked to us about how his work reflect both hidden desire and pain, and how the sensual imagery is a critique of our desire to have more perfect bodies. Among other things, his work also comments on a consumerist culture - not a critique as he is very much a part of it - and how we become enraptured by luxury.

*Tattoo and Taboo* is on exhibit at Sundaram Tagore Gallery until December 13.

Sundaram Tagore Gallery is at 57-59 Hollywood Road, Central. For more information, visit [www.sundaramtagore.com](http://www.sundaramtagore.com)