

## Trace: KIM Hyunsik, SHIN Meekyoung

17 FEB (THU) - 16 APR (SAT) 2022

Opening: 2. 17 (THU) 5-7 PM

Gallery JJ (745 Nonhyeon-ro, Gangnam-gu, Seoul)  
TUE-SAT 11am-7pm (SUN and MON off) [www.galleryjj.org](http://www.galleryjj.org)

It is no overstatement to say today we are hemmed in by an environment of "image" due to cutting-edge technology and consumer culture rather than being in a natural or material one, and this phenomenon encroaches even our genuine senses. At this juncture, Gallery JJ notes on fundamental attempts to transition to the world of space-time and materials rather than any artificial and superficial painting or making.

GalleryJJ is pleased to present paintings by Kim Hyunsik and sculptures by Shin Meekyoung as the first exhibition in 2022. In particular, the two artists share a persistent exploration and practice attitude on their unique materials constituting the basis of the work and think about the boundaries between mediums convention, life and art, East and West, and space-time. This exhibition, *Trace: Kim Hyunsik and Shin Meekyoung*, highlights the diverse and original use of the medium employed by the two artists working in different fields. Introducing Kim's new three-dimensional paintings, and Shin's recent works using 'jesmonite' as a medium initially released in spring 2021 coupled with her new soap sculptures, the exhibition also serves as an opportunity to re-recognize the old notional categories of painting and sculpture.

Working and living between London and Seoul, Shin has exhibited in Europe's leading art museums, including the British Museum, and for about 25 years, has been visualizing temporality through soap's medium characteristics to uncover the gaps and differences caused by the translation between cultures and materials from different times and spaces. Her recent work involving jesmonite as a sculpture material has shown a remarkable result once again. Since 2017, she has expanded her practice into ceramics and glass, and the *Megalith Series* currently exhibited at the Princessehof National Museum of Ceramics is also ceramic work. While Shin questions and deconstructs absolute value that seem immutable from materials, Kim turns to the invisible and pursues absolute space and its unchanging essence, leading us to a meditative and poetic world. He has studied the physical properties of the picture plane in painting and epoxy resin for about thirty years. Through its transparency, he creates a unique world that captures a tranquil and infinite space filled with light and energy in the plane. It conveys the reverberation and energy of light that we can accommodate with our senses through traces of myriad differences and the language of silence in stationary time.

Through their works, the exhibition focuses on the artistic creativity and vitality created between *matière* and form, matter and mind, and the temporality transcending them. It enables us to experience the realm where materiality emerges, ambiguous traces between presence and absence, and new thoughts beyond boundaries.

The exhibition consists of Kim's *Who likes Colors?* series (2022), *Delve into the Profound* series (2022), and *Mirror* series (2021), and Shin's *Abstract Matter* series (2021), the latest soap sculpture *Petrified Time* series (2021), and

planar works of *Written in soap* series (2007) and *Painting* series (2014). *Abstract Matter* series is a flat sculpture in the form of painting (according to the artist) made of jesmonite, a relatively new material in sculpture, and an atypical sculpture recalling ancient murals, part of old buildings, or abstract paintings, paying attention to accumulated traces and weathering marks. They are the 'incidents' in which the artist returns to the origin of form, and the form emerges from sculptural matter. The material itself is an abstract and new sculptural form implied by its materiality.

The works on view - not only three-dimensional sculptures in space but also flat sculptures and 'paintings as a volumetric entity' hung on the wall in a traditional display mode - demonstrate multilateral traits and occupy the space in their respective ways. The scope of this exhibition will expand further by speculating forms and the matter deviating from the forms themselves while facing the work as traces of matter or distinct figuration.

For Shin and Kim, who have been dealing with soap and resin, respectively, as their work medium for a long time, each materiality forms the basis of their work and speculates the realms of sculpture and painting. Shin has closely woven the relationship between form and matter in temporality. Since 1998, she has been drawing attention as a 'soap artist' by using soap meticulously (yet incompletely) to create Buddha statues, Western classical sculptures, ceramics, and things that are representative of certain cultures. The work translates historical relics and artworks prone to wear and vanish over time, utilizing soap as a medium that easily deforms and disappears depending on the surrounding conditions emphasizing the material specificity in her work. In addition to the problems of presentation and authenticity from a replica or original copy, the physicality of soap, a daily consumable used as a substituting material for sculpture, conflicts with the authority of sculptural form and questions the iconic or absolute value of relics, and temporality and civilization.

As evident in the latest *Petrified Time* series, she symbolically reproduces relics that yield value to disappearing materials by putting effort into unsustainable things such as carefully gilding or drawing on the soap. Meanwhile, in the *Abstract Matter* series, the *matière* liberated from such means and forms reveals its abstract materiality and becomes the protagonist.

In this exhibition, her works establish a connection between specific shapes such as ancient statues and ceramics that she has been executing so far with planar forms and abstract sculptural matters. The soap sculptures in the *Translation* series appropriate the original works that exist. In *Weather Project* and *Toilet Project*, the *matière* of the sculptures, soap, reveals its materiality in the shape of worn-out and distorted as people continue using them as soap. Subsequently, in *Ruinscape* (2018), reminiscent of an ancient historic site, the materiality of soap that exists even after vanishing over time manifests in a built environment, revealing the traces of weathering and disappearing form as a material of sculpture. In earlier soap sculptures, as always in Western aesthetics, if the material held secondary and only a mediating role in developing forms, inversely, the form returns to materiality and appears as the material's trace constituting the form itself. Such workflow is evident in the soap plane series in this exhibition. The planar soap works consist of a 'drawing' series created by the naturally split lines of its surface and a 'painting' series like faint traces. They are the vestige of *matière* separated from its form.

More broadly, the *Abstract Matter* series shows the material used itself as the sculptural surface by casting jesmonite, a sculptural method, without references to any shape from the beginning. The work thus far has shown traces and disappearance of matter through weathering and deformation over time, but now it is reversed where we witness from the origin that form emerges from matter.

Just as the crushed soap bottle has translated into bronze relics, Shin relooks anew at things thrown away or

disappeared. She casts jesmonite in a mold made by discarded rubber plates, styrofoam, and glass plates. Jesmonite is a non-toxic water-based acrylic resin developed as an alternative to existing resin, which can express many textures by mixing dyes and various ingredients. As a result of applying paints and mixing pigments such as pulverized stone, iron powder, gilt, and silver leaf on the inner surface of the mold, an unexpected effect emerges like an abstract painting. After a laborious process of grinding the surface relatively flat, it appears ancient and corroded due to unforeseen pleats, crumples, and tears. As if it were a trace of overlapping on parchment, we can see the compressed space-time arises from the old because they derive from the traces remaining in ruins, the boundaries between what remains and disappears, and thoughts on the passage of time. Rather than deliberately conceiving a form, she creates as if it were born by containing an extended history and condensing its duration. The artist allowed the material to create its own form with minimal sculptural intervention. Unlike those produced per representation intent, materials generate forms by their own abstraction and coincidence. In this regard, Shin responds, *"As I eliminate sculptural expressions and existing forms, in turn, it reaches the realm of abstract painting."* Rather than try creating something entirely new, rethinking and reinterpreting the existing is a novelty for her.

Sculptures that have been with human civilization were not distinguished from engraving or depicting long before the field of sculpture was established, thus painting and sculpture are much closely related, regardless of their conventions. Unlike Shin, Kim Hyunsik begins the work with a flat picture plane, the traditional painting surface, but speculates it through a repetitive three-dimensional work process of solidifying, scraping, or etching, expanding the boundaries of painting. When comparing how their works are displayed, Shin's jesmonite work dilates the space beyond the frame while Kim's frame contains space within the plane and creates depth.

At first glance, Kim Hyunsik's work is smooth and transparent, and the light and colors vary depending on viewpoint. The monochrome picture plane by the simple composition of lines and colors surprisingly leads the gaze into an unceasing abyss within its frame. He has been working for years on creating space in the plane as a new methodology in contemporary painting. It assumes the flatness of painting. He pours resin into the frame, hardens it flat, and then scrapes numerous lines with awls. The grooves are revealed in thin color lines after applying pigments on the surface and wiping them off. He repeats the same process several times in a meditative manner. As a result, countless lines, and the fine gaps between lines and layers, the in-between spaces emerge.

The lines consciously drawn by him ultimately result in uncontrollable differences among the myriad gaps and infinite recurrence. Matters and spacetime influence one another. A beautiful and profound place is created by the interaction of light in its reprised reflections and passages through the materiality of transparent resins and pigments. As an incident in which the minute gaps contain the movement of light and seize the time, critic Hong Ga Yi says that Kim's work is an artistic practice on light and 'optical physical aesthetics.' The movement of light inherent in the spaces between layers is comparable to the cosmic principles by light energy wavelengths. On the other hand, the stopped time directs to the origin, not the object that changes in continuous time in reality. It is both a shadow of the essence and a vitality embracing the universe. As the title of the work, *Delve into the Profound*, points to, Kim says that the unknown transparent space in the painting is the 'space of profundity' that embraces everything. *"Profundity (玄) is a rhythm that flows between the essence and its revealed phenomenon, and is a colorless space containing light."* Such deep territory within the plane is a trace of nothingness and the origin that cannot be reached as it perpetually slips between presence and absence.

He reifies such intricacy visually. In other words, through the physical phenomenon of matter and modus operandi, he presents before our eyes the play of phenomenal differences transitioned to the realm of the mind as if it were

an impossible presence of inexistent being. Apart from metaphysics and scientific understanding, we can perceive the infinite space created by differences, not a mere stagnant and empty space, but the resonance of light transmitted in silence, the sense of movement it generates, and the vigor of life. What he creates is a place of immersion and mediation, and an experience of time different from the secular world. His work is a new type of painting that embodies the movement of the substance itself by detouring the illusion of representation on the surface. Amid the noise of reality now, he still has found a space calm yet animate in small picture planes. They reconceive the category of painting, encompass the aesthetics of the East and the West, and prompt us to think beyond the visible.

While wearing out, casting, hardening resin or jesmonite, unmolding, and engraving, some unknowns leave traces, and every incident bears an imprint. At the junction of static and dynamic times, it becomes an unstable trace that cannot fully exist from its unreachable origin as perpetually repeating differences that exist but are invisible.

Writing | KANG Juyeon Gallery JJ Director

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### 김현식 약력 소개

김현식은 1965년 홍익대학교 미술대학 회화과를 졸업하였고 현재 서울과 울산을 기반으로 활동 중이다. 그는 회화 평면 속에 무한한 깊이의 공간을 담아내면서 새로운 현대 회화를 구축하고 현재 미술계에 크게 반향을 일으키고 있다. 2000년부터 서울을 중심으로 런던의 마고모던아트(Mauger Modern Art), 브뤼셀 아트로프트(Art Loft), 중국 등 국내외에서 다양한 개인전을 열었으며, 호림아트센터, 부산시립미술관, 어메이현대미술관(중국) 등에서 열린 다수의 단체전에 참여했다. 2019 아트부산 어워즈를 수상하였으며, 국립현대미술관과 광주시립미술관에 작품이 소장되어 있다.

### 신미경 약력 소개

신미경(1967~)은 서울대학교 미술대학 및 동 대학원 조소과를 졸업하고 1998년 런던 슬레이드미술대학 대학원에서 조소로 졸업했다. 2017년에는 영국 왕립예술대학교에서 유리와 세라믹 분야의 석사 학위를 취득했다. 그의 조각 작업은 비누를 매체로 질료와 형상 사이를 오가면서, 시간성과 문명에 관해 질문한다. 서울과 런던을 오가며 국제 무대에서 활동하고 있는 작가는 영국을 비롯한 세계 각국에서 30여회의 개인전을 열었으며, 런던의 영국박물관, 사치갤러리, 빅토리아&앨버트박물관, 스웨덴국립미술관, 한국의 국립현대미술관 등 국내외 주요한 기관에서 열린 단체전에 참여했다. 작가의 작품은 국내외 우수한 미술관에 소장되어 있으며, 작가는 문예진흥기금을 비롯해 국내외에서 15여 차례 수상한 경력을 가지고 있다.

[대표 이미지]



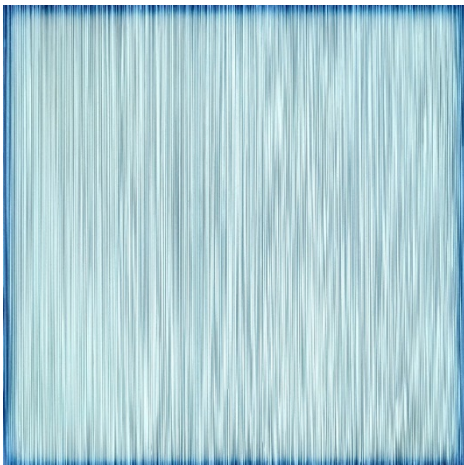
SHIN Meekyoung, Abstract Matter 0024, 2020, Jesmonite, Gild with White gold and 24k gold, 56 x 45 x 3.5cm



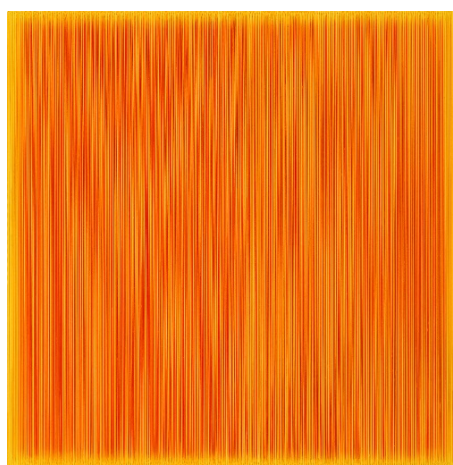
SHIN Meekyoung, Petrified Time Series 002, 2021, Soap, Gild with White gold and 24k gold, Varnish 20 x 9 x 9cm



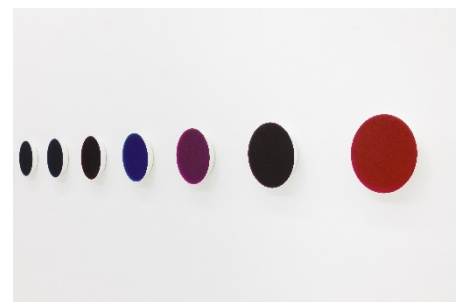
SHIN Meekyoung, Abstract Matter 0049, 2021, Jesmonite, Glided copper, 93 x 46 x 6.5cm



KIM Hyunsik, Delve into the profound(B), 2022, Acrylic on epoxy resin, Wooden frame, 54 x 54 x 7cm



KIM Hyunsik, Who likes yellow color?, 2022, Acrylic on epoxy resin, Wooden frame, 80 x 80 x 7cm



KIM Hyunsik, Mirror, 2021, Epoxy resin on resin color, Resin frame, 19(r) x 4(d)cm



## [Biography]

### KIM Hyunsik

b.1965

#### Education

1992 BFA, Department of Painting, Hongik University, Seoul

#### Selected Solo Exhibition (2010-)

- 2021 *Profundity*, Hakgojae Gallery, Seoul
- 2018 *Light Reverberates*, Hakgojae Gallery, Seoul  
*Who likes Blue?*, Noblesse Collection, Seoul
- 2016 *Who likes K Colors?*, Hakgojae Gallery, Shanghai  
*Who likes Colors?*, Art LOFT, Brussels
- 2013 *In Between Spaces*, Mauger Modern Art, London
- 2012 *Line-Zen*, Gallery Lee & Bae, Busan, Korea
- 2011 *KIM HYUNSIK*, FN Art Space, Seoul
- 2010 *Illusion*, Gallery LVS, Seoul

#### Selected Group Exhibition (2014-)

- 2021 *Black; encounter*, Grimson gallery, Seoul  
*Luxembourg Art Week*, Leebauwens Gallery, Luxembourg  
*Emotional Materials*, Art' Loft, Leebauwens Gallery, Brussels  
*The Luster of Styles*, Eul Gallery, Dague, Korea  
*PARS PRO TOT*, Cian Art Museum, Yeongcheon, Korea  
*Kiaf 2021*, Seoul
- 2020 *Transcending Colors*, Gallery Lee & Bae, Busan, Korea  
*21.2 Century*, Hakgojae Gallery, Seoul  
*The Showroom*, Hakgojae Gallery, Seoul  
*ART BASEL OVR*, Hakgojae Gallery, Seoul
- 2019 *MOVEMENT*, Grimson Gallery, Seoul  
*Speical Exhibition for the 20th Anniversary of the Opening of the Museum, Talk about Pottery Tomorrow*, Yeongam Pottery Museum, Yeongam, Korea  
*Art Brussels 2019*, Brussels  
*Art Basel 2019*, HongKong  
*Asia Now*, Avenue Hoche, Paris  
*Taipei Dangdai*, Taipei  
*Kiaf 2019*, Seoul
- 2018 *Transcend Time*, Gallery Grimson, Seoul  
*Asia Now*, Avenue Hoche, Paris  
*Kiaf 2018*, Seoul
- 2017 *Art Miami-Korean Art Show*, The Art Miami Pavilion; The Context Pavilion, Miami, U.S.  
*Asia Now*, Avenue Hoche, Paris  
*Art New York*, Pier 94, New York  
*Art Paris*, Grand Palais, Paris
- 2016 *1st International Exhibition of Contemporary Art of E'mei, E'mei Contemporary Art Museum, E'mei, China*  
*Dansaek Dagam*, Gallery Lee & Bae, Busan, Korea
- 2015 *Made in the EAST*, MDZ Art Gallery, Knokke, Belgium
- 2014 *Korea Tomorrow*, Dongdaemun Design Plaza & Park, Seoul  
*Blue & D Major*, Ilju & Sunhwa Gallery, Seoul  
*Insight into Life*, Soul Art Space, Busan, Korea

*Deep in Thought and Colors*, Gallery Lee & Bae, Busan, Korea

## Awards

Art Busan Awards(2019)

## Collections

Government Art Bank National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art(Seoul), Gwangju Museum of Art

## SHIN Meekyoung

b.1967

### Education

2017	MA, Royal College of Art, London
1998	MFA, Sculpture, Slade School of Fine Art in University College London, London
1993	MA, Sculpture, Seoul National University, Seoul
1990	BA, Sculpture, Seoul National University, Seoul

### Selected Solo Exhibition (2015-)

2021	<i>Megalith</i> , Ceramic Museum Princessehof, Leeuwarden, Netherlands <i>Abstract Matters</i> , CR Collective, Seoul
2020	<i>In the Shadow of Time</i> , Art' Loft, Leebauwens Gallery, Brussels
2019	<i>Weather</i> , Barakat London
2018	<i>The Abyss of Time</i> , Arko Art Centre, Seoul <i>Ancient Future</i> , Wooyang Museum of Art, Gyeongju, Korea
2016	<i>Meekyoung Shin Solo Show</i> , Space K, Gwachun, Korea <i>Cabinet of Curiosities</i> , Hakgojae Gallery, Shanghai, China
2015	<i>Translation Paintings</i> , Asia House, London <i>Painting Series</i> , Hada Contemporary, London

### Selected Group Exhibition (2016-)

2021	<i>5518. 8880</i> , CU Coventry, UK <i>Fragrance &amp; Nostalgia: Remembrance of Things Past</i> , Asian Culture Centre, Gwangju, Korea <i>The Chronical of Lost Time</i> , Seoul National University Museum, Seoul <i>Loss, everything that Happens to me</i> , Daejeon City Museum, Daejeon, Korea <i>Emotional Materials</i> , Art' Loft, Leebauwens Gallery, Brussels
2020	<i>Korean Eye 2020 Creativity and Daydream</i> , The state Hermitage Museum St. Petersburg / Saatchi Gallery, London <i>Say the Unsayable: 10th Yeosu International Art Festival</i> , Expo, Yeosu, Korea <i>Unbreakable: Women in Glass</i> , Fondazione Berengo Art Space, Venice, Italy <i>Inspiration-Iconic Works</i> , National Museum, Stockholm
2019	<i>Start x Roland Mouret</i> , Saatchi Gallery, London <i>Pick Me</i> , Gyeonggi Museum of Modern Art, Ansan, Korea <i>King Sejoing and Music Chiwhapyeong</i> , Presidential Archives, Sejong City, Korea <i>Age of Classics!</i> , Le Musee Saint-Raymond, Toulouse, France
2018	<i>Material</i> , Cob gallery, London
2017	<i>In Motion: Ceramic Reflections in Contemporary art</i> , Ceramic Museum Princessehof, Leeuwarden, Netherlands <i>Korean eye: Perceptual Trace</i> , Saatchi Gallery, London <i>Korean's Spirit</i> , Artveras Contemporary, Geneva <i>Korea Contemporary Ceramic</i> , Victoria & Albert Museum, London <i>The emerging and the established</i> , Christie's, London
2016	<i>Club Monster</i> , Asian Culture Center, Gwangju, Korea

*Changwon Sculpture Biennale*, Sungsan Art Hall, Changwon, Korea

*As the moon waxes and wanes*, MMCA Gwacheon 30 years, National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Gwacheon, Korea

*La Terre Le Feu L'esprit*, Grand Palais, Paris

*Please return to Busan Port*, Vestfossen Kunstlaboratorium, Norway

*Ceramique Contemporaine Coreenne*, Bernardaud Foundation, Limoges, France

### **Awards**

Seoul Cultural Foundation Fund(2016, 2021), Korean Art Council Fund(2012, 2017, 2019), Prudential Eye Awards, Best Emerging Artist Using Sculpture, Singapore(2015), Research&Development Fund, Art Council England, London(2015), Korean Artist Prize, National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea(2013), GFA, Art Council England, London(2012)

### **Collections**

National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art(Seoul), LEEUM Museum of Art, Houston Art Museum, Museum of Art(Seoul National University), Painting Studio(Tokyo), Yongsan Council, Mongin Art Centre, Seoul City Museum, British Art Council, Bristol Museum&Art Gallery, Princessehof Museum, Maeil Dairies