

PearlLam Galleries

Hong Kong Pedder Building

Drops:

KIM TSCHANG-YEUL solo exhibition

Exhibition Dates 21 March–10 May, 2017 Monday–Saturday, 10am–7pm

Extended Hours 21 March–25 March, 9am–9pm

Venue Pearl Lam Galleries, 6/F, Pedder Building, 12 Pedder Street, Central, Hong Kong

Hong Kong—Pearl Lam Galleries is pleased to announce its first solo exhibition by post-war Korean artist Kim Tschang-Yeul (b. 1929, Maengsan, Korea) at the Pedder Building. Kim is regarded as one of the most influential figures in Korea's modern art history and is renowned for his “waterdrop” paintings. The exhibition will feature pieces from this signature series from the 1970s through to the present, which reflect his personal experiences, such as poverty, love, wars, and pain. Through the continued act of painting water drops, Kim is able to erase traumatic memories of the tragedy of the Korean War (1950–53).

The language Kim Tschang-Yeul uses in his “water drop” paintings combines the discourse of photorealism and abstract expressionism, placing the paintings in an ambiguous space between abstraction and reality. For Kim, water is the origin of all things, highlighting that nothing in our universe would exist without water. Through exploring water as an independent subject, Kim has brought the origin theory of Thales, the father of Western philosophy, to mind.

Many of his works from the early 1970s feature water drops individually. In these pieces, Kim does not employ water as a subject itself but shows water drops seeping out of a wall or sitting alone. An artificial impression is given and he begins to visualise the quality of existence. By 1972, his paintings show a conceptual shift and water is no longer alone on his canvas. The water drops radically increase in size and quantity and bring forth a surreal impression. He also refines the composition through the removal of colour in his painting process.

The transition into the 1980s shows Kim beginning to explore textures in his water drops. He uses oil paint, applied to the back of a wet canvas. *Recurrence*, the series he developed in this period, shows frames full of calligraphic texts from *Thousand Character Classic* or deconstructed strokes of Chinese letters, all used to construct the water drops. Kim continues to work on this series to this day. He has taken the works a step further by placing Xuan sheet paper and rice paper on the canvas first before writing on the paper with ink and composing water drops, which reflects Kim's childhood experiences of practicing reading and writing and also the art tradition he inhabits.

In the 1990s, the artist started to experiment with the use of new techniques and media, such as painting water drops on wooden boards and a range of other materials. Kim also began to create sculptures with rock, iron, and bronze, and he used glass for water drops in his installations. Kim believes that water and water drops exist anywhere around us, including in space and time, but are also vulnerable and exposed to an infinite emptiness. Over the decades we see the water drops become a path through which Kim searches for an infinite revelation.

“I am excited to present the first solo exhibition by a post-war Korean artist in our gallery. Meditative art has been overlooked in the art world; I hope this exhibition will be able to draw attention to the beautiful art from this genre.”

—Pearl Lam, Founder of Pearl Lam Galleries

About Kim Tschang-Yeul

Born in 1929, Kim Tschang-Yeul is a prolific Korean artist who led the Korean Art Informel movement in the 1950s and 60s and is known for his “water drop” paintings. For over four decades, Kim has been focusing on evolving his distinct spherical transparent “water drops”.

Recent and selected works have been showcased in numerous local and international exhibitions and events. He has presented his works in France, Korea, Taiwan, the United States, Belgium, China, Japan, Germany, Brazil, Switzerland, Canada, Singapore, and other countries and territories. Recent and selected solo exhibitions include ones at the Gwangju Museum of Art, Gwangju, Korea (2014); National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, Taichung, Taiwan (2012); Busan Museum of Art, Busan, Korea (2009); National Art Museum of China, Beijing, China (2006); Galerie Nationale du Jeu de Paume, Paris, France (2004).

About Pearl Lam Galleries

Founded by Pearl Lam, Pearl Lam Galleries is a driving force within Asia’s contemporary art scene. With over 20 years of experience exhibiting Asian and Western art and design, it is one of the leading and most established contemporary art galleries to be launched out of China.

Playing a vital role in stimulating international dialogue on Chinese and Asian contemporary art, the Galleries is dedicated to championing artists who re-evaluate and challenge perceptions of cultural practice from the region. The Galleries in Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Singapore collaborate with renowned curators, each presenting distinct programming from major solo exhibitions, special projects and installations to conceptually rigorous group shows. Based on the philosophy of Chinese Literati where art forms have no hierarchy, Pearl Lam Galleries is dedicated to breaking down boundaries between different disciplines, with a unique gallery model committed to encouraging cross-cultural exchange.

The four branches of Pearl Lam Galleries in Hong Kong, Shanghai and Singapore represent an increasingly influential roster of contemporary artists. Chinese artists Zhu Jinshi and Su Xiaobai, who synthesise Chinese sensibilities with an international visual language, are presented internationally with work now included in major private and public collections worldwide. The Galleries has also introduced leading international artists, such as Jenny Holzer, Leonardo Drew, Carlos Rolón/Dzine and Yinka Shonibare MBE, to markets in the region, providing opportunities for new audiences in Asia to encounter their work. Pearl Lam Galleries encourages international artists to create new work which engages specifically with the region, collaborating to produce thought-provoking, culturally relevant work.

Press Enquiries

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