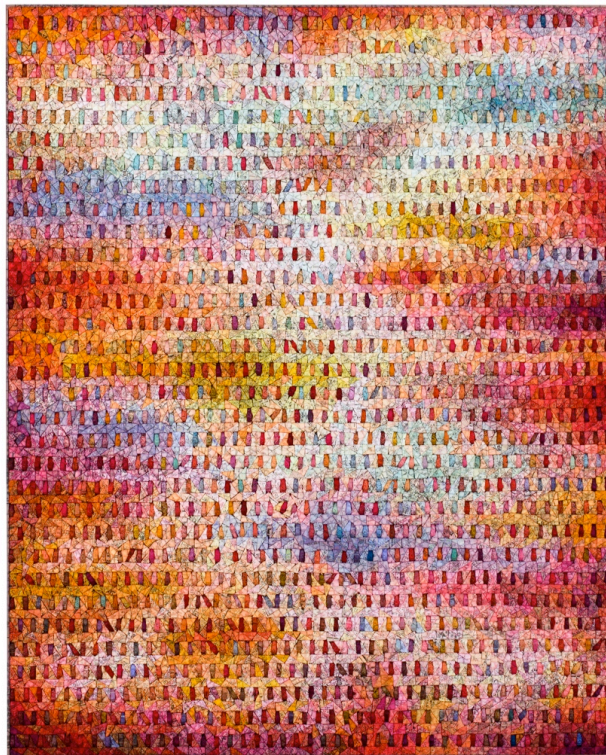


PearlLam Galleries

Singapore

Chun Kwang Young solo exhibition 'Aggregation'



Chun Kwang Young b. 1944, **Aggregation 14-NV054 (Dream19)**, 2014
Mixed media and Korean mulberry paper, 163 x 131 cm (64 1/8 x 51 5/8 in.)

Exhibition Dates

28 November, 2015–3 January, 2016

Tuesday–Saturday, 11am–7pm; Sunday, noon–6pm

Pearl Lam Galleries, 9 Lock Road, #03-22, Gillman Barracks, Singapore 108937

Singapore—Pearl Lam Galleries is delighted to present *Aggregation*, a solo exhibition by Korean artist Chun Kwang Young (b. 1944) that surveys works from his acclaimed long running series of the same name. The series explores underlying concerns with the whole versus the individual amidst the artist's negotiations between the East and West. In his search for a culturally authentic mode of expression, Chun combines his early experimentations with Abstract Expressionism with his mastery of a uniquely Korean material, mulberry paper.

Korean mulberry paper is at the centre of Chun's artistic practice, deeply imbuing his works with a Korean sensibility by lending its potency for metaphorical associations. Although long prized as a medium for writing and drawing, it was once a central feature of Korean daily life. Delicately translucent, yet strong and durable, mulberry paper was used for a variety of purposes in Korean households. From covering doors, windows, and walls, to carpeting floors and packing dried goods, mulberry paper proved to be a versatile material—a worthy symbol of Korean national pride. The paper is also evocative of herbal medicine bundles that were prominent in Korean traditional medicine prior to the advent of modern medicine in the years following the Korean War. Medicinal herbs were hung from the ceiling in clusters, wrapped in mulberry paper inscribed with invocations for good health. It is no coincidence that the wrapped triangles of Chun's *Aggregation* works are visually similar to their spiritual ancestors, as the artist draws from connotations of healing in his address of the socio-cultural issues particular to his country and universal conditions of human trauma and suffering.

Small triangles are the basic structural unit of Chun's recent works, coming together by the hundreds to form the surfaces of each work. Barely two centimetres thick, each triangular piece of polystyrene is carefully wrapped in Korean mulberry paper and tied with string of the same material. The vast landscapes and richly textured surfaces of Chun's works are the result of the meticulous placement of each piece in tight clusters, akin to adjoining pieces of a puzzle. Protruding from the flat plane, the clustered triangles exude an organic, chaotic energy, defying any suggestion of a pattern or method to the perceived madness. In such compositions, Chun works primarily with mono- or dichromatic palettes. When set flat against one another, the effect is an even surface that is nevertheless as irregular and unique as a microscopic view of skin. Chun uses these flat surfaces to continue his forays into optical illusions by playing with tonal gradation to mimic light and shade, suggesting crevices and craters on his paper plateaus.

Titling the works with the prefix *Aggregation* is a self-reflexive acknowledgement of their nature as large-scale compositions assembled together from several distinct parts. Implied in the word is the act of collecting and physically uniting the individual components, relating it further to Chun's artistic process.

The making of each work involves an exhaustingly laborious process, deliberately formulated to mimic a meditative practice, focusing the consciousness on each individual piece as it is dyed, wrapped, and arranged in its place. The act of enfolding each triangle with the mulberry paper is done mindfully, drawing from the traditional practices of *bojagi*, or the wrapping of objects for safe keeping and protection during travel, and Korean origami, where paper is folded into shapes of figures to serve as devotional reminders. It is with an almost religious reverence that Chun engages with his chosen material. Developing a meditative process out of the repetitive gesture can afford him a consciousness of the individual while harnessing the strength and power of the mass.

“Chun Kwang Young's *Aggregation* works showcase his unique ability to use traditional Korean materials in a contemporary context, and we are delighted to welcome him back to Singapore. This exhibition celebrates Pearl Lam Galleries' commitment to presenting artists who re-evaluate and challenge perceptions of cultural practice in the region.”

—Pearl Lam, Founder of Pearl Lam Galleries

About Chun Kwang Young

Seoul-based artist Kwang Young Chun (b. 1944, Hongcheon County, Korea) received his BFA from Hong-ik University in Korea, and MFA from the Philadelphia College of Art, USA. Known for his sculptural assemblages—both freestanding pieces and wall-hung low reliefs—Chun composes his forms from a myriad of small shapes wrapped in Korean mulberry paper. With a trompe l'oeil quality, Chun's sculptures create the illusion of depth and coalescence and, ultimately, represent the harmony and conflict in the unity of many.

Chun Kwang Young's works have been acquired by, and are included in esteemed public collections, such as the Rockefeller Foundation in New York, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, the Woodrow Wilson International Center in Washington D.C., the United Nations headquarters in New York, the National Museum of Contemporary Art in Seoul, the Philadelphia Society Building, Seoul Museum of Art, the National Gallery of Australia at Canberra, Fidelity Investments Boston, Museum Kunstwerk in Germany, and the Busan Art Museum, among others. Named the Artist of the Year by the National Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul, in 2001, Chun has also received many other accolades recognising the unique beauty of his works. Most recently, he was awarded the Presidential Prize in the 41st Korean Culture and Art Prize by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism in Korea in 2009.

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.

Influential Chinese artists Zhu Jinshi and Su Xiaobai, who synthesise Chinese sensibilities with an international visual language, are presented internationally with works now included in major private and public collections worldwide. The Galleries has also introduced leading international artists such as Jenny Holzer and Yinka Shonibare MBE (RA) 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

Chloe Ho / Pearl Lam Galleries / gallerysg@pearllamgalleries.com / +65 6570 2284
Eleanor Porter / SUTTON / eleanor@suttonpr.com / +852 2528 0792