

sundaram tagore gallery

## Korean artists Kim Joon and Hosook Kang make Singapore debut at Sundaram Tagore Gallery

**Exhibition title:** *Through the Mind's Eye: Kim Joon and Hosook Kang*

**Exhibition dates:** March 20 to May 31, 2015

**Opening cocktail reception:** Friday, March 20, 6 – 9 pm, Gillman Barracks

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Hosook Kang, *Relief*, 2010, acrylic on canvas, 60 x 60 inches/152.4 x 152.4 cm

**Singapore, February 25, 2015**—Korean artists Kim Joon and Hosook Kang show their work for the first time in Singapore. Both are known for projecting images as they see them in their imaginations, incorporating elements from Korean artistic tradition with contemporary Western visual language.

New York-based painter **Hosook Kang** combines bold action painting and steady mark-making to produce fanciful, abstracted landscapes. Rendered in vibrant colors of orange, red, fuchsia, blue and gold, Kang's large-scale canvases depict nature as she sees it in her imagination. Her undulating ripples of color, formed from intricate dot patterns and meticulous gestural brushstrokes, dissipate across the surface of the canvas suggesting nature's transformative energy.

She starts with a background of abstract forms—her vision of the completed painting—then covers the canvas with a painted net of structured units that create a skin-like overlay. To bring her original vision back into focus, Kang fills each unit with colors that correspond to the background, adding a three-dimensional quality. Obsessively detailed and orderly, these works are simultaneously meditative and pulsing with energy.

Kang's work references traditional Korean motifs, such as elements of nature, yet her focus on abstraction and the richness of color root her work firmly in the Western tradition.

Hosook Kang was raised in Daegu, Korea, and attended the Pratt Institute, Brooklyn. She has exhibited her work at Gallery Korea, Korean Cultural Service New York and Daegu Culture and Arts Center, Korea.



Kim Joon, *Drunken-Johnnie Walker*, 2011, digital print, 47 x 82.7 inches/119.4 x 210 cm; image © 2011 Kim Joon

Kim Joon, who is based in Seoul, creates digital prints, exploring themes of desire, memory and fragility. A master of the computer software 3D Studio Max, Kim composes richly detailed tableaux using digitally rendered porcelain and tattooed human bodies, successfully juxtaposing traditional Asian motifs, Western Pop references and luxury brand logos.

A selection of work from his *Bird Land*, *Fragile*, *Drunken*, *Blue Jean Blues* and *Island* series will be on view.

*Bird Land* (2009), one of Kim's most noted series, raises questions about consumerism using tattoos as a metaphor for the hidden desires engraved on the human consciousness. He covers digitally rendered nude bodies with brand logos from Ferragamo, Montblanc and Vivienne Westwood, forming a surreal landscape reflecting society's weakness for material objects.

With the series *Fragile* (2010) and *Drunken* (2011), Kim turned his attention to porcelain-like human figures instead of tattooed bodies. His porcelain figures are hollow, missing limbs, and above all, imperfect—a recurring theme in his work.

*Blue Jean Blues* (2012) explores desire, memory and youth, once again using images in porcelain. Fabricating compositions out of tableware, fragments of idealized nudes and objects of Western Pop culture including guitars, cars and guns, Kim alludes to nostalgic obsessions and attachments.

In *Island* (2013), the artist examined the volatile relationship between people and nature. This dramatic shift away from tattoos and luxury was spurred by the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster, which happened close to Kim's home, and a visit to the volcanic island of Jeju. Kim depicts islands made of fragmented human bodies overlaid with exotic animal skins.

Kim Joon was born in 1966 in Seoul. His works have been exhibited at the Saatchi Gallery, London (where his work was featured on the cover of *Korean Eye: Contemporary Korean Art*, the book accompanying the exhibition of the same name); the Total Museum, Seoul; The National Museum of Contemporary Art, Kwachon, Korea; the Gwangju Biennale, Korea; and the National Taiwan Museum.

Starting May 6, work by Kim Joon will be on view in ***Frontiers Reimagined***, an exhibition focusing on globalism, at the Museo di Palazzo Grimani in Venice, Italy. The exhibition has been organized by Sundaram Tagore and Tagore Foundation International, a nonprofit cultural organization dedicated to dialogue between Asia and the West.

Mounted in partnership with the Soprintendenza speciale per il patrimonio storico, artistico ed etnoantropologico e per il polo museale della città di Venezia e dei comuni della Gronda lagunare, the Venetian state museum authority, *Frontiers Reimagined* includes the work of more than forty painters, sculptors, photographers and installation artists from Asia, Africa and the West.

The show will be on view through November 22, running concurrently with the 56th International Art Exhibition of la Biennale di Venezia, the oldest, largest and most prestigious contemporary art event in the world.

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