

# CHUN KWANG YOUNG

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*Aggregation 18 - OC060 (Star 6)*, 2018, mixed media with Korean mulberry paper, 43.25 inches/110 cm tondo

Korean artist Chun Kwang Young incorporates elements of both painting and sculpture in his practice. He is best known for his acclaimed *Aggregation* series: freestanding and wall-hung amalgamations of small, triangular forms wrapped in antique mulberry paper, often tinted with teas or pigment.

Born in Hongchun, South Korea, in 1944, Chun grew up during the end of Japanese colonization and the brutality of the Korean War. In the early 1970s, he moved to the United States to pursue a Master's Degree at Philadelphia College of Art, where he was deeply drawn to Abstract Expressionism. "It seemed to be the best way to freely express my surprise and sadness at witnessing the huge gap between idea and reality," he says.

Over time, Chun became disillusioned with the materialistic drive that seemed to fuel the American dream and feelings of loneliness intensified his longing for home. During this period, Chun's paintings, which explored the effects of light and color, reflected his interest in Abstract Expressionism, however, he ultimately found the expression inauthentic. Chun decided to return to Korea and focus on developing his own methodology, one that was wholly unique and reflective of his history and cultural identity.

The development of Chun's signature technique was sparked by childhood memories of seeing medicinal herbs wrapped in mulberry paper, tied into small packages and hung from the ceiling of the local doctor's office. He became intrigued with the idea of merging the techniques, materials and sentiment of his Korean heritage with the conceptual freedom he experienced during his Western education.

Over the years, Chun's Aggregations have become more colorful and evolved in complexity and scale, but the use of mulberry paper remains at the core of his practice. Although imbued with the spirit of Korean tradition and history, Chun's work, with its intricate, abstract compositions, is grounded in a purely contemporary context.

Chun Kwang Young received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Hongik University, Seoul and a Master of Fine Arts from the Philadelphia College of Art, Pennsylvania. His work is in numerous public collections, including the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; The Rockefeller Foundation and the United Nations, New York; the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, D.C.; the Philadelphia Society Building, Pennsylvania; the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul, and the Seoul Museum of Art; the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra; and the National Museum of Fine Arts, Malta.

He was named Artist of the Year by the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul, in 2001 and in 2009 he was awarded the Presidential Prize in the 41st Korean Culture and Art Prize by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism.

Born 1944 in Hongchun, Korea | Lives in works in Seongnam, Korea