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Haegue Yang

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THE ART NEWSPAPER *DAILY*



Haegue Yang, *Lingering Nous*, 2016.
Courtesy Kanal Centre Pompidou, Bruxelles

"A Bruxelles, le troisième volet de la préfiguration du Kanal Pompidou vient de démarrer"

The Art newspaper Daily - Jeudi 24 Janvier 2019

https://daily.artnewspaper.fr/viewer?file=https://firebasestorage.googleapis.com/v0/b/webident-60692.appspot.com/o/20190124%2F1c6925ed-560c-48e3-b4ce-46118225159a_daily_fr.pdf?alt=media

À BRUXELLES, LE TROISIÈME VOLET DE LA PRÉFIGURATION DU KANAL POMPIDOU VIENT DE DÉMARRER

Le troisième et dernier volet de la phase de préfiguration du Kanal Centre Pompidou à Bruxelles s'est ouvert hier, avant la fermeture du site cet été en vue du chantier de sa rénovation. Quatre nouvelles expositions viennent d'y prendre place, à commencer par « De simples constructions », exploration d'un pan de la sculpture moderne allant du constructivisme au minimalisme et à ses déclinaisons contemporaines, à l'instar de l'œuvre monumentale de Haegue Yang. Dans les anciens locaux administratifs se loge « Bureaux fantôme » qui rassemble les réalisations de plus de soixante-dix designers internationaux. Une douzaine d'agences recréent des espaces imaginaires de travail, comme une lecture transversale du mobilier et des objets de ces cinquante dernières années. Le cinéma expérimental apparaît lui sous la forme d'installations, l'une de l'Américaine Ericka Beckman (*The Super-8 Trilogy*), l'autre de la Hollandaise Manon de Boer avec sa pièce *one, two, many* (2012) reconfigurée pour l'occasion. **B. M.**

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112 views | Sep 10, 2018, 10:18am

Haegue Yang Waxes Poetic About Her Exhibition with Fondazione Furla



Barry Samaha Contributor



Haegue Yang. FONDAZIONE FURLA

Last Friday, [Fondazione Furla](#) unveiled “Tightrope Walking and Its Wordless Shadow,” a new exhibition by Korean artist Haegue Yang at the [La Triennale di Milano](#), one of the biggest design museums in Milan.

Created in 2008 by [Furla](#), the Milan-based accessories manufacturer, Fondazione Furla is meant to showcase the company’s relation with the art community (read: a ploy typical of fashion brands, especially Italian ones). In 2017, it presented “Time after Time, Space after Space,” which was a showcase of the works of five artists and was part of a new program called [Furla Series](#).

This year, the foundation decided to focus on solely Yang’s oeuvre for the second iteration, which is officially called Furla Series #02. Born and raised in Seoul, Korea, she is a highly respected figure in the industry. She splits her time between her home city and Germany, where she’s a professor at Städelschule in Frankfurt, her alma mater.

Barry Samaha

«*Haegue Yang Waxes Poetic About Her Exhibition with Fondazione Furla*»
Forbes, September 10, 2018.

How would you describe your exhibit “Tightrope Walking and Its Wordless Shadow” at La Triennale?

It is, first of all, my first institutional solo exhibition in Italy. There are various types of works: old and new, simple and complicated, small and big, etc. This show should show the type of movement I have done so far. And it also shows where I am now. Also, we selected works that are experiential. People might know my work from social media, but this show offers an experience. The exhibition is built with sensorial elements, visually challenging materials through its subtlety or performativity. Maybe I am over interpreting, or maybe I should consider further what it means to be international. My professional life is full of tension, being a foreign figure in each place. Artists always have been an alien in society and I am both female and foreign—double “F”.

Even if I often don’t explicitly express the issues around us, reality is my ground. I hope that this show provides this joyful, contemplative, yet critical dimension of reading our times.

What other projects do you have coming up?

I am working on many projects for the future. But right now I’m focusing on finalizing another ambitious project, which is a bilingual anthology. This volume will include 15 essays and conversations from 2006 to 2018. It will be very important resource about my work. I know that it is not the most popular gesture to provide over 400 pages to read, but we wanted to demonstrate the seriousness of this exhibition at La Triennale. The show is backed by this intellectual material, which can be born only within the serious engagement by the Furla Foundation. There are also some projects coming up in Montpellier, France, Singapore, New York, San Francisco, Seoul, Miami, Toronto, and Manila, just to name a few. I am not trying to impress you. It is such an overwhelming privilege to be active in various places, but I need to be well balanced on my tightrope, as you can imagine.



Haegue Yang's "Tightrope Walking and Its Wordless Shadow" at La Triennale di Milano. FONDAZIONE FURLA

How did this partnership with Fondazione Furla come about?

As usual, I was contacted, meaning someone knocked on my door. And it was Bruna Roccasalva. It is always miraculous to me how people, like Bruna, are able to select someone to work with. For me, selection is not just picking a person. In fact, you must have a vision about art and artists. It is not only about one show. You wish to create significance together through an adventure together. It is a journey, an epic journey. I liked the fact that Bruna and the Furla Foundation were serious enough to contact me early on. Time means a lot today, as we all know. They brought precious and sufficient time to let something develop. It is rare today, but very important.

How do you feel about being a Korean artist showing in Italy?

I always feel much more Korean outside of Korea. In Korea, I always feel more foreign. We all know this situation. Meaning, we are always more native when we are outside of our own border. For this kind of aspect of how our identity gets reversed. I brought on a Korean figure, a late Korean composer, whose name is Isang Yun. There will be two musicians who will play his music at the opening, and his music will be a trigger to perform the sculptures during the exhibition. He has been such a complex figure, both musically and politically. And we will contemplate together his duality in his most demanding, yet compelling music.



Haegue Yang's "Tightrope Walking and Its Wordless Shadow" at La Triennale di Milano. FONDAZIONE FURLA

Barry Samaha

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Forbes, September 10, 2018.



Haegue Yang's "Tightrope Walking and its Wordless Shadow" at La Triennale di Milano. Foto: Fondazione Furla

According to the *New York Times*, Yang's installations are marked by the way they "ply the border between sculptures fashioned from sundry materials and those made of ready-made objects." Supposedly, she brings the same sensibility to "Tightrope Walking and Its Wordless Shadow." The exhibit, which was curated by Bruna Roccasalva, is comprised of three rooms with a number of displays in each. It will be open to the public until November 4th.

Here, Yang waxes poetic about her work and collaboration with Fondazione Furla.

How would you describe your aesthetic? What are you most know for?

Well, I do have many aesthetical faces. I guess that I am known as someone who is difficult to be understood, and I can live with that. Many things in life are difficult to pin down. And I accept and acknowledge that ambiguity, as well as the slipperiness of things. I am someone who is courageous enough to say that something is elusive. I guess that art brings this clarity about elusiveness.

How would you describe the symbiosis between art and commerce?

I don't or can't describe it. I can only react to it. The best solutions are either an active one or a passive one. And I decided to be a bit passive, meaning that I chose to be naive. Yet, I work with great galleries who know how to protect and support me so I can focus on my work. It may sound like a fairytale, but one can achieve it when everyone plays together.

A talk with Haegue Yang about her first Italian solo show “Tightrope Walking and Its Wordless Shadow” curated by Bruna Roccasalva on view at La Triennale di Milano. Interview by Angelica Moschin.

From September 7 to November 4, 2018, La Triennale di Milano pays homage to the incredibly versatile oeuvre of Haegue Yang with a show that combines landmark works with new commissions to highlight recurrent themes in the artist’s career such as migration, postcolonial diasporas, enforced exile and social mobility. Over the past few years, working with nontraditional materials such as venetian blinds, clothing racks, synthetic straw, bells and graph paper, she has created a series of carefully staged installations that embrace all senses and are the results of the entanglement of politics and human passions.

Two works in particular have contributed to praise her work as greatly modest and restrained: *Sadong 30* (2006), where she resuscitated an abandoned house in Seoul to create a lyrical and deeply personal orchestration of Christmas lights, origami polyhedrons, mirrors and various electronic devices and *Series of Vulnerable Arrangements – Blind Room* (2006), where she folded black venetian blinds to convey a sense of reserve and concealment. Besides pointing to her deep engagement with the unspoken, the exhibition at La Triennale also reveals her *penchant* for the mood of melancholy – a fundamental aspect of our human condition that is intimately tied to the historical environment we live in. Here she tells us how to embrace this feeling, turn it into a powerful trigger and bravely step outside our comfort zone towards the others.



How crucial is it for you to go where you exhibit to get the atmosphere of the space and understand its surroundings? Though the idea of "studio practice" might define well what you do, you sometimes prefer to have a more "context-oriented" approach to the setting as you have a tendency to develop the largest part of your works in situ and take in the culture of the place with all your senses. How do you manage to blend those two aspects together so properly and poignantly?

I've always considered space as a crucial starting point in my career but my aim is to turn a space into a place. "Space" sounds too neutral to me; it reminds of the so-called white cube and the mode of display it implies. At a point I felt that through sculptures and installations I had to become more specific and consider whatever exhibition space I was working in more as a place. A place is a common ground that holds the potential for creating a shared experience and invites people to dwell, encounter the others and go through a series of perceptual associations that include scent, sound, light and tactility.

In Cittadella (2011) the use of venetian blinds is extensive and magnificent. As one takes a step inside the installation, is suddenly bombarded by the most diverse sensorial elements. In today's societies our waking hours are filled with a great deal of perceptual stimuli we barely pay attention to and Cittadella tries to invoke them and protect their integrity. However, these elements are not gathered to form a clearly understandable situation; they rather stand on their own in an almost purist-like way. Could you elaborate a bit further on this?

In Cittadella (2011) the use of venetian blinds is extensive and magnificent. As one takes a step inside the installation, is suddenly bombarded by the most diverse sensorial elements. In today's societies our waking hours are filled with a great deal of perceptual stimuli we barely pay attention to and Cittadella tries to invoke them and protect their integrity. However, these elements are not gathered to form a clearly understandable situation; they rather stand on their own in an almost purist-like way. Could you elaborate a bit further on this?

Cittadella is a work I conceived in 2001 and this is the third time it's been presented. It's a transitional piece where you have a series of half-transparent "cells" formed by venetian blinds suspended from the ceiling and folded almost like origami. For this exhibition we wanted the first room to be that "intro" you are referring to – something conceptual and minimal that exists prior to any chronology or categorization. When you come across Cittadella you find a room that is physically overwhelming and perceptually challenging; there are few passages you can move through quite easily but you can't penetrate the entire installation. It's literally a maze.

At a certain stage of your career you realized that non-figurative sculptures can sometimes portray a person or a personal quality better than any figurative reference and that your main interests lay in abstraction rather than illustration. Do you think your art needs to be decoded?

Representation is the use of signs that generally take the place of something else. Since ancient times representation has been deemed as natural to man and therefore necessary for people's learning and being in the world. The ability to project something human onto something that's not human at all, say, your small belongings, your car, your room etc., is a definitively human activity and to me one of the most fascinating ones. As a sculptor, I want to honor that specific human instinct by projecting narratives and feelings onto our everyday objects and achieve what I call empathy or sometimes sympathy. Even though today progress happens at a furious pace and both technology and science force us to deal with macro realities that we neither see nor touch we still rely on imagination. Does my art need to be decoded? Well, I think the liminal divide between abstraction and representation has been blurred a long time ago so I would say no. This kind of abstraction stands on her own and is generous with whomever has a desire to understand it.

Your interventions have often been praised as modest and restrained. On one hand, working on a global scale allowed you to travel a lot and perhaps quench your wanderlust but on the other it might have contributed to deepen your sense of vulnerability and melancholy. However, as an artist, you've found your own way to weave histories of human passions and fleeting places in a flux without moving much further from the innermost core of yourself which seems to be the most exquisite oriental melancholy. Don't you think that melancholy could be easily mistaken for an act of self-negation and "airtight" concealment? I know you've repeatedly warned viewers against such a reading but it's difficult not to keep bouncing back to it, especially for those who don't have a well-rounded understanding of your works.

They call it modesty, I'd rather call it ignorance or blindness on my part. On one hand I acknowledge the impossibility to communicate and fill the chasm between what I am to others and what I am to myself. But on the other I clearly see the risks of cutting myself off and not communicate at all. I think I will be truly accepted and understood by the others when I make an effort to not take their openness as a given but rather as a generative force that helps me shake free of prejudices. Of course it's not easy and it takes a great amount of bravery but I believe that's exactly what artists need to come up with. They need a feedback from the others as they deal with uncertain things that cannot be proven as true or false.





COLOGNE

Museum Ludwig

HAEGUE YANG

ETA: 1994-2018

Galerie
Chantal Crousel



The year 2006 marked a major transition in Haegue Yang's career. For her solo exhibition at Basis voor Actuele Kunst (BAK) in Utrecht, Netherlands, she created her first installation with venetian blinds and indoor appliances such as standing fans, artificial scent emitters, strobe lights, electric heaters and humidifiers. The dynamic, autonomous system of that work, *Series of Vulnerable Arrangements - Version Utrecht* (2006), and others that followed, can be read as a metaphor for a human or a social body whose elements are not always in harmony. Installed with the power cables plainly visible, the work is also extremely literal, as it wryly deconstructs the environmental conditions of indoor spaces (like museums or malls) that are designed to be "neutral" or to disappear. The anthropomorphic mise-en-scène became a hallmark of Yang's practice, as her works disrupt the fixity of the boundaries between objects (in this case, artworks) and humans, natural creatures and cultural creations.

Displacement, itinerancy, familiarity and strangeness (of meaning, of context) are Yang's enduring themes. Inside the self-enclosed nucleus made from the black venetian blinds of this first "vulnerable arrangement" was a trilogy of video essays: *Unfolding Places* (2004), *Restrained Courage* (2004) and *Squandering Negative Spaces* (2006), which are essayistic meditations on travel, solitude and wandering, with impressionistic scenes of cities, some featuring cameo-like appearances of origami figures placed in the street by Yang, with narrative voiceovers. "How many 'places' have I walked the street only 'to familiarize' them? . . . To tame myself in the world

of others, or perhaps to assimilate myself. This is a very lonely process of self-colonization," a female voice states in *Squandering Negative Spaces*.

Series of Vulnerable Arrangements - Version Utrecht was the first artwork viewers encountered in Yang's midcareer retrospective, "ETA: 1994-2018," at the Museum Ludwig in Cologne, curated by Yilmaz Dziewior with Leonie Radine, on the occasion of her being awarded the 2018 Wolfgang Hahn Prize. The exhibition featured more than 120 works that spanned—but didn't entirely encapsulate—Yang's diverse and increasingly prodigious output of the past quarter century. "ETA" examines the career of an artist in perpetual itinerancy, from the time of her first move to Germany from Korea in the early 1990s through today, when her exhibition lineup continues to span five continents.

Much of what was suggested about Yang's first decade of artistic output in this roughly chronological survey could be found in a statement affixed to the wall in the main gallery: the text-based work *Science of Communication - a Study on How to Make Myself Understood* (2000), in which she declares, "Translatability and communication are two different issues that I'm somehow interested in concurrently." Framed by Yang's rumination on language in that text was a small, dedicated gallery that looked at her works from the mid-1990s, beginning from when she was studying in Frankfurt. A glass vitrine housed works on paper including her first collages made from hardware-store catalogs and small enigmatic plaster sculptures, some created with dry pasta or metal hardware that resembles pasta, showcasing Yang's early mixture of visual, material and cultural puns. While the show resisted the historicization of Yang's works, it did allude to the contemporaneous zeitgeist of 1990s Frankfurt and to "Kontext Kunst" ("Context Art"), a term coined by curator Peter Wiebel for artists who used the strategies of institutional critique to look at the relationship between art and society.

The culmination and most iconic work of Yang's first decade remains *Storage Piece* (2004), which she initially conceived for an exhibition in London to solve the practical problem about what to do with her early works. She packaged her early pieces in bubble-wrap, or packed them into beer crates and boxes, and displays them on shipping pallets. These early works, like the artist herself, are then free to circulate around the world (the piece has been shown more than ten times, including at Museum Ludwig) while remaining within the packaging—or format—of art itself.

Though it was not represented in "ETA," another project created in 2006 represents Yang's ongoing desire to work outside of large



Opposite page

HAEGUE YANG

Series of Vulnerable Arrangements
- *Version Utrecht*
2006
Various sensory devices,
aluminum venetian blinds,
cable, dimensions variable.
Installation view of "Haegue Yang: ETA
1994–2018, 2018 Wolfgang Hahn Prize"
at Museum Ludwig, Cologne, 2018.
Copyright the artist.
Photo by Saša Fuis.
Courtesy Museum Ludwig, Cologne.

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HAEGUE YANG

"Medicine Men" series: *Hairy Noble*;
Indiscreet Other World; *A Good Hunk of*
Safety; *Out of Cave* (from left to right),
2010
Mixed-media assemblage, dimensions
variable.
Installation view of "Haegue Yang: ETA
1994–2018, 2018 Wolfgang Hahn Prize"
at Museum Ludwig, Cologne, 2018.
Copyright the artist.
Photo by Saša Fuis.
Courtesy Museum Ludwig, Cologne.

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HAEGUE YANG

Mountains of Encounter
2008
Aluminum venetian blinds,
powder-coated aluminum
hanging structure, steel wire rope,
moving spotlights, floodlights and
cable, dimensions variable.
Installation view of "Haegue Yang: ETA
1994–2018, 2018 Wolfgang Hahn Prize"
at Museum Ludwig, Cologne, 2018.
Copyright the artist.
Photo by Saša Fuis.
Courtesy Museum Ludwig, Cologne.

institutions and traditional exhibition spaces. Staged in an abandoned house (formerly her grandparents') in Incheon, South Korea, the "Sadong 30" installation—which marked the beginning of a series called "Non-Indépliables," (2006/2009–10), represented in "ETA" through a series of photographs—featured origami figures and a drying rack covered in fabric and placed in a dilapidated room. Similarly, since 2008, she has staged performances of *The Malady of Death*, featuring women reading passages from Marguerite Duras's novella of the same title, in Minneapolis, Seoul, Kassel, Hong Kong and most recently in a cave in Yucatán, Mexico.

The importance of historical female figures to Yang's practice was alluded to in the installation *5, Rue Saint-Benoît* (2008), a structure of aluminum frames—corresponding in size to various items of furniture, such as the boiler, shower, stove and washing machine in Yang's apartment—on wheels, with colorful blinds, strands of lights and fabric inside. The largest gallery featured *Mountains of Encounter* (2008), an installation of red blinds and a wandering spotlight that refers to the story of Kim San, a Korean communist whose life was recorded by American journalist Nym Wales (Helen Foster Snow). However, other female figures were absent, such as German activist and Green Party co-founder Petra Kelly (the subject of the installation *Lethal Love*, 2008, which was not shown) and Sophie Taeuber-Arp, whose name was not mentioned in relation to the bell-covered *Sonicwear – Scarf with Mitten Ends, Nickel Plated #1* (2013), though the "Sonicwear" series had been developed for a project at Aubette 1928, a cultural hall that Taeuber-Arp had co-designed in Strasbourg.

The catalogue raisonné published for "ETA" gives a sense of how formidable Yang's output has been since 2006. More than 1,270 of the 1,444 listed works date since then—spanning years like 2012, when Yang showed in more than 40 international exhibitions. One also gets a fuller sense of how Yang works in typologies, like the free-standing figures on wheeled armatures dressed in colorful electric cables, light bulbs, weavings, tinsel strands,



wigs and eclectic fabric pieces that began with *Series of Vulnerable Arrangements – Seven Basel Lights* (2007) and then evolved into the more anthropomorphic (sometimes transvestite- or shamanic-looking) "Medicine Man" (2010) and "Warrior Believer Lover" (2011) series, through to the bell-clad "Sonic Dances" (2013–) and the "The Intermediates" (2017), made with artificial straw. (In the exhibition, selections from these interrelated series were shown in a large gallery divided by triangular-shaped half walls.) The show also surveyed the entire history of the "Trustworthies" series (now in the 400s), from the first two iterations, created in 2010, comprising horizontal rows of envelope security paper, to the increasingly more varied patterns of "waves," "refractions," "turbans," and, more recently, hugely elaborate arrangements with gold vinyl shapes adhered to the wall. The earlier "Trustworthies" works were paired in one gallery with "Can Cosies" (2010–), another wildly iterative series of colorful weavings that encase canned food items—objects that move through the world, in Yang's descriptive comparison, like homeless people.

Like most of her post-2006 bodies of work, Yang is constantly reinventing her own series in formal terms. She often begins with a simple structure that evolves over time, in a typological progression of variations that further enhances her works' species-like or creature-like qualities. This sense of her works resembling "beings" (viral, animal or human) remains underdeveloped in the contemporary context of an emergent era of "smart devices" like automated vacuum cleaners, autonomous vehicles and robotic nurses—as machines supplant not only human labor but inspire human emotions of comfort, empathy, curiosity and delight, suggesting a return to the ritualistic properties of objects, and a shift in the anthropocentric hierarchy of human-culture-nature.

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« Museum Ludwig, Cologne », *e-flux*, April 16, 2018.
<http://www.e-flux.com/announcements/169387/haegue-yangeta-1994-2018/>

e-flux

Museum Ludwig, Cologne

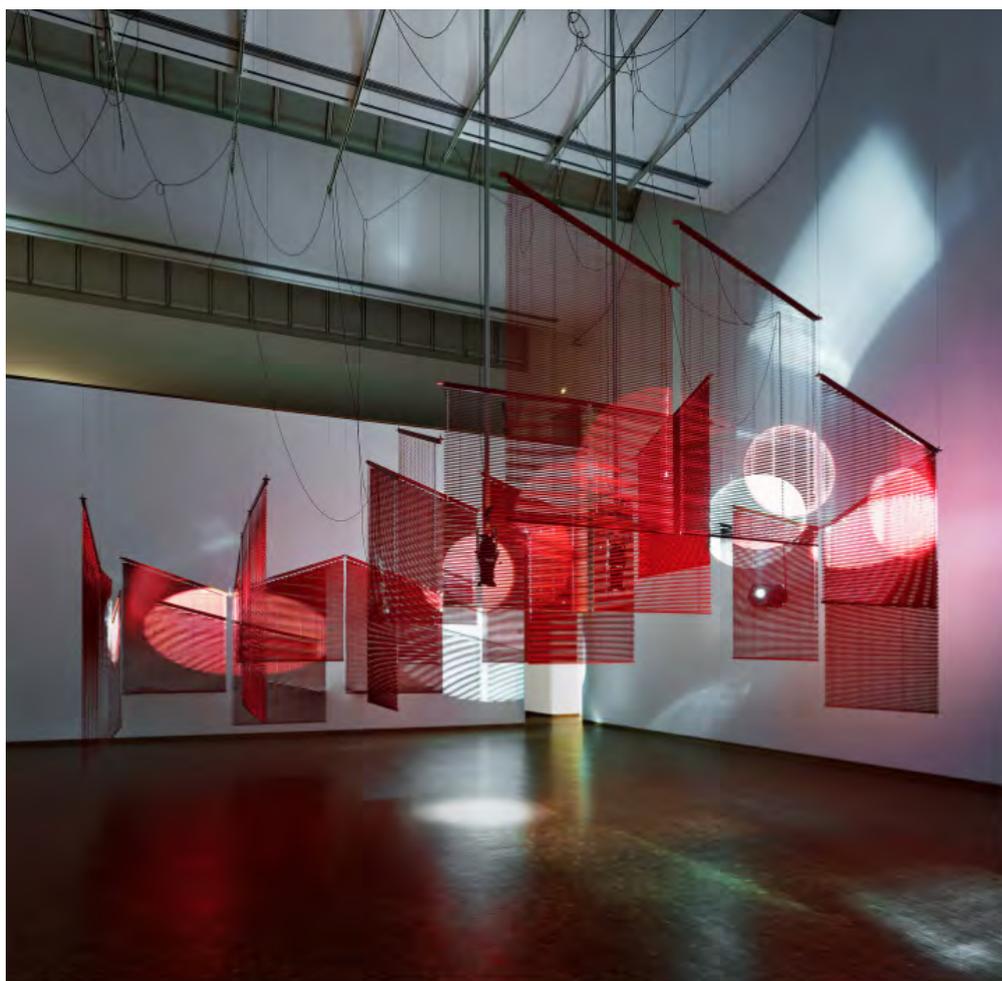
Haegue Yang
ETA 1994–2018
2018 Wolfgang Hahn Prize
April 18–August 12, 2018

Wolfgang Hahn Prize award ceremony and opening: April 17, 6:30–10pm

Museum Ludwig, Cologne
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Haegue Yang, *Mountains of Encounter*, 2008, Aluminum venetian blinds, powder-coated aluminum hanging structure, steel wire rope, moving spotlights, floodlights, cable, Dimensions variable, Museum Ludwig, Köln, joint acquisition with the Gesellschaft für Moderne Kunst on the occasion of the 2018 Wolfgang Hahn Prize
Installation view of Haegue Yang: ETA 1994–2018, Museum Ludwig, Cologne, 2018, © Haegue Yang, Photo: Museum Ludwig, Saša Fuis, Cologne

In 2018, the Gesellschaft für Moderne Kunst am Museum Ludwig will recognize Haegue Yang for her extraordinary body of work with the Wolfgang Hahn Prize. The Museum Ludwig will showcase the remarkable versatility of her entire oeuvre in the artist's first-ever survey exhibition with over 120 works ranging from action-based objects from the 1990s to lacquer paintings, photographs, works on paper, video essays, anthropomorphic sculptures, performative pieces, and large-scale installations.

The abbreviation ETA stands for "estimated time of arrival," among other things. Thus, the exhibition title points to an artistic career in transit and the constant itineracy of an artist who maintains studios in Seoul and Berlin and has exhibited internationally since 1994.

The exhibition will begin with Yang's first venetian blind installation from her 2006 *Series of Vulnerable Arrangements*—the 2006 *Version Utrecht*, an immersive and sensorial experience unfolding from a composition of various materials and the simultaneous use of wind, scents, light, and heat. Within this arrangement, video essays document the artist's travels through cities around the world and convey feelings of home, isolation, and dislocation associated with her itineracy in quite personal commentaries.

One of the first rooms will feature early and in some cases reconstructed works that reveal Yang's examination of Western art history from Duchamp to Fluxus and tendencies of Institutional Critique as well as the then-current Context Art. As in her first few exhibitions in the 1990s, these works will be staged or ironically shown in display cases, like in an archive.

A central part of the exhibition is *Storage Piece*. This key work was created in 2004 out of financial need and an acute lack of space as a collection of packaged works on shipping pallets. The work has since been exhibited in several configurations, and its arrangement will also change at regular intervals in the Cologne exhibition—a reflection of Yang's consideration of transitory states. Furthermore, it was an important contribution to Conceptual Art in the mid-2000s, as well as a striking commentary on a rapidly changing art market and the increasing commodification of art.

Yang's well-known anthropomorphic light sculptures will be represented in the exhibition with the "Medicine Men" series from 2010, among other works. These consist of a variety of materials: functional and industrially manufactured everyday objects such as clothing racks, light bulbs, electric cables, and party wigs. Yang herself refers to these sculptures as "shamans" or "transvestites," thus pointing to the ambiguous gender and social roles that medicine men take on in nature religions. They also pose questions of exoticism and cultural identity which run throughout Yang's work.

Yang will also continue her series "VIP's Union" (2001–) with a version for Cologne. Well-known local figures—VIPs from different areas of society such as culture, sports, business, and politics—will be invited to lend their favorite chair or table for the duration of the exhibition. This collection of different pieces of furniture will portray the local society and its domestic preferences.

The 12-meter-high DC Hall will feature two works consisting of blinds, *Mountains of Encounter* (2008) and *Sol LeWitt Upside Down – K123456, Expanded 1078 Times, Doubled and Mirrored* (2015). For the first time, two very different types of venetian blind installations will be juxtaposed in a single room: while *Mountains of Encounter* marked the beginning of a series of structurally complex compositions relating to historical events and personalities in Yang's oeuvre, *Sol LeWitt Upside Down – K123456, Expanded 1078 Times, Doubled and Mirrored* is based on a cubic structure by the Minimalist artist Sol LeWitt, which Yang not only physically expands, but also conceptually condenses, doubles, mirrors, and finally turns upside down.

With her diverse oeuvre, Yang adeptly avoids clear attributions. Her works demonstrate elements of Institutional Critique and are conceptual as well as rich in cultural and historical references, while simultaneously sensually complex and emotionally charged. Across over 1500 square meters of exhibition space, this comprehensive retrospective's spatial scenography will echo the conceptual dynamics of the works, lending the exhibition the quality of a Gesamtkunstwerk—harmonious yet full of dissonances.

« Museum Ludwig, Cologne », *e-flux*, April 16, 2018.
<http://www.e-flux.com/announcements/169387/haegue-yangeta-1994-2018/>

e-flux

Curator: Yilmaz Dziewior

Curatorial Project Management: Leonie Radine

Biography

Haegue Yang (*1971 in Seoul) lives and works in Berlin and Seoul. Since 2017, she has been teaching at the Städtelschule, where she herself began her studies under Georg Herold in 1994. She was twice represented at the Venice Biennale in 2009 (in the programmatic exhibition *fare mundi* and in a solo exhibition in the Korean pavilion), and in 2012 she participated in DOCUMENTA (13).

Catalogue

A catalogue raisonné *Haegue Yang: ETA 1994–2018* will be published alongside the opening of the exhibition with a text by Chus Martínez, a conversation between Haegue Yang and Yilmaz Dziewior, and a biographical essay by Leonie Radine.

The exhibition is generously supported by the Kunststiftung NRW, the Peter and Irene Ludwig Foundation, Michael Zimmer, and the cultural department of the Embassy of the Republic of Korea. We would like to thank the Peter and Irene Ludwig Foundation for their additional support for the program of music and films.

PARIS

Haegue Yang

GALERIE CHANTAL CROUSEL

The themes that Haegue Yang investigates in her recent work—the sixth sense, grafts between the natural and technological realms—are always seen as in process. In the end she leaves her own thoughts regarding them unresolved, as signaled by her recurrent use of the adverb *quasi* in titles of works and shows over the past decade or so: *Quasi-MB*, 2006–2007, and “Quasi-Pagan Minimal” and “Quasi-Pagan Modern” (both 2016). This prefix indicates the incomplete attainment of a condition, a property, or an identity, suggesting that the status of the work is suspended and calling attention to a lack, a

structural imperfection. Distributed through the gallery space in “Quasi-ESP,” her recent show, works from three series entered into a dialogue, opening up to unexpected associations, for example in variations of the color yellow: faded in the case of straw, amber in the varnish for the wood of the paintings, gilded in the Chromolux paper of the collages.

In “The Intermediates,” 2015–, a series of sculptures produced in Korea out of artificial straw, Yang explores that material’s richness. Fake straw appears identical to real straw, yet it has no odor and does not rot or decay. Used for clothing as well as furnishings, this ersatz substance is at once solid and light, and unites a morphological pliability with a sense of precariousness and the unfinished.

While one might associate straw with rustic craftsmanship, basketry, and furnishings in a country house, it does not carry any specific cultural identity. Here, Yang let her artificial straw assume a range of heteroge-

neous forms. On the one hand, she used it to compose open and serpentine hanging sculptures that nearly touch the ground, as if performing a dance step. Their sinuosity gives the inorganic material a vital breath, at times vaguely threatening, as in the black *The Intermediate—Tinted Serpent Creature* (all works 2017), which, with its tentacles, seems as if it might at any moment free itself from the hooks anchoring it to the ceiling. In *The Intermediate—Psychic Turbine Vents Ball*, on the other hand, one saw the closed form of the sphere, deprived of any possibility of rotation by the excrescences, such as aluminum ventilators, that cover it. Other pieces with turbine vents had previously been exhibited outdoors; now, vainly awaiting a puff of wind, they hung inertly. Sometimes the extraneous elements were more discreet, such as the television antennae that rise up among artificial plant stalks in *The Intermediate—Antenna Basket on Rings*, placed atop a straw vase in the shape of elephant ears.

The elephant ear is a familiar motif in Yang’s work, also seen in stylized form in *Elephant Dancing on Toes* at the entrance to the show. That work is part of the series “Lacquer Paintings,” 1994–, based on scientific charts reproduced in botanical manuals and in herbariums. To create these pieces, Yang collected various plants in Berlin and



Haegue Yang, *The Intermediate—Antenna Basket on Rings*, 2017, artificial straw, powder-coated stainless steel, steel wire, artificial plants, TV antennae, 70 7/8 x 31 1/2 x 31 1/2". From the series “The Intermediates,” 2015–.

Mexico City, as well as earth, dust, tobacco leaves, even a fly. She then covered these objets trouvés with thin layers of lacquer and allowed them to air-dry, creating a slight but distinct relief. The effect is similar to amber resin and distances these works from the objectivity of botanical illustrations, with their depictions of specimens isolated against a neutral background and arranged in a way that underscores the plants' structures. The stratigraphy in Yang's work restores a temporality absent from scientific information.

In the series "Hardware Store Collages," 1994–, Yang displays arrangements of cutout images of technological prostheses, such as earphones, drones, cameras, ultra-flat screens, surveillance cameras, Segway scooters, and remote controls, executing this meticulously precise decoupage against a gold or silver background and arranging the elements into molecule-like structures. Taken from catalogues for stores selling digital electronics, the cutouts form colorful and playful do-it-yourself projects that reflect Yang's long-standing passion for the Bauhaus. The reference is not to the homonymous art movement, but to the chain of hardware stores of that name, which the artist discovered when she moved from Seoul to Berlin: "The thick store catalogue became my bible, and where I learned German words." Leafing through these pages, Yang chanced upon an organized visual and conceptual universe, accumulations kept under control, a *Warenwelt*, or world of merchandise, not yet threatened by the indeterminacy of the "quasi."

—Riccardo Venturi

Translated from Italian by Marguerite Shore.

frieze

MY INFLUENCES

Haegue Yang



Galerie
Chantal Crousel

Elephants, identity and abstraction:
The winner of the 2018 Wolfgang Hahn Prize reveals the
objects and ideas that have shaped her thinking

frieze

Vast Venetian blinds, exhaust fans on loop and clinking bells recur in Haegue Yang's sculptures, prints and installations: half-living talismans that solder industrial precision with the involvement of craft. Yang admires weaving as much for its tousled inefficiency as for its enjambment of the natural and the human-made. Artificial straw seems folkloric and totemic, but Yang uses it to probe questions of formatting and encoding: the ascription and sharing of values in communities, art historical and cultural traditions, for example; or the fraught fictions of abstraction and identification, east and west, social engagement and hermetic objection.

Always moving between these oppositions, Yang's abstractions are fricative. Yet, they dissemble a third layer, too, which is all the more inscrutable: difficult lives from art history, literature and politics in which the artist is steeped but which are rarely identifiable in the final work. They phrase questions that are all the more relevant today: can we separate the work from the figure? Can they ever be united? Yang's influences are doubly defiant: nearly restrained from legibility, these figures resurface still, like silent ghosts haunting stories untold.

I OFTEN RETURN to the agonizing, yet compelling, lives of artists whose biographies reveal an oscillation between their engagement in art and politics. As I see it, artists relate to their moment as though they are surfing a wave, up and down. Often, their engagement isolates them, though they might only realize this at the crest of the wave. Attention to their political achievements can lead to the simplification and reduction of their art; when their art is understood, their social or political work is obscured or diluted. While my own art does not contain traceable facets of such histories, an unlearning or blurring of these figures and their narratives has emerged over time, crafted and resolved into a dimension of abstraction.

Born in Sancheong, Korea, in 1917, the composer Isang Yun came to West Germany in 1957. Before his relocation, he lived through considerable political and ideological turmoil during the Japanese colonial period (1910–45), which saw the occupation of Korea, and the Korean War (1950–53). During this time, Yun was active in the Korean independence movement of armed resistance. He composed songs in Korean, which was forbidden at the time, leading to his arrest. He also founded and ran an institution for war orphans, contracting tuberculosis in the process.

In Europe, Yun quickly received recognition for his musical accomplishments. Yet here, too, he experienced another period of political turbulence. During the East Berlin Incident of 1967, he was kidnapped by the South Korean secret police and accused of spying for North Korea. His wife was arrested, together with hundreds of other Korean artists and intellectuals. As one of the most prominent among the accused, he was tortured, forced to confess and, following a suicide attempt, ultimately charged with the death penalty. After an international petition called for his release, Yun was freed and obtained German citizenship for his own security. He never returned to his homeland. In fact, Yun was only politically rehabilitated in Korea after his death. Now, public perception of Yun has changed: he is seen as a figure of political suppression and exile, and as a member of the resistance abroad against the country's military dictatorship.

OPPOSITE PAGE
Haegue Yang,
*The Intermediate –
Running Firecracker*, 2016,
artificial straw, steel
stand, powder coating,
casters, plastic twine,
brass-plated bells,
copper-plated bells,
1.6 × 1.2 × 1.2 m.
Courtesy: Galerie
Barbara Wein, Berlin;
photograph: Studio
Haegue Yang

What remained overlooked was Yun's music. The end of the 1950s was a revolutionary period in contemporary music, with composers such as Béla Bartók, Karlheinz Stockhausen and Igor Stravinsky creating what we now refer to as *neue Musik* (new music). Arnold Schönberg's 12-tone technique gave music a completely new mathematical template for organizing Western musical tonality. Composers working after Schönberg had either to accept, question or reject the 12-tone technique. Having studied this approach, Yun returned to traditional Asian tonalities. Many of his instrumental methods were unusual and extremely difficult to play, such as his use of glissando, vibrato, portamento and pizzicato. Unlike in 12-tone composition, there are melodies in Yun's pieces; the way tones are performed is much more elastic – never a 'pure' G or F, but a sound that swells then recedes over a main note.

Most people cannot imagine what it means to be a non-Westerner working in contemporary art. In Korea, art was traditionally never separated from philosophy, scholarship or governance; 'contemporary art' is a modern affixation. Yun's musical trajectory did not recognize the ideologically drawn borders between North and South or East and West. He was geographically liberated via a detour that progressed toward *neue Musik* then returned to his lost tradition. Drawing on his experience as a Korean partially trained in Japan who migrated West, Yun integrated art and philosophy in a way that enabled him to return to the place from which he had been exiled. I find Yun's unfulfilled return incredibly significant, not just for the political implication of his resistance and the yearning for democracy in South Korea, but also for the possible connection with silences and isolations in the lives of other historical figures.

As a result of the postwar partitioning of both Germany and Korea, interesting political parallels can be drawn between these two seemingly different cultures. It was after travelling to North Korea in 1963, to realize his long-standing desire to see the Gangseo royal tomb murals of the Goguryeo Dynasty (37 BCE–668 CE), that Yun was accused of espionage. Composed during his imprisonment, 'Images for flute, oboe, violin and violoncello' (1968) was based on the paintings of four animals on the tomb walls: the white tiger, blue dragon, black tortoise and



THIS PAGE
East and west wall
murals from the main
chamber of the Goguryeo
Tombs, depicting a blue
dragon and white tiger,
5th century CE.
Courtesy: Sakyejul
Publishing Ltd.

frieze

red phoenix. Each animal represents a cardinal direction, but the funny thing is that they closely resemble one another. I admire Yun's vision and spirit to 'feel' these mystical animals, simultaneously distinctive yet similar, not unlike his divided homelands.

Historical narratives overlap with personal ones in the most unlikely of ways. When the oil crisis hit Korea in 1973, many Koreans who had operated as mercenaries alongside US forces in Vietnam looked to the Middle East and North Africa for construction jobs. The Korean government was eager to accumulate foreign reserves to help rebuild the country after the severe destruction caused by Japanese imperialism and the Korean War, as well as to secure energy supplies. Consequently, many of my generation grew up deprived of any contact with our fathers and uncles, who were working abroad.

This process isolated people from their families and caused entire generations to fall into silence. These social forces were dissimulated: played off as 'personal' decisions. In the regions to which they emigrated, these many husbands, brothers, uncles and fathers left few officially documented traces. But the massive infrastructure resulting from their labours endures: vast ports, factories, highways, hospitals and schools built from concrete. In this way, regions are unexpectedly connected yet remain disconnected, since this history is rarely discussed or disputed.

I remember my own father's absence. He worked as a journalist for the *Dong-a Ilbo* newspaper. When reporters occupied the company in 1974 to publish a newspaper free of censorship, it developed into a movement for freedom of speech, with those involved consequently fired and imprisoned. If you were arrested or imprisoned during the military dictatorship in Korea, you received a 'red line' on your ID, which disadvantaged you and your entire family; you couldn't get a job and no one was allowed to help you. To support our family, my father left for the Middle East and Africa and stayed for a long time. It was only after the June Struggle of 1987 that South Korea turned to democracy, finally electing a president in 1992. When the men came back to Seoul after the Middle Eastern boom, their experiences remained unspoken, as they had after the Vietnam War. Subsequent social developments created a lasting silence: even without systematic suppression, some narratives remain untold or unacknowledged.

When I went to Sharjah in 2015, I met other such fathers and uncles – no longer Korean but Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Filipino and Indian. Most of the workers I spoke to hadn't seen their families for years. Labour migration is a known fact but infrequently discussed. Instead of asking my father why he stayed so long, even after Korea's democratization, I studied the period to gain my own understanding of it. This was my personal effort to honour not only my father's silence but that of all the men who migrated for work. I wanted their silence to reach a dimension of opacity: a right to remain unknown. My project for the Sharjah Biennial, *An Opaque Wind* (2015), was an attempt to render this silence as dignified. This silence and isolation is an act of obscuring and resisting liberal ideas of transparency and mere equivalence.

THIS PAGE
Haegue Yang, *Dry Spell*
at *Villeperdue*, 2016, straw
basket, wooden tripod,
iron stove, artificial
plants, mahogany
seedpods, lotus seedpods,
suicide tree seeds, pine
cones, 225 x 103 x 91 cm.
Courtesy: Galerie Barbara
Wien, Berlin

OPPOSITE PAGE
Haegue Yang, *Lingering Nous*,
2016, installation view at
Centre Pompidou, Paris.
Courtesy: Centre Pompidou,
Paris; photograph:
Florian Kleinfenn



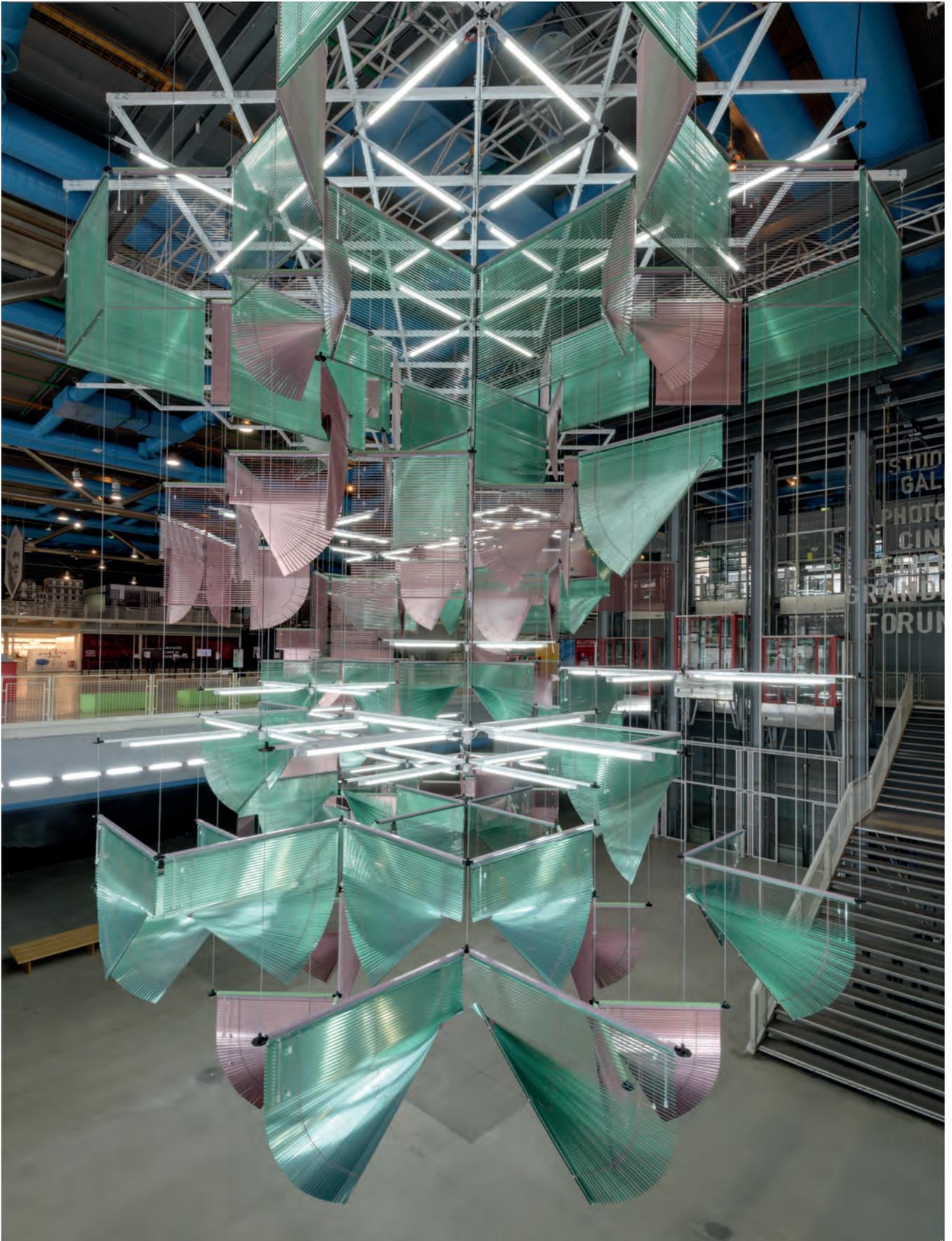
“Most people cannot imagine what it means to be a non-Westerner working in contemporary art.”

Abstraction enables me to work through individual and collective narratives across history in a non-linear or elastic manner. Coming across elephants in various sources over time helped me to establish the animal as a metaphor for that abstraction. For instance, according to one theory, the Chinese character for 'elephant' (象) derives from the shape of the animal's bones. Yet, it is probable that few people had ever even seen an elephant, particularly given that their existence in China has been contested. In modern Chinese, when you combine the symbol for 'person' (人) with that for 'elephant' (象), the resulting character signifies 'image' or 'motif' (像). The symbol seems to describe, then, a human imagining an animal they've never seen. It's come to represent, for me, this discrepancy between seen and unseen.

In his essay 'Shooting an Elephant' (1936), George Orwell describes his days in Burma as a British policeman. It includes a moment of identification in which the narrator, Orwell, feels within him the pain of an elephant he is forced to kill to prove his status in front of a gathered crowd. The hostile power struggle between humans is articulated by the act of killing an animal that has no relationship to the humans concerned. The creature's irrelevance, or independence, represents artistic or individual consciousness. The elephant stands between the colonizer and the colonized: a figure of isolation that must be killed to define the distance between both parties. Yet the Westerner, affected

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“Abstraction is not
a reductionist or simplified way
of thinking: it’s a leap.”

ABOVE
Romain Gary, 1953.
Courtesy:
Magnum Photos;
photograph:
Philippe Halsman

by colonial history, reaches the point where they have to kill their own elephant: the defiant autonomy of abstraction.

Though of Lithuanian descent, Romain Gary, who lived roughly contemporaneously to Yun, is the only French writer to have won the Prix Goncourt twice: once under his own name and once under the pseudonym Émile Ajar, which he adopted in 1975. His dual identity was only discovered through the note he left when he committed suicide in 1980. The letter also stated that his death was unrelated to that of his wife, the American actress Jean Seberg, who had been found dead – most likely having also committed suicide – a year before. Toward the end of his life, the whole world was seeking to discover Ajar’s true identity while Gary himself was regarded as little more than a has-been.

Gary had served as an aviator in the French Air Force, as secretary of the French Delegation to the UN, and as a diplomat in Los Angeles in 1956, representing France as a consul general. He was an extremely glamorous figure but also an intensely mysterious and lonely man, who seemingly never found his true home. In his semi-autobiographical book, *La Promesse de l’aube* (Promise at Dawn, 1960), Gary describes his upbringing and how his identity as a French writer was the realization of his mother’s great ambitions, although her immense love for him was almost suffocating. In addition to appropriating the pseudonym Ajar, he revealed that his childhood surname had not, in fact, been Gary but Kacew, which was his stepfather’s name. (He had never known his biological father.) His continual rebellion against the identity given to him confirms, for me, that we view names as a way to evaluate and classify someone in society. Even literature is limited in its grasp of the existential struggle of identity.

Returning to the topic of the elephant: in Gary’s *Les Racines du ciel* (The Roots of Heaven, 1956), the book’s protagonist, Morel, appears out of the blue in French Equatorial Africa during the civil war: a period of violence in which the indigenous people fought for their independence from the colonizers, yet also fought among themselves. Elephants were killed to raise money for arms. As in Orwell’s story, the elephant was a sacrifice for human hostility.

The most poignant episode in the book describes Morel’s experience in a concentration camp prior to his arrival in Africa. Exposed to inhumane conditions, a fellow internee proposes that they play a game – imagining a woman is incarcerated with them – in order to stay sane. The fictional presence of the woman encourages them to maintain their dignity and, consequently, to survive. A German officer discovers their ruse, however, and orders the prisoners to imagine killing the woman, thereby ending the game. Morel then devises a new survival strategy, imagining not a woman but a herd of stampeding elephants sweeping away the inhumanity. He vows that, if he survives, he will devote his life to these animals. This reference feeds into the first: elephants may save humans, but humans do not save elephants. In this moment of existential crisis, the action of the imagination becomes amplified. For me, this power of amplification is abstraction. Abstraction is not a reductionist or simplified way of thinking: it’s a leap – a leap into a dimension that cannot otherwise be understood ●

HAEGUE YANG is an artist based in Berlin, Germany, and Seoul, South Korea. She is professor of fine arts at the Städelschule, Frankfurt, Germany, and recipient of the 2018 Wolfgang Hahn Prize. Her solo exhibitions include: Kunsthau Graz, Austria (until 2 April); KINDL Centre for Contemporary Art, Berlin (until 13 May); kurimanazutto, Mexico City, Mexico; and Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris, France (both 2017). 'ETA', a comprehensive survey of her work, opens at Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany, on 18 April. Yang will participate in the Biennale of Sydney, Australia, in March and the Liverpool Biennial, UK, in July.





Haegue Yang, *Thread with Fishhook*, 1995-96, varnish, thread, and fishhook on chipboard, 10 1/4 x 9 1/2".

COLOGNE

“HAEGUE YANG: ETA 1994–2018”

Museum Ludwig

April 18–August 12

Curated by Yilmaz Dziewior with Leonie Radine

The peripatetic Korean-born artist Haegue Yang was awarded this year's Wolfgang Hahn Prize, whose past recipients include James Lee Byars, Isa Genzken, and Rosemarie Trockel. Yang stages metaphorical conversations between various everyday objects in her installations, which range from the uncannily anthropomorphic to the unyieldingly deadpan. Her largest exhibition to date, “ETA 1994–2018,” marks her receipt of the award and features an encyclopedic array of more than a hundred works, including photographs and videos as well as her signature installations. Accompanied by a catalogue raisonné, the show will highlight Yang's recent baroque constellations as well as her relatively lesser-known early projects, including a set of modestly proportioned wooden panels that calls attention to form as an endlessly generative problem.

—Joan Kee

Haegue Yang's "Quasi-ESP"

GALERIE CHANTAL CROUSEL, Paris

October 14–November 25, 2017



Not having a story to tell from the beginning or possibly starting from the middle is how Taoism describes time: continuity without a starting point. Stories abbreviate and expand in "intensiveness," a term Haegue Yang uses, in dialogue with Jimmie Durham, to describe a mode that, similarly to belief, can exist beyond linear narrative form.⁽¹⁾ Yang, who is recognized for her forays into domesticity and response to the assumed neutrality of exhibition spaces, seeks to find a home in the political, constructing spaces of being and belonging in an ever-recurring cycle of unbound histories and narrations.

While in her discourse Yang positions abstraction at the frontier of form, collapsing real and imaginary kinds of value (including that of the human body and technological gimmicks), her studio practice convolutes these tropes. This is the case with the series "Hardware Store Collages" (ongoing since 1994), where indexed images of hardware and quotidian electronic components are released from their functional context and framed as unfamiliar organic assemblages. At Chantal Crousel, Media Markt smartphones and Saturn Bluetooth speakers are the subject of compositions that intensify technological narratives of hybridity. *Swaying Television Ball* (2017) places a two-sided flat-screen monitor atop an exercise ball made with artificial straw and stainless steel. Cutouts from commercial hardware catalogues cover the monitors' surface, and these in turn depict portraits of women and animation stills from such films as *The Lion King* (1997). When fitness training cannot singlehandedly capture one's focus, the intensified lore of the technosphere might get the job done.

Part of sculpture series "The Intermediates" (ongoing since 2015), *Antenna Basket on Rings* (2017) and *Psychic Turbine Vent Ball* (2017) use household industrial components such as TV antennas and wind turbines to adorn crafted rotatory bodies made of artificial straw. The same material reappears in the freestanding and suspended sculptures *Serpent Creature*, *Tinted Serpent Creature*, and *Triple Tentacles Serpent* (all 2017). Drawing on the same narrative that parts technology and craft, progress and folk, the organisms confound formal boundaries by connecting animal mythology, globalized technological expansion, and domesticity. Recalling vernacular shelters, disproportionately large cleaning rags, or even lavish chandeliers, the three works speak to the modern failure to tame processes of hybridization. Contiguous with *Triple Tentacles Serpent*, the two-sided *Faceted Dancing Mask* (2017) articulates and sieves the space. Covered by lenticular foil on one side and unclad on the other, the movable folding screen invites visitors to play with views of the gallery and of the boundary-making processes resignified by the artist to foster new kinds of storytelling.

In the 2017 instantiation of the series "Lacquer Paintings" (ongoing since 1994) Yang uses time as her subject matter. Common botanical specimens, such as tobacco leaves, are organized on small wood panels in the tradition of colonial botanical arrangements. Yet, suspicious of material processes of memorialization and their capacity to give meaning to a disordered chronological force field, Yang lets the slow-drying wood varnish capture the dirt, dust, raindrops, and insects present in the original materials and in the making of the work, as traces of the duration of that particular event.

Yang often experiments with narration in varied visual, tactile, aural, and olfactory cues. The title of the exhibition "Quasi-ESP" speaks to the categories by which perception is mediated. As a heightened capability to engage with one's surroundings, in storytelling extrasensory perception (ESP) confounds linear time with sensory processes. "Quasi"—a reappearing construction in Yang's exhibition titles—figures as a gesture of incompleteness, of bordering one or several narratives in constant flux. In this view, "intensiveness" renders the gallery a space for abstraction in multiple cadences, intensified by a circuitous studio practice with its own unending narratives.

(1) Jimmie Durham, Haegue Yang, and Mark Welzel, "We can get there!" In *Parkett*, no. 89 (2011), 88.



1 View of Haegue Yang's "Quasi-ESP," Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris, 2017.



3 View of Haegue Yang's "Quasi-ESP," Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris, 2017.



2 View of Haegue Yang's "Quasi-ESP," Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris, 2017.



4 Haegue Yang, *The Intermediate – Serpent Creature*, 2017.



5 View of Haegue Yang's "Quasi-ESP," Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris, 2017.



7 Haegue Yang, *The Intermediate – Swaying Television Ball*, 2017.



6 Haegue Yang, *Grafting Gone Aslant*, 2017.



8 View of Haegue Yang's "Quasi-ESP," Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris, 2017.

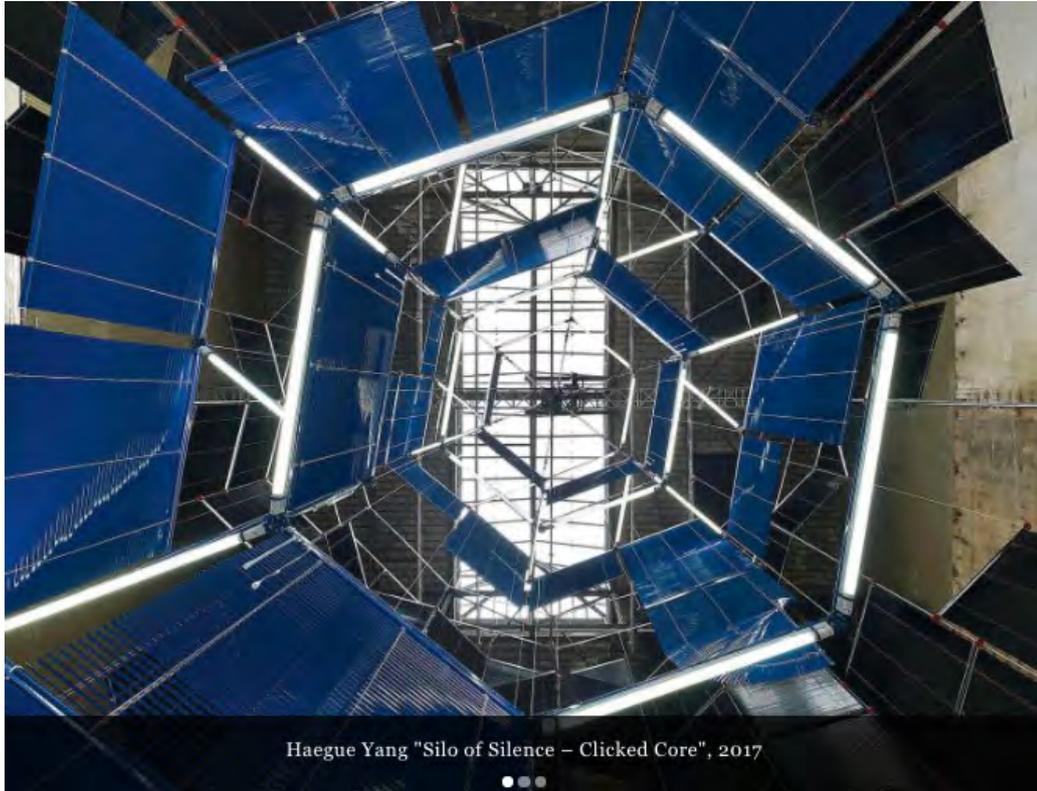
- 1 View of Haegue Yang's "Quasi-ESP," Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris, 2017. All images courtesy of the artist and Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris. All photos by Florian Kleinfenn.
- 2 View of Haegue Yang's "Quasi-ESP," Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris, 2017.
- 3 View of Haegue Yang's "Quasi-ESP," Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris, 2017.
- 4 Haegue Yang, *The Intermediate – Serpent Creature*, 2017. Artificial straw, stainless steel hanging structure, stainless steel frame, powder coating, steel wire, Neoseul, plastic bells, and pompoms, 154 x 102 x 97 cm.
- 5 View of Haegue Yang's "Quasi-ESP," Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris, 2017.
- 6 Haegue Yang, *Grafting Gone Aslant*, 2017. Wooden panel, wood varnish, found plants, dust, and tobacco leaves, 90 x 63 cm.
- 7 Haegue Yang, *The Intermediate – Swaying Television Ball*, 2017. Artificial straw, stainless steel frame, powder coating, iron forging frame, hardware store catalogs, lenticular sheets, chromolux paper, and acrylic glass, 117 x 73 x 71 cm.
- 8 View of Haegue Yang's "Quasi-ESP," Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris, 2017.
- 9 Haegue Yang, *Faceted Dancing Mask*, 2017. Wood, stainless steel, iridescent vinyl film, and casters, 186 x 118 x 93 cm.
- 10 Haegue Yang, *Hardware Store Collage – Media Markt Smartphone and In-Ear Headphones*, 2017. Hardware store catalogs and chromolux paper, framed, 50 x 50 cm.



9 Haegue Yang, *Faceted Dancing Mask*, 2017.



10 Haegue Yang, *Hardware Store Collage – Media Markt Smartphone and In-Ear Headphones*, 2017.



Haegue Yang "Silo of Silence – Clicked Core", 2017

Haegue Yang und Asta Gröting in Berlin

Bewegung und Stillstand

Im Berliner Kindl-Kunstzentrum lässt Haegue Yang die Jalousien tanzen und Asta Gröting kehrt die Geschichte der Stadt nach außen

Obwohl **Haegue Yang** ihr bevorzugtes Material, die Jalousie, schon lange verwendet, gewinnt die Bildhauerin deren Durchlässigkeit, ihren skulpturalen und zweidimensionalen Qualitäten immer wieder etwas Neues ab. Jüngst wurde sie mit dem renommierten Wolfgang-Hahn-Preis für Skulptur ausgezeichnet, der mit einer Ausstellung im Museum Ludwig einhergeht.

In Berlin zeigt sie zum ersten Mal in einer Institution eine überwältigend schöne Installation: Im Kesselhaus des privat geführten Ausstellungshauses Kindl hat sie ein Mobile aus Leuchtstoffröhren und Jalousien aufgebaut, das trotz monumentaler Größe zu schweben und zu tanzen scheint. "Silo of Silence – Clicked Core" hat Poesie und technoide Coolness zugleich, die typisch postindustriellen Insignien der früheren Nutzung des Raumes geben die perfekt unpassende Kulisse dazu ab.

Genau andersherum ist es bei **Asta Gröting** im zweiten Ausstellungsraum, einem clean sanierten White Cube: Die Künstlerin zeigt großformatige Silikonabgüsse von Berliner Fassaden – abgenommen an den wenigen Stellen, an denen noch Einschusslöcher erhalten sind. Jedes Loch wird zur Skulptur, Schmutz und Graffiti bleiben haften, die Überlagerung der Geschichte einer Stadt wird noch einmal anders sichtbar, aus dem Inneren der Wände.

"Haegue Yang: Silo of Silence – Clicked Core" und "Asta Gröting: Berlin Fassaden", [Kindl - Zentrum für Zeitgenössische Kunst](#), Berlin, bis 13. Mai 2018

TEILEN

Text: Silke Hohmann

Datum: 26.9.2017

Reviews

FRAME

ONE ARTIST, ONE MATERIAL

77

Blind *Date*

Galerie
Chantal Crousel

HAEGUE YANG makes spatial
statements with Venetian blinds.

Words
ANNA SANSOM

Portraits
DANIEL HOFER

FRAME

78 PORTRAITS

Galerie
Chantal Crousel



Sol LeWitt Upside Down – Structure with Three Towers, Expanded 23 Times (2015) exemplifies Haegue Yang's fascination with the work of Sol LeWitt, whose *Structure with Three Towers* (1986) she expanded and reverted using layers of blinds.

*'I felt liberated
by Sol LeWitt's
approach to
his work'*

DIVIDING HER TIME BETWEEN Seoul and Berlin, Haegue Yang makes conceptual work using everyday materials, which she employs in abstract and subtly narrative ways. The results range from compositions featuring envelope security patterns to sculptures built around products like clothing racks. The 45-year-old artist has made sculptures and installations out of Venetian blinds since 2006.

You first used Venetian blinds in *Series of Vulnerable Arrangements – Version Utrecht*, your multisensory installation from 2006. How did your interest in blinds develop? HAEGUE YANG: That installation was a mute sensorial field, composed of devices such as lights and scent emitters that were juxtaposed with a 'voice' from video essays in the same space, which was demarcated by Venetian blinds. The obliqueness of the blinds achieved an ambivalence of being comfortingly separated yet sufficiently connected. This discovery informed my next piece, *Series of Vulnerable Arrangements – Blind Room*, also from 2006. Guided by the blinds, one wandered into a

field of light/shadow, wind, heat, humidity and smells, the mind strolling in associative memories. Although the contemplation of senses occurred individually, visitors were bound to one another through a shared experience of fragmentation and separation.

How has using Venetian blinds helped you to think about space and architectural volume? My 2008 installation, *Mountains of Encounter*, marked the first shift from narration to abstraction. The spiral layout of vibrant red Venetian blinds sloping at different angles portrayed the mountainous landscape of Yan'an, China, where Korean underground revolutionary Kim San had an unlikely encounter with American journalist Helen Foster Snow in the 1930s, leading to her biography about him. The hypnotizing choreography of four moving lights sharply cut the blinds' surface, while white circles and two strong floodlights in the spiral's centre dimmed and brightened. As lights and blinds intensely confronted each other, heroic and universal qualities of this encounter penetrated across history. »

FRAME

Galerie
Chantal Crousel



Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art, courtesy of Kujje Gallery, Seoul

FRAME

80

PORTRAITS

Galerie
Chantal Crousel



Fred Doct, courtesy of Galerie Barbara Wien, Berlin

FRAME

ONE ARTIST, ONE MATERIAL

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Galerie
Chantal Crousel



'Mountains of Encounter' (2008) marked the first shift from narration to abstraction,' says Haegue Yang of her installation – a spiral of vibrant red Venetian blinds – for international group exhibition Wessen Geschichte [Whose (His)Story], held at the Kunstverein in Hamburg, Germany.

*'The obliqueness
of blinds can
achieve an
ambivalence
of being
comfortingly
separated yet
sufficiently
connected'*

FRAME

82 PORTRAITS

Galerie
Chantal Crousel



South Korean artist Haegue Yang is known for using mundane objects in her installations, such as the Venetian blinds that have been a recurring motif in her work since 2006.

‘Viewers remain blind to the concrete narrative, which is my goal in achieving abstraction’

Your installations seem to be inspired by figures from literature, their politics and passions. How do Venetian blinds enable you to develop an abstract narrative? One example is *Lethal Love* from 2008, which lingered on the intense companionship and tragic end in the story of Petra Kelly, founding member of the German Green Party, and Gert Bastian, former German general and peace-movement hero. [In 1992, Bastian apparently shot Kelly dead in her sleep before killing himself.] The installation activated an experimental template to explore their narrative, using materials suggestive of what happened, such as gunmetal-coloured Venetian blinds, smells of wildflowers and gunpowder, and an extreme reflection of blinding light. The viewer, however, remained more or less blind to the concrete narrative, which is my goal in achieving abstraction. For me, abstraction gives value to narratives that appear within and around us without constituting its own limits.

How important is it that visitors understand the meaning behind the piece? It's not very important – more of an option than an obligation for the viewer. Although I don't want to give up learning about histori-

cal figures, the work and the audience should be free from my eagerness to dive into those stories. I'd rather invite the audience to enter a visual and spatial field that has a somewhat abstruse articulation than one that produces an obvious meaning.

Other pieces reference 20th-century art, such as Sol LeWitt's geometric white structures. What triggered this aspect of your work? I felt liberated by Sol LeWitt's approach to works such as his modular structures and by his statement: 'Conceptual artists are mystics rather than rationalists. They leap to conclusions that logic cannot reach.' The primary translation mechanism of my piece from 2015, *Sol LeWitt Upside Down – Structure with Three Towers, Expanded 23 Times*, is an expansion and inversion of LeWitt's 1986 *Structure with Three Towers*. The work becomes progressively opaque as the layers of blinds accumulate, while the shallow areas maintain their transparency.

How does playing with transparency and opacity relate to Korea's modern history? Experiencing modern Korean history, with its long and brutal military dictatorship – a dominance of state-led

economic development and the sacrifice of freedom of speech and democratic values – made me conscious of the authoritarian abuse of power. I wish not only to remember but to render official history in a subjective way, so that it doesn't become knowledge to be learned.

You often choose what have been called 'indescribable, uncategorizable colours', such as the iridescent green and pink in *Lingering Nous*, exhibited at the Centre Pompidou in 2016. What are your criteria for choosing colours? Each colour in *Lingering Nous* (*Frame* 113, p. 148) relates to a specific angle defined by my own octagonal connector system and echoes the primary colour scheme of the Centre Pompidou's building services, such as ventilation and electricity.

What are you working on now? A solo exhibition at the Geffen Contemporary in Los Angeles, part of the city's Museum of Contemporary Art. Scheduled to open in June 2019, the show will encompass works from 1994 to the present, including major installations featuring Venetian blinds. ●

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Galerie
Chantal Crousel





Words by Nadine Khalil

ALL THAT NOISE

Galerie
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Korean-born artist Haegue Yang is known for her multi-faceted sensorial installations and sculptures occupying the in-between spaces where public and private meet. *A Mag* discovers her weird and wonderful world

Above: "Uninhibited island in New Year Saekdong" (2016) from Yang's *The Intermediate series* at Art People restaurant, Aishti Foundation. Opposite: Haegue Yang with her installation at Aishti by the Sea



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When Igor Stravinsky's 20th century masterpiece, *The Rite of Spring*, was first performed in Paris in 1913, it was a disaster. Erratic and jarring, the music rising and falling in layers of drama and dissonance with abrupt twists, the audience jeered and booed it, even throwing vegetables at the stage.

This disjunction is precisely why Berlin and Seoul-based artist Haegue Yang – who gained international attention after her installation in the Korean pavilion at the 2009 Venice Biennale, a structure of coloured, hanging Venetian blinds fluttering to wind-propellers – chose it to accompany the latest display of her artworks entitled *Quasi-pagan Seasonal Shift*, currently on show until mid-February at Aishti by the Sea in Beirut.

"The history of Russian avant-garde art has helped me gain an understanding of what I am doing, developing my consciousness as an artist. And *The Rite of Spring* was part of the Ballets Russes, and wasn't received well at all at first – it's eclectic and not harmonious. These days, we may all know it as legendary but it took over a hundred years for the work to become celebrated," Yang says, as we listen to its staccato rhythms while walking through the ten anthropomorphic sculptures made of artificial straw that make up the installation.

First shown at Galeries Lafayette in Paris



This page from top: "What I'd Love to Have at Home" (2001), with metal shelving by Otto Kind AG and a 1968 Egon Eiermann sofa; "Shooting the Elephant Thinking the Elephant," Samsung Museum of Art, Seoul, taken from the original "Boxing Ballet" (2015). Opposite: Hornbachbild #2 & #3 (1994), made from hardware store catalogues and chromolux paper

Courtesy of Studio Haegue Yang, Galerie Barbara Wten and Wolfgang Gänzel



Right: *Arrivals* (2011) at the Kunsthhaus Bregenz, Austria. Below: The 2009 exhibition "Assume Nothing: New Social Practice" at the Art Gallery of Victoria, Canada



for private space, and also a paradoxical yet desperate statement on both art and lifestyle by a young artist.

"It's not that I didn't have the desire to make things during that period," Yang says, "I just didn't see how working with the discovery of objects, such as in a shopping mall, on the one hand, and making labour-intensive works on the other, were contradictory. They exist as parallel desires in me, in a hybrid approach of found and made. In a similar way, many other seemingly opposing parts, such as anthropomorphic and geometric, organic and artificial, indeed build a contrast, yet aren't conflicting."

Perhaps the best examples of this inclination are her recent mobile sonic sculptures (2012-2013), metallic, spherical forms made out of bells. "I began these

around the same time as my so-called light sculptures began to fade away. And the series of *The Intermediates*, the straw sculptures, which began in 2014-2015, followed... their materiality is so different." The former may look cold but they vibrate with sound as they move.

While her straw sculptures communicate by evoking some kind of esoteric dance ritual, her sonic pieces communicate through movement and resonance. Both are bizarre and move through sound; both are profoundly uncanny and perhaps a little tatty and uncool. Both work with oppositions that re-imagine the ordinary as extraordinary, the primitive as contemporary, and the organic as artificial.





Left: *Hardware Store Collage - Bauhaus Door Handles #3* (2013) from a private collection in Stuttgart. Below: *Hornbachbild #1* (1994)

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codes. I had never been to Europe before, I decided to leave home because I didn't know what to do next – after I failed to get into grad school in Korea,” she recounts unabashedly. “I had studied sculpture in university and I had lost the sense of what art means.”

So the art student, disillusioned with the academic system in her country, which she describes as a “Japanese import mixed with American influences,” found refuge in the most unlikely of places: the Bauhaus, or your typical German hardware store. “I was fascinated, we don't have these kinds of stores back home... The thick store catalogue became my Bible, and where I learned German words.”

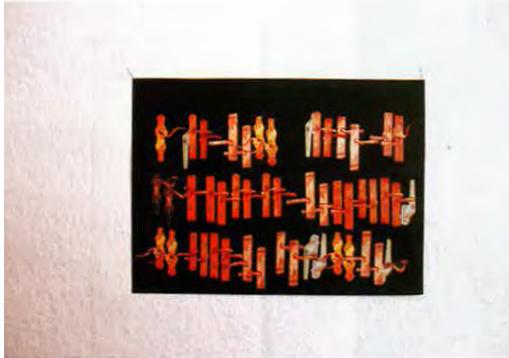
Yang made her first paper collages out of these catalogues, in her *Hornbachbild* or *Hardware Store Collages* series, featuring various tools such as faucets, door handles and tubes – which may not be the coolest thing for artistry today but at the time with little money, Yang used the materials she had at hand. “This is *Warenwelt*, German for the ‘world of things/commodities.’ I didn't see it then but I had begun to develop my vocabulary out of lacquer and varnish, casts and plaster.

“The decision to include this early work as the beginning of my career in this monograph,” she says, as she shows me the latest published catalogue of her artworks by Kunsthau Bregenz, “was a crucial yet difficult one. For a long time, I didn't understand these formative works on my own. I considered them mere studies, and was embarrassed by them. I even often threw everything away, since I had no means to store them. So there are only some 35 mm



slides remaining of the actual works.”

She moved further in her fascination with the everyday with *Social Conditions of the Sitting Table* in 2001, a pseudo-social study of the ubiquitous low-lying tables in Korea: “The ownership of this nameless table, with the height of a chair and the surface area of a table, isn't questioned; it's used in spaces that blur the private with the public. I'm interested in these urban objects that are on the verge of disappearing,” Yang says, referencing Marcel DuChamp's ready-mades, or mundane objects that are found and repositioned to become art (such as his notorious 1917 porcelain urinal, *Fountain*). In the same year, Yang created *What I'd Love to Have at Home*, by placing a vintage sofa near empty metal shelves in a minimalist expression of modular living, a desire



in 2016, albeit in slightly different guises and under the title *Quasi-Pagan Modern*, the works came to Aishti by the Sea after a joint effort between Yang's gallerist Chantal Crousel and Aishti CEO Tony Salamé, who both felt the sculptures could be staged in the David Adjaye-designed building.

"Haegue is very interested in crafts from all parts of the world," Crousel said, "and bringing her sculptures, and the music related to shamanic ritual dances that accompanies them to Beirut, in dialogue with contemporary dresses and mannequins, is a continuation of her exploration about how East can meet West."

Some of her sculptures have horn-like heads, others are more cylindrical and bulbous in form and many of them have fake plants emerging from them. With playful titles such as: *Long Neck Woman Upside Down* or *Narrating Solid Cloud*, Yang's works look organic, yet are largely artificial; they have a traditional, decorative aesthetic but are also anti-classicist and modernist in their geometries. The choice to use *The Rite of Spring* she says, points to her continued obsession with this kind of hybridity, in the juxtaposition of diverging motifs: "It's a cultural detour of sorts, in atonal music about a Native American pagan sacrifice spring ritual. I wanted to integrate it in my work."

It isn't hard to see why since the sculptures have a tribal, surrealist feel to them. The music adds a hint of motion where there actually is none. On the ground floor of the mall stands the three-legged *Tilted Bushy-head Junior*, positioned between two mannequins. It looks like a furry animal on rollers about to break into a dance. Nearby is another furry blob, *Running Squeezed Two-tone Fan Dance* (without rollers), its form punctuated by a swirly ethnic weave, in a nod to traditional Korean folk craftsmanship. Part of *The Intermediate* series, these works are matched with half a dozen more pieces on a central rotating platform, also in artificial straw.

"*The Intermediate* refers to medium, in shamanic terms, or the mediation between

different dimensions. In my sculptures, it's about taking something ancient and bringing it to the present," Yang says.

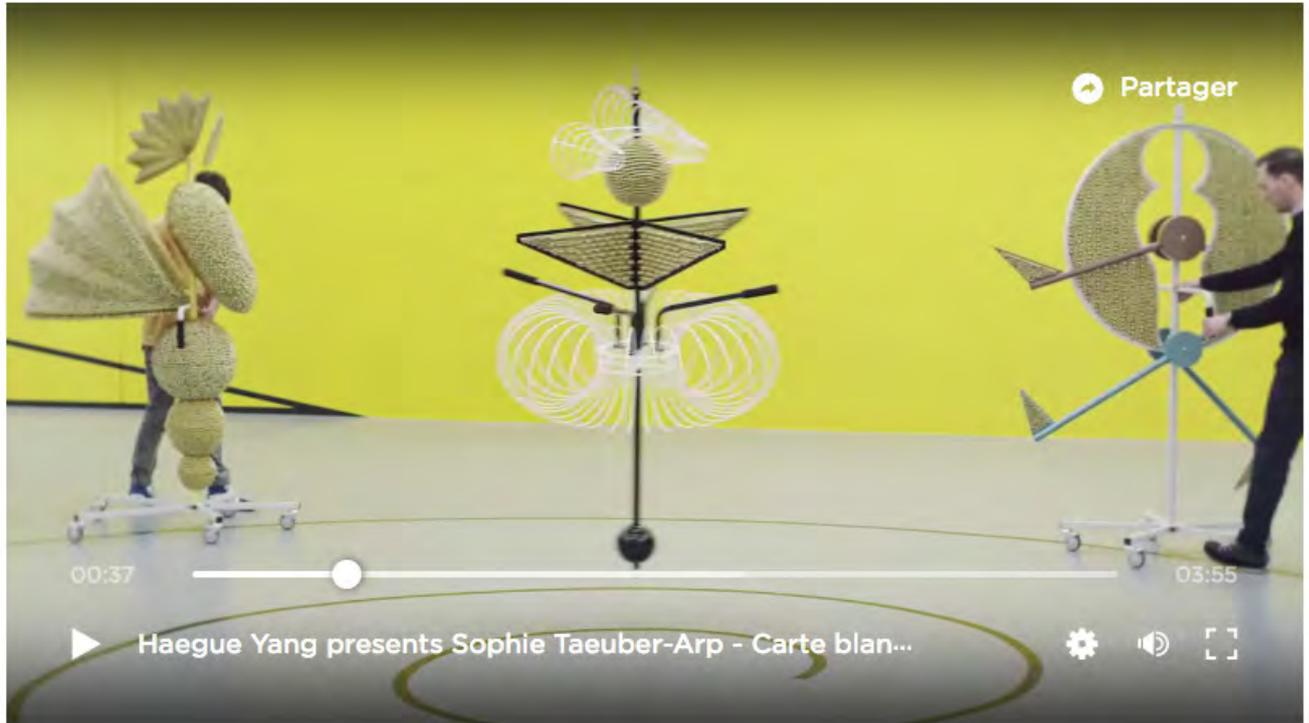
Before she began experimenting with straw, Yang was making light sculptures out of IV stands and clothing racks. Her *Warrior*, *Believer*, *Lover* series in 2011 featured 33 such works draped with cables, bulbs, Venetian blinds, netting, artificial plants, dried herb bundles, mushrooms, charcoal, metal strainers, baskets, bells, fly swatters, whistles, knitting yarn, plastic funnels and other miscellaneous items. These sculptures in turn grew out of a *Series of Vulnerable Arrangements* (2007-9). "I imagined a group dance of pagan figures, such as Native women and medicine men in duets and trios and I was envisioning a choreography with *Rite of Spring* as my reference. At the time, I thought it was exploitative to use another author's music but it became a necessity to lend movement to the piece."

Yang began using frames like IV stands on wheels, or drying racks wrapped in fabric and elements like bulbs and cables, in what seemed like ad hoc sculptures, after she visited her late grandmother's house. "I went there and the drying rack, IV drip, fans, strobes and origami - they were all there - and it all just came together in my work." So she created an installation on-site, *Sadong 30*. "As I moved from IV stands - which were too frail to carry more objects - to clothing racks, it started to become an autonomous sculptural language: the bodies or frames got chunkier, which enabled me to tailor the sculptures in a richer way," Yang adds.

But building art pieces out of unusual materials such as bicycle bells and Venetian blinds, which she calls "banal discoveries," can be traced to the very beginnings of her art practice. Leaving Seoul, where she trained as an artist, for Germany in 1994, she found herself in a place that was completely foreign.

"I don't know if you can imagine the confusion I went through... I couldn't interpret the social





Galerie
Chantal Crousel

My favourite artwork - Haegue Yang

ARTE Creative | KUNST | 5 Mars 2017

L'artiste de *Readymade* Haegue Yang présente son œuvre préférée *Une coupe Dada* de Sophie Taeuber-Arp et la fait s'envoler à Berlin.

La Coréenne Haegue Yang crée des installations à partir d'objets du quotidien, qu'elle place dans un nouveau contexte. Dans le cadre de *My favourite artwork*, la plasticienne présente son œuvre préférée : une coupe Dada de Sophie Taeuber-Arp. Et la fait voler dans les airs pour tester sa résistance à son exposition dans l'espace public. .

Dans *My favourite artwork*, des artistes présentent une œuvre qui les a influencées et inspirées.

« Haegue Yang X Aishti by the sea », *Aishti Blog*, December 7, 2016.
<http://aishtiblog.com/haegue-yang-x-aishti-by-the-sea-installation/>

AÏSHTI BLOG

HAEGUE YANG X AÏSHTI BY THE SEA

Galerie
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« Haegue Yang X Aishti by the sea », *Aishti Blog*, December 7, 2016.
<http://aishtiblog.com/haegue-yang-x-aishti-by-the-sea-installation/>

AÏSHTI BLOG

DECEMBER 7, 2016

We bring good news for all art lovers: Aishti is delighted to announce that Korean contemporary artist Haegue Yang will be installing her artworks on Aishti by the Sea's windows, in collaboration with Galerie Chantal Crousel, titled "Quasi – Pagan Seasonal Shift".



Yang's work is all about hybrid combinations that challenge different notions such as crafts vs. modernity, real vs. supernatural, geometric vs. organic. For example, she uses typical household objects and everyday materials such as Venetian blinds and straw and transforms them in interesting ways, drawing her inspiration from cultural references linked to political and social phenomena. The « Pagan » relates to the pagan dances in composer Igor Stravinsky's *Sacre du Printemps*.



After her most recent installation at Galeries Lafayette in Paris, she's bringing 10 of those works especially to be installed at Aishti by the Sea.

The display will run until the end of January 2017.

AÏSHTI BLOG

Galerie
Chantal Crousel



Hague Yang

The Intermediate – Long Neck Woman Upside Down, 2016

Artificial straw, steel stand, powder coating, plastic fans, rattles, artificial plants, Saekdong fabric, Indian bells, casters

182 x 115 x 100 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris

Aishti by the Sea, Antelias

Tel. 04 711 940

EDITOR'S PICK
KARINE MONIÉ
28 | 10 | 2016

Bienal de arte de Montreal

Un escaparate efervescente que muestra lo más vibrante en la escena artística actual.



Skyline de la ciudad de Montreal.

FOTO: iStock

Del 19 de octubre de 2016 al 15 de enero de 2017, tendrá lugar la novena edición de la **Bienal de arte de Montreal** bajo el título "Le Grand Balcon", en referencia a la obra de teatro de **Jean Genet** "Le Balcon", sobre la oposición entre realidad e ilusión. Curada por **Philippe Pirotte**, la bienal invita a reexaminar nuestra búsqueda del placer sensual. Las obras seleccionadas destacan por ser imágenes de gran resonancia histórica que nos anclan materialmente y sensorialmente en el momento presente.

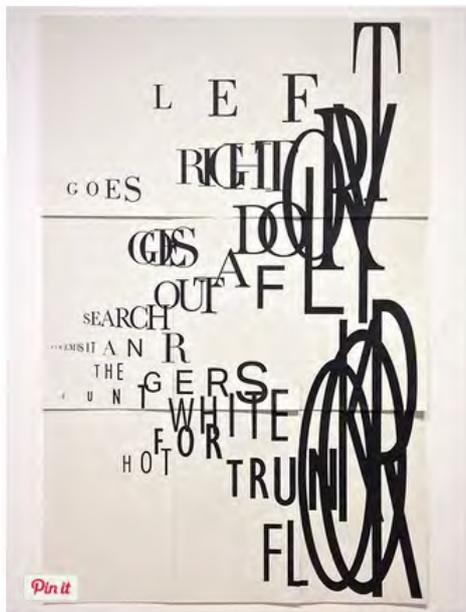
Desde sus inicios en 1998, la misión de la Bienal de Montreal ha sido estimular, producir, interpretar y difundir las prácticas de las artes visuales más actuales. En la edición 2016, más de 50 artistas y colectivos de 23 países podrán descubrirse durante 75 días. Te presentamos nuestras 5 obras de arte favoritas.



3 HAEGUE YANG, "SONIC SPHERE – HORIZONTALLY-STRIPED BRASS AND NICKEL", 2015.

Nacida en 1971 en Seúl, Corea del Sur, Haegue Yang vive y trabaja entre su ciudad de origen y Berlín. Suele usar objetos y materiales de la vida cotidiana, dándoles un nuevo significado poético o político a través de esculturas e instalaciones donde trata los efectos del capitalismo. Su trabajo ofrece experiencias sensoriales a través de narrativas abstractas.

Foto: Elisabeth Bernstein / Cortesía del artista y Greene Naftali, Nueva York.



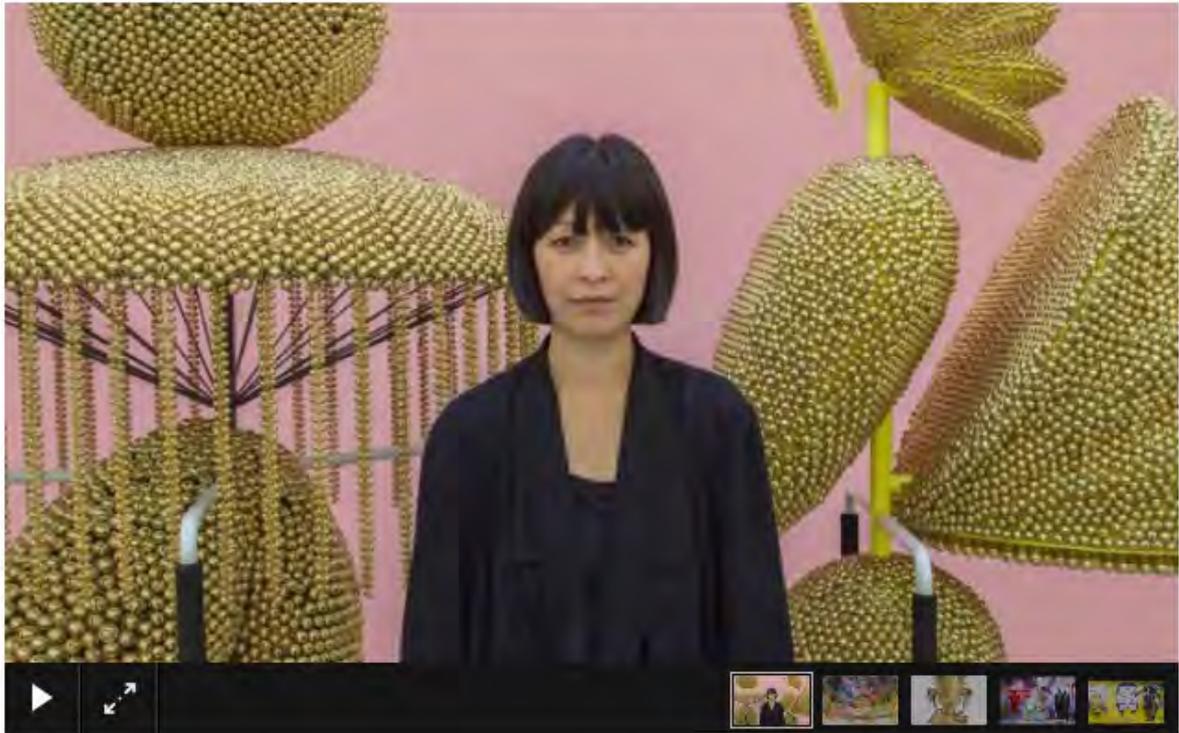
4 JANICE KERBEL, "SCORE", 2015.

Originaria de Toronto, Canadá, Janice Kerbel –nacida en 1969– trabaja en Londres donde explora la noción de visibilidad a través de formas que se caracterizan por su potencial de transformación futura. Se interesa en diversas disciplinas y sus obras tienden a borrar los límites entre realidad, imaginación e ilusión. Janice Kerbel suele usar todo tipo de medios en su trabajo que incluye instalaciones, libros, estampados y material audiovisual, ofreciendo al público experiencias visuales y sonoras únicas.

Foto: Karine Monié.

LA SEIZE

Haegue Yang investit Aishti by the Sea



Galerie
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LA MODE

Demain, l'artiste sud-coréenne Haegue Yang, en collaboration avec la galerie Chantal Crousel, prendra possession des vitrines du complexe Aishti by the Sea pour y créer des installations déclinant son thème « Quasi-pagan » lancé en août dernier aux Galeries Lafayette, à Paris.

Fifi ABOU DIB | OLJ

14/12/2016



Les objets inanimés ont-ils une âme ? Cette question galvaudée, posée par Lamartine au XIXe siècle, n'attend évidemment pas de réponse. D'ailleurs, quelle importance qu'ils en aient ou pas, tant qu'ils ont le talent de dégager de l'émotion et de piéger du sens. C'est la réflexion que s'est faite l'artiste Haegue Yang qui compte parmi les plus influentes de sa génération. Née en 1971 à Séoul, d'un père journaliste et d'une mère écrivaine, elle vit aujourd'hui entre Berlin et sa ville natale. Après avoir fait ses études à l'Université nationale de Séoul, elle passe son master à la Städelschule de Francfort et poursuit sa formation en fréquentant des ateliers, notamment l'atelier Calder. Ses installations interpellent les émotions humaines entre poésie et politique. La réflexion profonde qui les sous-tend n'en fait pas pour autant des œuvres intellectuelles. Les objets du quotidien mis en scène par ses soins se révèlent sous un jour inédit, dénoncent le culte parfois inconscient qu'on leur voue et, statiques ou mouvants, occupent l'espace physique autant que l'espace mental du spectateur. À la croisée de la culture coréenne et du matérialisme contemporain, l'œuvre de Haegue Yang impose son universalité.

« Lingerin Nous » au Centre Pompidou, Paris

L'été dernier, de juillet à septembre, le Centre Pompidou présentait une production monumentale inédite de Haegue Yang. Dans le Forum du musée, dont l'espace vertical se déploie sur trois niveaux du bâtiment, l'artiste interrogeait à travers plusieurs médiums, du collage à la performance, les qualités plastiques et émotionnelles des objets du quotidien. Dissociés de leur contexte et assemblés dans ses compositions abstraites, ces objets, libérés de leurs fonctions premières, imposaient leurs qualités plastiques et oniriques. Essentiellement composée de stores vénitiens comme autant de lustres de même origine, et autant d'éventails et panneaux asiatiques d'ailleurs, cette installation monumentale, constituée de près de 166 éléments verts et roses iridescents, était accompagnée, au sous-sol de la salle, de quatre essais vidéo qui lui donnaient voix et dimension humaine. « Les matériaux sont dotés d'un pouvoir magique, soulignait l'artiste. Je les conçois dans toute leur potentialité, et celle-ci ne se révèle qu'au bout d'un combat. Durant toutes ces années, j'ai travaillé avec acharnement sur les stores, et ce n'est que maintenant que je réalise que ce travail n'a pas été vain : il leur a permis de se libérer de la trivialité de l'usage quotidien qui en est fait. »



Haegue Yang / Quasi-Pagan Modern from Studio Haegue Yang 양혜규 on Vimeo.

« Quasi-pagan modern » aux Galeries Lafayette

Presque simultanément avec le Centre Pompidou, les Galeries Lafayette, boulevard Haussmann et dans tous leurs magasins en France, lançaient au mois d'août les collections automne-hiver 2016-2017 avec la contribution de Haegue Yang. Jusqu'au 9 octobre, l'artiste proposait dans les vitrines du temple français du bon goût, sous le titre Quasi-pagan modern (modernité quasi païenne), des motifs hybrides qui osaient l'affrontement entre des notions différentes telles que artisanat/modernité, réel/surnaturel, géométrique/organique. Ses œuvres ont été dévoilées dans les vitrines et sous la célèbre coupole du magasin du boulevard Haussmann, ornant même le shopping bag en édition limitée de la rentrée. Entre rationnel et étrange, ces installations faisaient écho aux nouvelles collections de la saison. Dynamisées par cette collaboration, les Galeries Lafayette révélaient en échange l'énergie de la création et se posaient en « médiateurs entre artistes emblématiques, jeunes créateurs et grand public, provoquant la rencontre unique de la création et du commerce pour tous ».

« Quasi-pagan Seasonal Shift » à Aishti by the Sea

Pionnier de cette rencontre improbable entre l'art et le commerce de luxe, le complexe Aishti by the Sea, en collaboration avec la galerie Chantal Crousel, invite à son tour Haegue Yang à investir ses vitrines. L'œuvre qui sera mise en place demain, jeudi, à 18h, marquera une étape dans le développement du projet « Quasi-pagan » de l'artiste coréenne. On n'en dira pas plus, sinon que les créations de cette saison y seront traitées comme des objets d'art, non pas en raison de leur beauté intrinsèque mais en tant que porteuses de sens et d'interrogations sur leur statut autant que sur nous-mêmes.

Sansom, Anna. «Haegue Yang's symphony of blinds rises through the vast foyer of Paris's Centre Pompidou»,
FRAME, November 13.

<http://www.frameweb.com/news/haegue-yang--s-symphony-of-blinds-rises-through-the-vast-foyer-of-paris--s-centre-pompidou>

FRAME



Galerie
Chantal Crousel

— FRAME MAGAZINE —

Haegue Yang's symphony of blinds rises through the vast foyer of Paris's Centre Pompidou

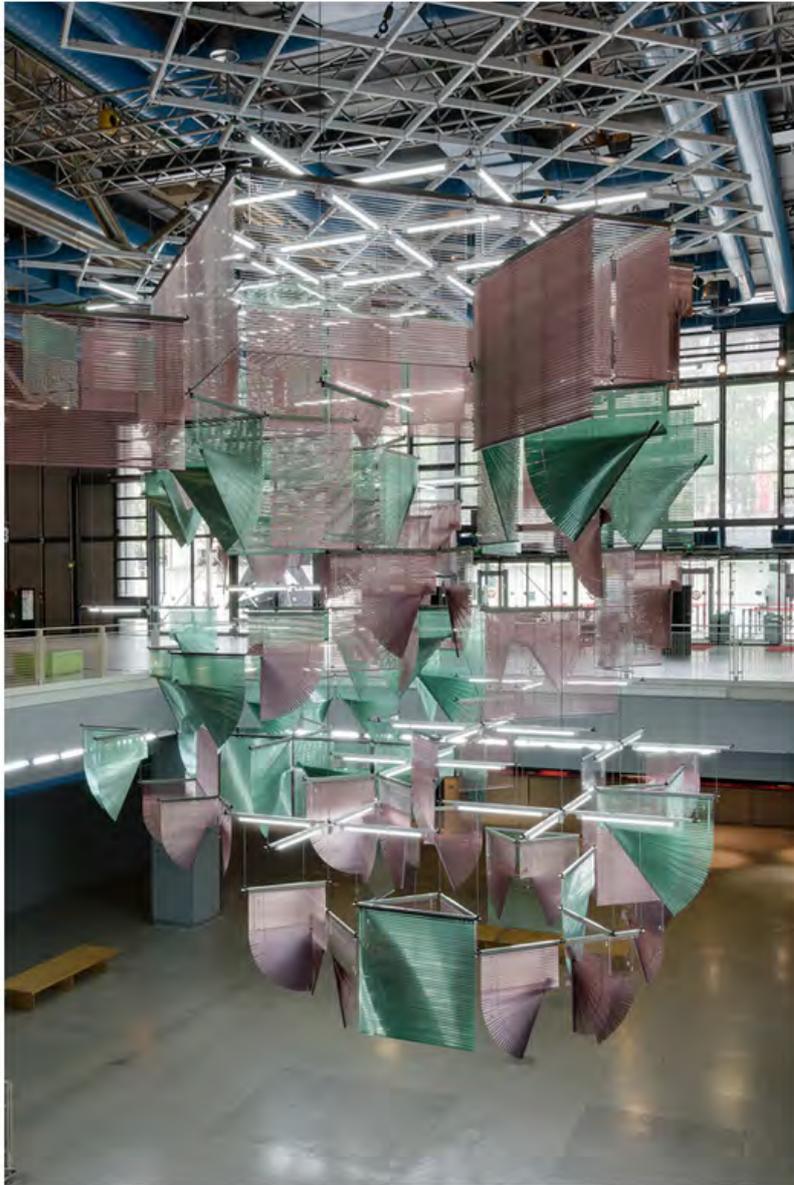
PARIS – To celebrate France-Korea Year 2015-2016, the Centre Pompidou in Paris invited South Korean artist Haegue Yang to make a site-specific installation to be shown in the Forum, which doubles as foyer and exhibition area. Her piece, *Lingering Nous*, extended over three floors, occupying the central part of the space.

Born in Seoul in 1971, Haegue Yang employed ordinary Venetian blinds, a staple in her work since 2006, for the monumental abstract composition. Liberating the blinds from their original function, she elevated the ready-mades to reveal their aesthetic quality. While some of the blinds hung all the way down, others opened midway, spanning out like fans. The resulting rhythmic sensation evoked an orchestral melody inaudibly filling the space.

Sansom, Anna. «Haegue Yang's symphony of blinds rises through the vast foyer of Paris's Centre Pompidou»,
FRAME, November 13.

<http://www.frameweb.com/news/haegue-yang--s-symphony-of-blinds-rises-through-the-vast-foyer-of-paris--s-centre-pompidou>

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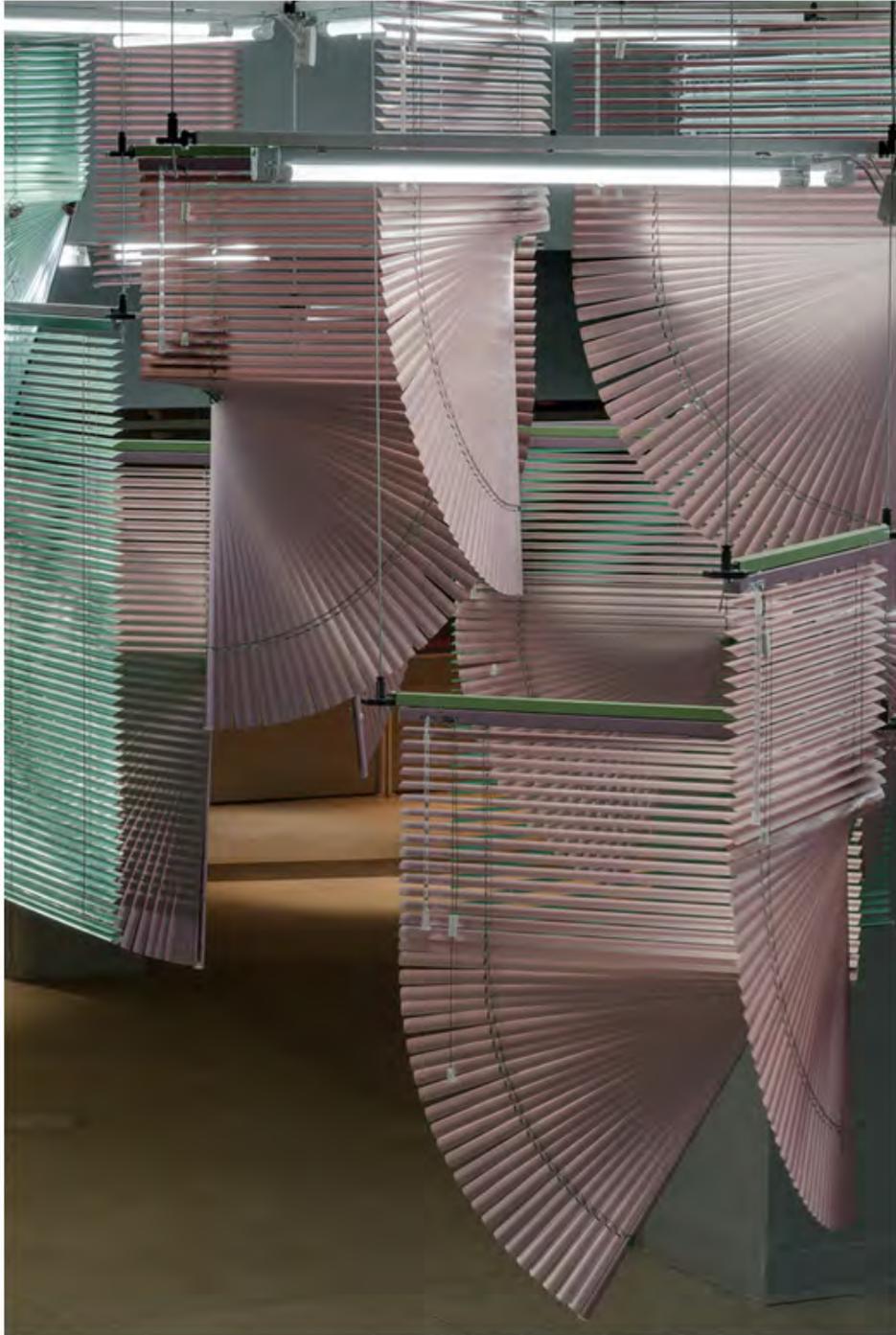
Galerie
Chantal Crousel

Yang's work cleverly reflected on the architecture of the Centre Pompidou. The flattened cones that she created contrasted with the building's strict linearity. Similarly, Yang chose delicate pastels – pearlescent pinks and greens – that complemented the Centre Pompidou's primary colours. The two LED chandeliers that illuminated her installation resonated with cabling visible on the ceiling.

Commenting on Yang's contribution prior to its installation, curator Nicolas Liucci-Goutnikov said, 'The artist has proposed a piece that doesn't seek to enter into competition with the space but to dialogue with it.' Experienced within the context of France-Korea Year, *Lingering Nous* expressed a wish for cultural harmony.

Sansom, Anna. «Haegue Yang's symphony of blinds rises through the vast foyer of Paris's Centre Pompidou»,
FRAME, November 13.
<http://www.frameweb.com/news/haegue-yang--s-symphony-of-blinds-rises-through-the-vast-foyer-of-paris--s-centre-pompidou>

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Galerie
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Photos Florian Kleinfenn, courtesy of Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris

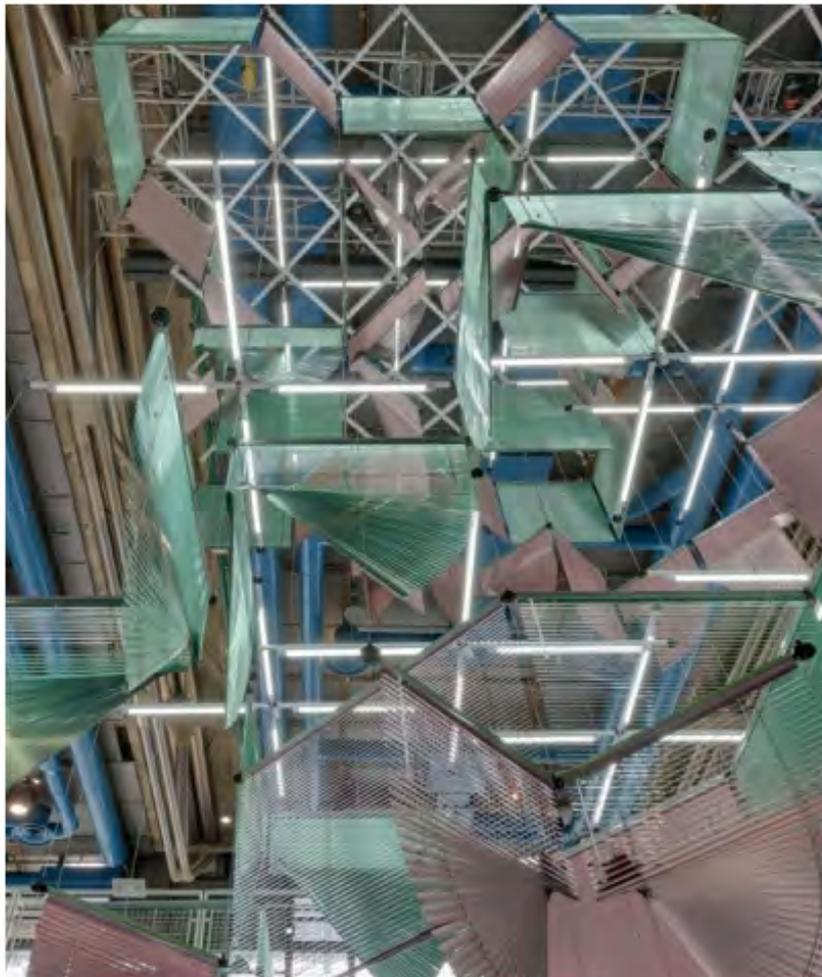
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Sansom, Anna. «Haegue Yang's symphony of blinds rises through the vast foyer of Paris's Centre Pompidou»,
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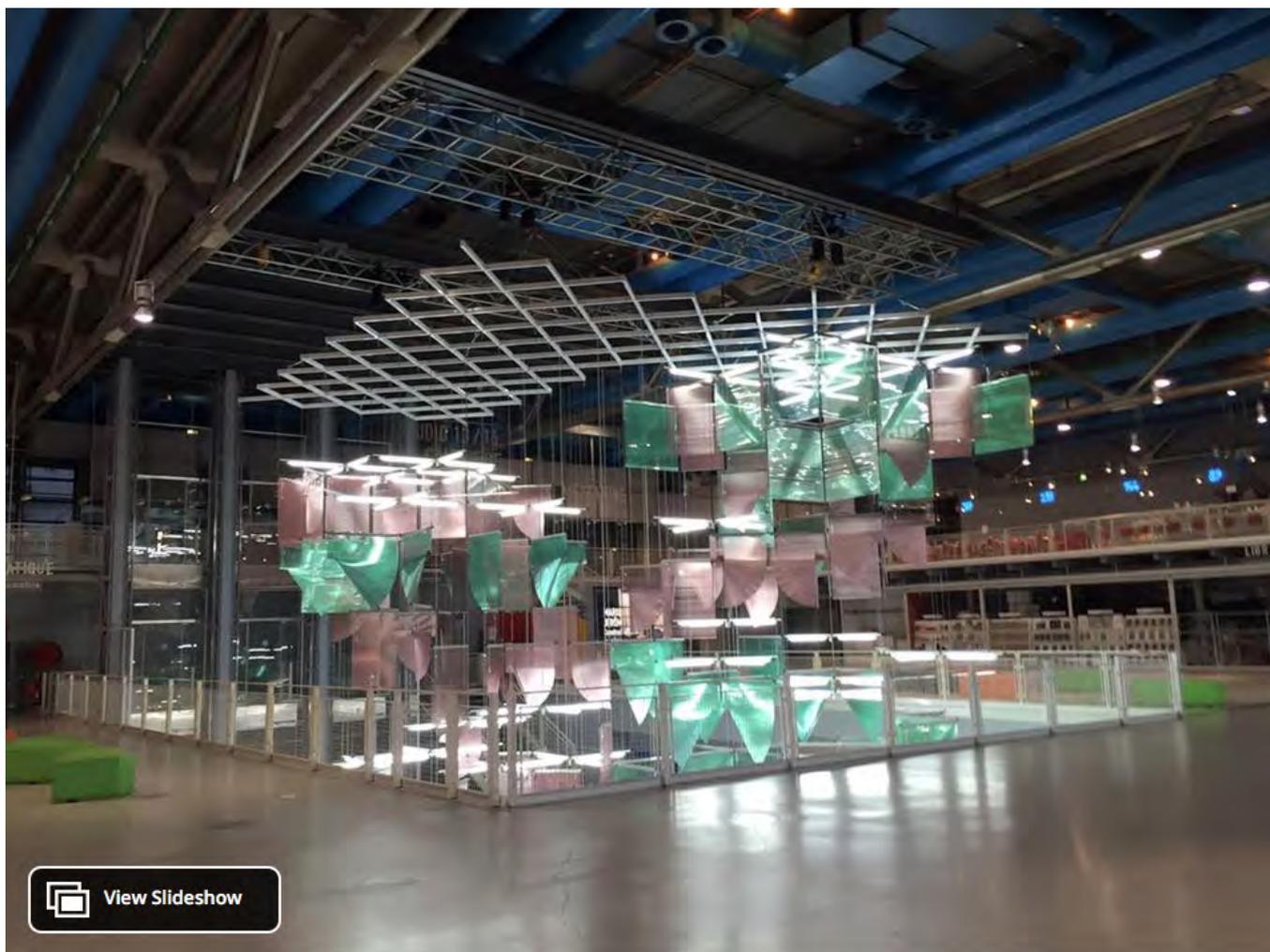
Wee, Darryl. "Haegue Yang Opens New Installation at Centre Pompidou". *Blouin Art Info*, July 7, 2016.
<http://enfr.blouinartinfo.com/news/story/1448590/haegue-yang-opens-new-installation-at-centre-pompidou>

BLOUINARTINFO

Haegue Yang Opens New Installation at Centre Pompidou

BY Darryl Wee | July 07, 2016

Galerie
Chantal Crousel



View of Haegue Yang's installation at the Forum of the Centre Pompidou
(Courtesy Bo Young Song)

2016 has been a productive year for Haegue Yang. Following her solo exhibition "Quasi-Pagan Minimal" that opened at the Hamburger Kunsthalle in April, a much-feted showcase at Art Basel Unlimited in June, and another exhibition at the Serralves Museum in Porto, Yang has just unveiled an ambitious site-specific installation in the Forum of the Centre Pompidou in Paris.

Entitled "Lingering Nous," Yang's new work is an installation that could easily have been overwhelmed by the cavernous scale of the space, which extends over three levels. By turns ethereal in its semi-translucency and varied in the degree of extension and color exhibited by each set of Venetian blinds, the work nonetheless adheres to a strict formal logic.

"At first glance, the installation looks quite expressive, freed of any constraint," curator Nicolas Liucci-Goutnikov tells ARTINFO. "But if you look more carefully, you realize that Haegue has set up a series of

BLOUINARTINFO

strict rules, to which she always submits herself delightfully."

"A grid determines the system by which the blinds are hung, which in turn determines the colors of the blinds, which she has chosen beforehand from an industrial catalog," he adds. "The whole is then rawly illuminated by lights placed within the structure itself, as well as around it. The result, for me, is a radiant beauty."

"Lingering Nous" is the latest addition to Yang's "Sol LeWitt" series, which she has been working on ever since her exhibition "Shooting the Elephant □ Thinking the Elephant" at the Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art in Seoul last year.

"The 12 or so installations in the Sol LeWitt series are characterized by their modular systems, which led Haegue to propose very dense and compact installations that prevent our gaze from seeing through them," notes Liucci-Goutnikov.

"With 'Lingering Nous,' I feel that Haegue has reached a breakthrough in the context of this series, thanks to its green and pink hues, its sparse and articulated installation, and 'butterfly' shapes."

For Liucci-Goutnikov, Yang's mastery of such an innocuous and seemingly mundane material as Venetian blinds points toward a more general flair for "working with utilitarian objects, by organizing a transfigured 'rendez-vous' — as Marcel Duchamp said about ready-mades — between them and the viewer."

"Incorporated into abstract compositions, those objects find themselves emancipated from their function, and acquire a new existence," he adds. "Their aesthetic qualities are fully revealed, thanks to Haegue's unique mastery of the material — a mastery that is acquired piece after piece, recalling in many ways the field of crafts."

"In this regard, I think the way in which Haegue deals with Venetian blinds, one of her signature materials, is exemplary," says Liucci-Goutnikov. "Instead of relying on what she has already learned about them, Haegue keeps researching and experimenting with new ways to uncover the aesthetic possibilities embedded in their functionality."

Haegue Yang's "Lingering Nous" runs through September 5 at Centre Pompidou.

Affreixo, Rodrigo. "Serralves em obras para acolher Haegue Yang". *Cultura GPS*, June 25, 2016.
http://www.sabado.pt/cultura_gps/detalhe/serralves_em_obras_para_acolher_haegue_yang.html

CULTURA GPS



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25 Junho 2016 • Rodrigo Affreixo

Um encontro adiado. Suzanne Cotter, a actual directora do Museu de Serralves, conheceu a artista sul-coreana Haegue Yang em Nova Iorque, em 2010. No ano seguinte, quando estava a co-comissariar a bienal de Sharjah, nos Emirados Árabes Unidos, convidou-a a participar. «Não participei, porque nunca tinha estado antes em Sharjah. Não tinha qualquer conhecimento do mundo árabe, mas através do seu convite comecei a investigar sobre o Médio Oriente. E em 2015 acabei por participar na bienal», recorda a artista.

Haegue Yang (Seul, 1971) tem uma carreira imparável e invejável, com apresentações em tudo quanto é sítio de referência, como o MoMA, o Guggenheim, a Tate Modern, a Bienal de Veneza ou o Documenta de Kassel. Ou o Centre Georges Pompidou, já em Julho.

Quando chegou a Serralves, Suzanne Cotter apressou-se a dirigir-lhe um convite. E também teve uma reunião com os parceiros da Sonae neste projecto, «no sentido de mudar o formato em função das coisas diferentes que temos aqui», conta ao GPS. «Se estão interessados em algo distintivo, a coisa mais distintiva que temos aqui é o facto de termos o museu em relação com os jardins e o parque. E isso é algo que a Tate Modern não tem, o MoMA não tem, o Centro Pompidou não tem».

A obra intitula-se An Opaque Wind Park in Six Folds (Parque de Vento Opaco em Seis Dobras). Primeiro, chegaram os esboços em 3D da artista. Depois, foram trabalhados num gabinete de arquitectos. Mais tarde, na Clareira dos Teixos, iniciou-se a construção da peça, que durou mais de duas semanas, envolvendo um engenheiro, um pedreiro, vários construtores e jardineiros e três estudantes de artes.

Wee, Darryl. "Lee Hyun-Sook on Haegue Yang at Art Basel Unlimited 2016". *Blouin Art Info*, June 7, 2016.
http://enkr.blouinartinfo.com/news/story/1421483/lee-hyun-sook-on-haegue-yang-at-art-basel-unlimited-2016?utm_source=Blouin+Artinfo+Newsletters&utm_campaign=0a798be876-Europe+Edition+Newsletter+June+8%2C+2016&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_df23dbd3c6-0a798be876-82962465

BLOUINARTINFO

Lee Hyun-Sook on Haegue Yang at Art Basel Unlimited 2016

BY Darryl Wee | June 07, 2016

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Haegue Yang, «Sol LeWitt Upside Down – Structure with Three Towers, Expanded 23 Times, Split in Three,» 2015, aluminum Venetian blinds, aluminum hanging structure, powder coating, steel wire, 3 towers, 350 x 352.5 x 352.5 cm each. Installation view of La vie modern, La Biennale de Lyon, La Sucrière, Lyon, France, 2015

(Courtesy Kukje Gallery. Photo © Blaise ADILON)

For all collectors attending Art Basel this month, the Unlimited Section of the fair is an absolute must-see. The sheer size of some of the works presented can often be breathtaking, while the roll-call of participating artists reads like a «who's who» of the art world. This year, visitors can expect to see 88 projects – a record number – including some by heavyweights like Ai Weiwei, El Anatsui, Elmgreen & Dragset, Tracey Emin, Sol LeWitt, Frank Stella, and James Turrell.

Proudly displayed amongst them will be leading Korean artist Haegue Yang's "Sol LeWitt Upside Down – Structure with Three Towers, Expanded 23 Times, Split in Three," an ethereal modular construction of

Wee, Darryl. "Lee Hyun-Sook on Haegue Yang at Art Basel Unlimited 2016". *Blouin Art Info*, June 7, 2016.
http://enkr.blouinartinfo.com/news/story/1421483/lee-hyun-sook-on-haegue-yang-at-art-basel-unlimited-2016?utm_source=Blouin+Artinfo+Newsletters&utm_campaign=0a798be876-Europe+Edition+Newsletter+June+8%2C+2016&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_df23dbd3c6-0a798be876-82962465

BLOUINARTINFO

white blinds that is an extension of a series first shown at Yang's solo exhibition "Shooting the Elephant □ Thinking the Elephant," at Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art (Seoul) in 2015.

We talked to Lee Hyun-Sook of Seoul's Kukje Gallery, which is collaborating with New York's Tina Kim Gallery to present Haegue Yang at Art Basel Unlimited 2016, to find out more about the installation.

Could you describe the significance of Haegue Yang's practice in the context of both her hometown of Seoul and her adopted base of Berlin? Would you say that there is anything at all «Korean» or even «Asian» about her work, or is it globally aware and internationally oriented?

Haegue Yang is inspired by the everyday, as well as deeply engaged with the context of the exhibition space. She is not locked into a framework of being "Korean" or "Asian"; however, her chosen subject matter and mediums do engage cultural perspectives depending on the historical and traditional milieu of the exhibition venue.

That being said, instead of viewing her work as nomadic and unmoored to any geographical site, the artist and her practice can be viewed as engaging with recurring themes, especially her desire to explore the sensuous and intuitive in the everyday.

This can be seen in her major series "The Intermediates," which is part of her current solo exhibition at the Hamburger Kunsthalle. These works are made primarily of straw, a material which can be found in various cultures, and explore how materials can act as a middleman between the borders of the past and present, the ancient and modern age.

Who would you say are some of Haegue Yang's main artistic influences and predecessors?

Haegue Yang's practice often revolves around series of related works based on deep research of historical figures and their social history. For instance, Yang approached the subject of diaspora by exploring the work of Korean-Japanese writer Suh Kyungsik, who wrote the book "My Journey to Primo Levi." This powerful work reflects on political asylum and Yang uses it as a framework to explore her own complex experience living and working in Germany. She organized a lecture with this important author as part of her solo exhibition at Haus der Kunst.

How would you describe Yang's installation for Unlimited in your own words?

"Sol LeWitt Upside Down – Structure with Three Towers, Expanded 23 Times, Split in Three," which will be presented at Art Basel Unlimited, is an extension of her blind series that was first shown at her solo exhibition "Shooting the Elephant □ Thinking the Elephant" at Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art, Seoul, in 2015, entitled "Sol LeWitt Upside Down – Structure with Three Towers, Expanded 23 Times."

In its first iteration, the work was suspended in the air as a single cube. At the Lyon Biennial in September 2015, the work evolved and was divided into three towers with fluorescent lamps installed inside. In this year's Art Basel Unlimited exhibition, the artist has altered the work once again, allowing it to hang nearly touching the floor and directly engaging the Unlimited sector's exhibition space designed by Herzog & de Meuron.

Wee, Darryl. "Lee Hyun-Sook on Haegue Yang at Art Basel Unlimited 2016". *Blouin Art Info*, June 7, 2016.
http://enkr.blouinartinfo.com/news/story/1421483/lee-hyun-sook-on-haegue-yang-at-art-basel-unlimited-2016?utm_source=Blouin+Artinfo+Newsletters&utm_campaign=0a798be876-Europe+Edition+Newsletter+June+8%2C+2016&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_df23dbd3c6-0a798be876-82962465

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What are some recent and upcoming projects by Haegue Yang that viewers ought to be aware of, or look forward to?

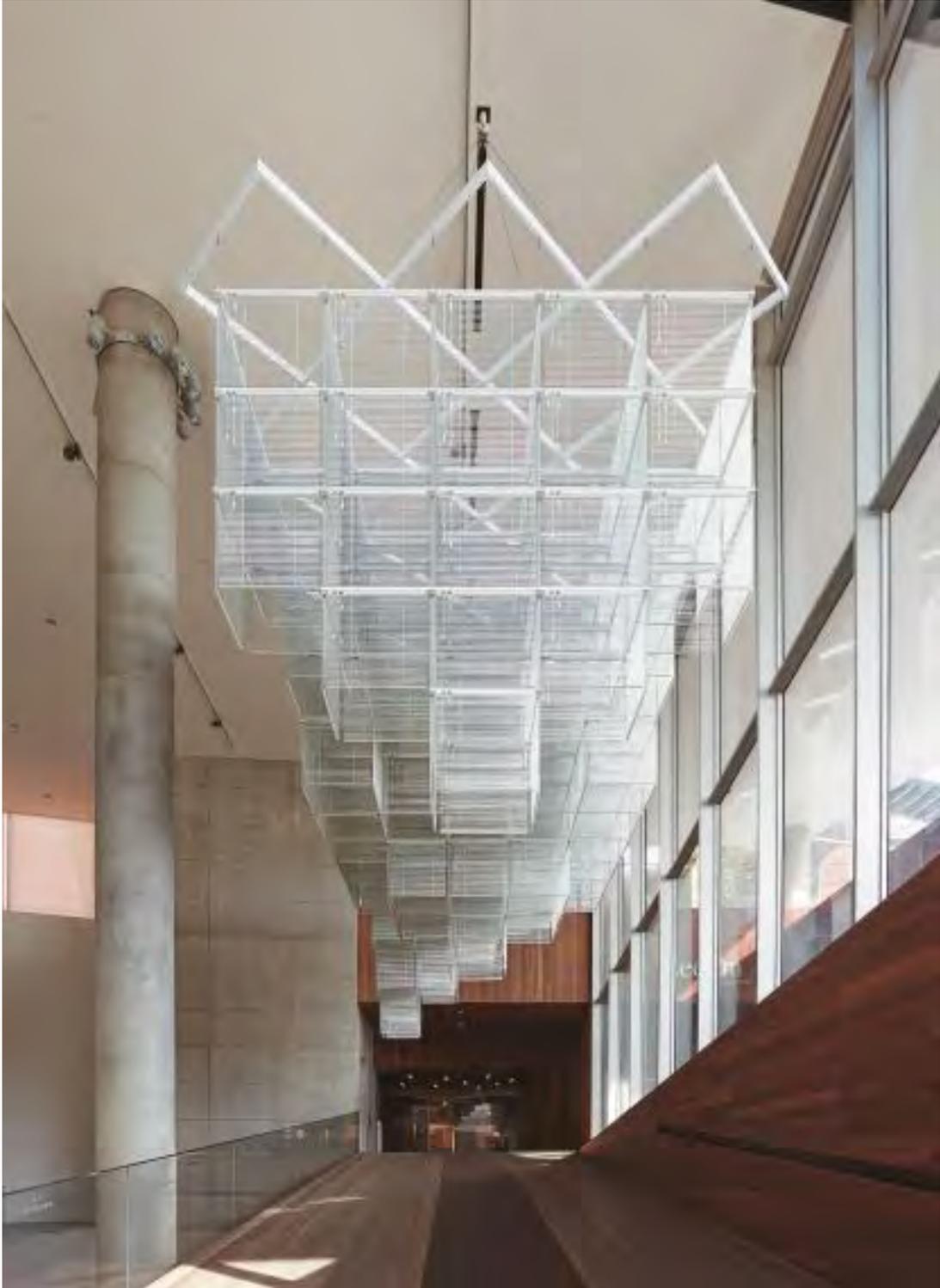
Her solo exhibition "Quasi-Pagan Minimal" at the Hamburger Kunsthalle opened last month and is on view through April 30, 2017. Also, her upcoming solo exhibition at the Centre Pompidou, Paris will open on July 5, and run through September 5, 2016. A large-scale blind work will be installed in the main Forum of the Centre Pompidou, and this will be a key exhibition showcasing this signature series. The blind series has allowed the artist to explore both compositional aspects and dynamic variables such as the architectural site.

Yang also has an exhibition in Porto, Portugal in June, a group exhibition at the Kunsthalle Bremen in Germany in August, and in October, she will be included in La Biennale de Montréal in Canada.

Wee, Darryl. "Lee Hyun-Sook on Haegue Yang at Art Basel Unlimited 2016". *Blouin Art Info*, June 7, 2016.
http://enkr.blouinartinfo.com/news/story/1421483/lee-hyun-sook-on-haegue-yang-at-art-basel-unlimited-2016?utm_source=Blouin+Artinfo+Newsletters&utm_campaign=0a798be876-Europe+Edition+Newsletter+June+8%2C+2016&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_df23dbd3c6-0a798be876-82962465

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ANNÉE
FRANCE CORÉE

HAEGUE YANG

PROPOS RECUEILLIS
PAR NICOLAS
LIUCCI-GOUTNIKOV
CONSERVATEUR AU MUSÉE
NATIONAL D'ART MODERNE

Pour marquer l'Année de la Corée en France, qui vient célébrer les cent trente ans de l'établissement des relations diplomatiques entre les deux pays, le Centre Pompidou présente une œuvre inédite

LES MATÉRIAUX SONT DOUÉS D'UNE
PUISSANCE MAGIQUE. JE LES ENVISAGE
DANS TOUTE LEUR POTENTIALITÉ.

DU 6 JUILLET
AU 5 SEPTEMBRE 2016

FORUM

de l'artiste coréenne Haegue Yang. À travers plusieurs disciplines et médiums, du collage à la performance en passant par l'installation, Haegue Yang met à l'épreuve nos perceptions communes et interroge les qualités plastiques des objets du quotidien. Elle imagine une nouvelle installation pour le Forum du Centre Pompidou. Entretien.

NICOLAS LIUCCI-GOUTNIKOV - Depuis ces dix dernières années, tu proposes des installations faites de stores, où la lumière artificielle, le mouvement et parfois les odeurs entrent en jeu. Cette pratique te conduit-elle à produire des « expériences » plutôt que des « objets » ?

HAEGUE YANG - Oui et non, puisque les stores n'occupent pas l'espace comme des objets ordinaires. Ce sont des objets qui articulent l'espace en vertu de leur puissance obscure. Dans mes premiers travaux, comme *Series of Vulnerable Arrangements* - *Blind Room* (2006), les stores constituent simplement des zones d'expérience sensibles, du courant d'air froid provenant du climatiseur suspendu à la chaleur émise par les radiateurs infrarouges autopor-

tants. Muette et pourtant riche en effets, *Blind Room* contient également la voix enregistrée dans les trois « essais » vidéo-graphiques de *Trilogy*. Cette voix habite le même espace. *Yearning Melancholy Red* (2008) m'a permis de mettre à l'épreuve mes découvertes quant à l'« obliquité du store », explorée dans *Blind Room*. Les stores s'y déploient en une expression spatiale plus évidente. Ils racontent aussi une histoire à travers leur forme, leur couleur et le dialogue contrasté avec une lumière rouge en mouvement. Autour des structures de stores, trois paires de radiateurs et de ventilateurs opposées sont juxtaposées. Elles intensifient l'expérience des sens.

NLG - La plupart de tes installations sont faites d'objets ménagers, privés de leur fonction. Quelle est ta relation à ces objets ?

HY - Les matériaux sont doués d'une puissance magique. Je les envisage dans toute leur potentialité, une potentialité qui ne s'actualise qu'à travers la lutte. Toutes ces années passées à travailler avec acharnement les stores ont, d'une certaine manière, prouvé que cette lutte n'était pas vaine : elle leur aura permis de se libérer de leur ancrage trivial au quotidien.

NLG - À quelle problématique as-tu été confrontée pour cette installation au Centre Pompidou ?

HY - Je me la suis imposée à moi-même, envisageant de revenir à une forme antérieure de la série de mes œuvres intitulées *Sol LeWitt Upside Down*, débutée en 2014. Je souhaitais me libérer du fort désir que





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j'éprouvais alors : une installation de stores qui citerait explicitement les structures modulaires de Sol LeWitt. Mais j'ai fini par retourner à ce dont j'avais essayé de me défaire, achevant un cycle de construction conceptuelle : de l'« apprendre » au « désapprendre ».

NLG - Tu as conçu l'installation pour le Forum du Centre Pompidou en la rendant adaptable aux galeries d'exposition. Comment y es-tu parvenue ?

HY - L'installation repose sur une grille dotée de sa propre géométrie, offrant une moindre résistance aux transformations. En tant que telle, elle peut être adaptée à des espaces de différents formats, donnant à cette œuvre la possibilité d'une existence aventureuse! ✕

HAEGUE YANG, PHOTO © STYLE H



Curated by Eungie Joo, Sharjah Biennial 12, “The Past, the Present, the Possible,” featured a compact lineup of 50-plus artists and groups from 25 countries, with many newly commissioned projects and the use of several new sites around the Gulf emirate. Eschewing the grab-bag presentation and heavy polemical themes commonly deployed in biennials, Joo instead showcased artists’ practices in depth or created opportunities for ambitious, site-specific solo projects. The result was more of an exhibition than a festival, as Joo nudged the biennial format away from wide-angled superficiality that make them akin to displays at today’s art fairs. Here’s a look at a handful of the memorable projects from “The Past, the Present, the Possible,” before a full review is published in the May/June issue of *ArtAsiaPacific*

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HAEGUE YANG’s *An Opaque Wind* (2015) drew on the history of Korean expatriates who, largely in the 1970s, were recruited to the Gulf in order to develop its oil industry. Her courtyard installation combined attributes of Sharjah’s traditional architecture, such as wind towers, with modern vents, shipping containers, and bricks and concrete blocks, and featured a small room with woven mats and Korean news program playing on a television. Photo by HG Masters for *ArtAsiaPacific*.

Sharjah Biennial 12: “The Past, the Present, the Possible” can be seen from now until June 5, 2015, at various venues in Sharjah.

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Wie **Haegue Yang** in ihrem Werk die Referenzen
ins Rollen bringt

The multiple registers and references
in the work of Haegue Yang

Kito Nedo

**Mehrfach
verschoben**

**The
Shape Shifter**

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Katie, Gallery, Seoul & Galerie, New, London, Berlin, www.chantalcrousel.com
Photography: © Kito Nedo

1
Sonic Figure – Vigorous Stretcher, 2013
Steel stand, metal grid,
powder coating, casters,
brass plated bells and metal rings
2,2 x 1,3 x 1,6 m
Installation view
Bonner Kunstverein, 2014

Woran genau liegt es eigentlich, dass der Elefant ein derart stark mit Symbolen beladenes Tier ist? Warum stapft er seit Urzeiten durch Mythen und Weisheiten? Ist es seine Größe? Sein Sozialverhalten? Sein sagenhaftes Gedächtnis? Auch Haegue Yang ruft das Tier für ihre aktuelle Ausstellung im Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art in Seoul auf, und zwar gleich im Titel. Aber trotz des schamierartigen Titels *Shooting the Elephant* 象 *Thinking the Elephant* (das chinesische Zeichen bedeutet Elefant) bezieht sich die Künstlerin genau genommen nur indirekt auf den Dickhäuter. Als eigentliche Hauptreferenzen dienen ihr zwei literarische Texte, die um den Elefanten kreisen und dabei Geschichten erzählen, die von Politik, Gesellschaft, Kolonialismus und dem Verhältnis zwischen Mensch und Natur handeln.

Zum einen ist da *Shooting an Elephant* (dt. *Einem Elefanten erschießen*). So der Titel einer ursprünglich 1936 veröffentlichten, kurzen autobiografischen und anticolonialistischen Skizze, in welcher George Orwell seine Erlebnisse als britischer Kolonialpolizist in Burma Mitte der 1920er Jahre verarbeitet. Der Ich-Erzähler, ein junger Polizei-offizier, wird gerufen, um einen wildgewordenen Arbeitselefanten zu erschießen. Entgegen seines ursprünglichen Entschlusses, es nicht zu tun, feuert er die tödlichen Schüsse dann doch ab. Der Toteskampf des Tieres wird qualvoll langsam beschrieben. Über die Schilderung der Zerrissenheit des Polizisten wird auch die Politisierung des Autors erkennbar, der den Imperialismus

als eine „schmutzige Sache“ beschreibt und trotz seiner Aufgabe mit den Unterdrückten sympathisiert: „Meinen Dienst habe ich mehr, als ich zu sagen vermag.“

Die zweite Referenz bezieht sich auf den 1956 erschienenen, seinerzeit mit dem Prix Goncourt ausgezeichneten, heute jedoch weitgehend vergessenen Roman *Les racines du ciel* (dt. *Die Wurzeln des Himmels*) des französisch-jüdischen Autors Romain Gary, der 1958 unter dem Titel *The Roots of Heaven* in Hollywood verfilmt wurde: Morel, ein kompromissloser Tierschützer, sorgt in der Kolonie Französisch-Äquatorialafrika für Aufruhr, weil er sich inmitten der Wirren des Unabhängigkeitskonflikts zwischen der französischen Verwaltung und der anticolonialen Befreiungsbewegung mit allen Mitteln für den Elefantenschutz und gegen Großwildjagden einsetzt. Für die Zeitgenossen scheint seine Vehemenz nicht nachvollziehbar. Doch sie ist biografisch begründet: Morel ist ein ehemaliger französischer Widerstandskämpfer und Überlebender eines deutschen Konzentrationslagers. Es war der Gedanke an Elefanten, diese freien und wilden Tiere, der ihm während der Haft die Kraft zum Überleben gab.

Wer freilich versucht, solche literarischen Verweise konkreter an bestimmte Werke in Yangs Ausstellungen rückzubinden, wird mitunter auf Schwierigkeiten stoßen: Das Verhältnis zwischen Ausgesprochenem und Gezeigtem scheint zumeist nicht einer Linearität zu folgen. Vielmehr öffnet sich zwischen den Skulpturen und den Referenzen

2
Jang Woo Chul
Staged photograph included in
the exhibition catalogue for Haegue Yang's
Shooting The Elephant 象
Thinking the Elephant, 2015

3
Blind Curtain - Flesh behind Tricolore, 2018
Aluminium Venetian blinds,
aluminium hanging structure, powder
coating and steel wire
4,6 x 7 x 1,5m
Installation view
Aubette 19 28 and Museum of Modern
and Contemporary Art, Strasbourg

Why do elephants exert such a strong symbolic charge? Why are they the stuff of legend and lore? Is it their size? Their social behaviour? Their fabled memory? The animal is invoked by Haegue Yang in her current show at Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art in Seoul. Despite the hinge-like title *Shooting the Elephant* 象 *Thinking the Elephant* (the Chinese character also means elephant) she refers to the pachyderms only indirectly. Her main reference is to two literary texts that feature elephants as their subject to comment on politics, society, colonialism and the relationship between man and nature.

Shooting an Elephant is the title of a short autobiographical, anti-colonial sketch by George Orwell published in 1936, in which the author recounts an episode from his experience as a British colonial policeman in Burma in the mid-1920s. Orwell, a young police officer, is called upon to shoot a rampaging elephant. Despite his initial reluctance, to save face in front of the locals he ends up firing the deadly shot. The animal's death throes are described in excruciating detail. The policeman's inert turmoil points to the politics of the author, who describes imperialism as 'dirty work' and who sympathizes with the oppressed Burmese, despite his position: 'the job I was doing, I hated it more bitterly than I can perhaps make clear'.

The second half of the title refers to Romain Gary's novel *Les racines du ciel*, which won the Prix Goncourt in 1956 but is now largely forgotten and which was made into the Hollywood film *The Roots of Heaven* (1958). In the midst of the battle for independence between the French administration and the anti-colonial liberation movement, the uncompromising animal activist Morel causes a stir in the colony of French Equatorial Africa by campaigning for the protection of elephants against big-game hunting. Morel's contemporaries find his vehemence hard to understand, but it is rooted in his experience as a former member of the French Resistance who survived a German concentration camp. Thinking about elephants, those free, wild animals, was what gave him the strength to live through his incarceration.

Linking such literary references back to specific works in Yang's exhibitions is not always easy, however. In most cases, the relationship between what is shown and what is said is not linear; instead, a space opens up



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3

Yang's approach is based on an element of surprise, on accepting a certain openness and creating a space where connections, ideas and objects are set in motion.

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between sculpture and reference, upsetting a one-to-one correspondence. Similarly, the two stories cited in the Leeum show themselves are about dislocation and rupture, shifting and displacement: transplanting the horrors of Nazi Germany and World War II to colonial Africa and Asia; the border between man and beast broken down by empathy. Political themes then, are articulated via a detour.

There are no elephants in the actual exhibition at Leeum, as the artist emphasizes during a conversation at her Berlin studio. But in the installation views of the otherwise deserted museum provided by her studio, an elegant, dandyish Elephant Man sashays through the exhibition spaces. His face is hidden by a scarf wound round his head, one end hanging down like a trunk. He looks like some hybrid being from another world, half visitor, half exhibit. The status of this figure, who appears only in the exhibition documentation in the catalogue remains

a mystery. Perhaps this ghostly figure is a transcendental wanderer capable of linking the various points of reference within Yang's universe?

Buried clues of this kind occur throughout her work, as Yang's approach is based on the element of surprise, on contradictions and abrupt twists, on accepting a certain openness and creating a space where connections, ideas and objects (and the relationships between them) are set in motion. When dealing with Yang's work, even such a usually uncontroversial term as Conceptual art raises more questions than answers. 'I find it hard to use the term concept,' she says during our conversation: 'If someone thought my work was conceptual I would agree, but I'm at a loss when asked to actually explain how it is conceptual. Perhaps we live in a time when the notion of Conceptual art is at a turning point. We know what Conceptual art was in the 1960s, but I think what the term means now is something that needs redefining.'



Bewegung wird über die Referenz zum Tanz dahingehend verstanden, dass das Verhältnis von Betrachter, Objekt und Raum flexibel wird.

ein Zwischenraum, in dem die Dinge anders miteinander in Relation gesetzt werden. So wie die beiden Erzählungen selbst schon von Entortung und Bruch, von Verschiebung und Übersprung handeln: die Verpflanzung des Horrors des Dritten Reiches und des Zweiten Weltkrieges in das postkoloniale Afrika; das Überspringen einer Mensch-Tier-Grenze in der Empathiefür den Elefanten – politische Themen, artikuliert über einen Umweg.

In der Ausstellung selbst – so betont die Künstlerin beim Gespräch in ihrem Berliner Atelier – ist natürlich kein Elefant zu sehen. Aber dann ist er doch irgendwie da: Zumindest auf den fotografierten Ausstellungsansichten aus dem menschenleeren Museum in Seoul, die ihr Studio schickt, tänzelt ein elegant dandyesker Elefantemann durch die Ausstellungsräume. Sein Gesicht verbirgt er hinter einem um seinen Kopf gewundenen Schattuch, dessen Ende wie ein Rüssel umherbaumelt. Er wirkt wie ein jenseitiges Zwitterwesen, halb Besucher, halb Ausstellungsstück. Der Status dieser Gestalt, die nur im Kontext der Ausstellungsdokumentation, im Abbildungsteil des Katalogs – und somit eher indirekt im Kontext des eigentlichen Werks – auftaucht, bleibt rätselhaft. Braucht es womöglich genau solch eine Geisterfigur, die als transzendente Umherstreifende die verschiedenen Referenzpunkte innerhalb des Yang-Universums zu verorten/prüfen vermag?

4
Follies,
Manifold:
Gabriel Lester –
Haegue Yang
Installation view
Bonner
Kunstverein
2014

5
Rocket Panpipe
– Trustworthy
#235, 2014
Envelope,
security
patterns
and sandpaper
102 x 72 cm

For her installations, Yang often works with everyday objects and materials, but she never contents herself with their ready-made character. Instead she subjects them to further artistic treatment but without stripping them of their original connotations. She has taken ordinary laundry drying racks and enveloped them in weaves of different coloured wool (*Non-Indéfinissables*, 2006/09–10), transforming the mass-produced commodity into unique pieces of folk art; she has manipulated Filofax calendar inserts (*Week on Two Pages Diary*, 1999) by making almost imperceptible changes to company logos, holidays and typography; and she has stacked 16 empty drinks crates into two towers on a small wooden ramp set at an angle that almost, but only almost, caused them to topple (*Tilted on a Plane*, 2002).

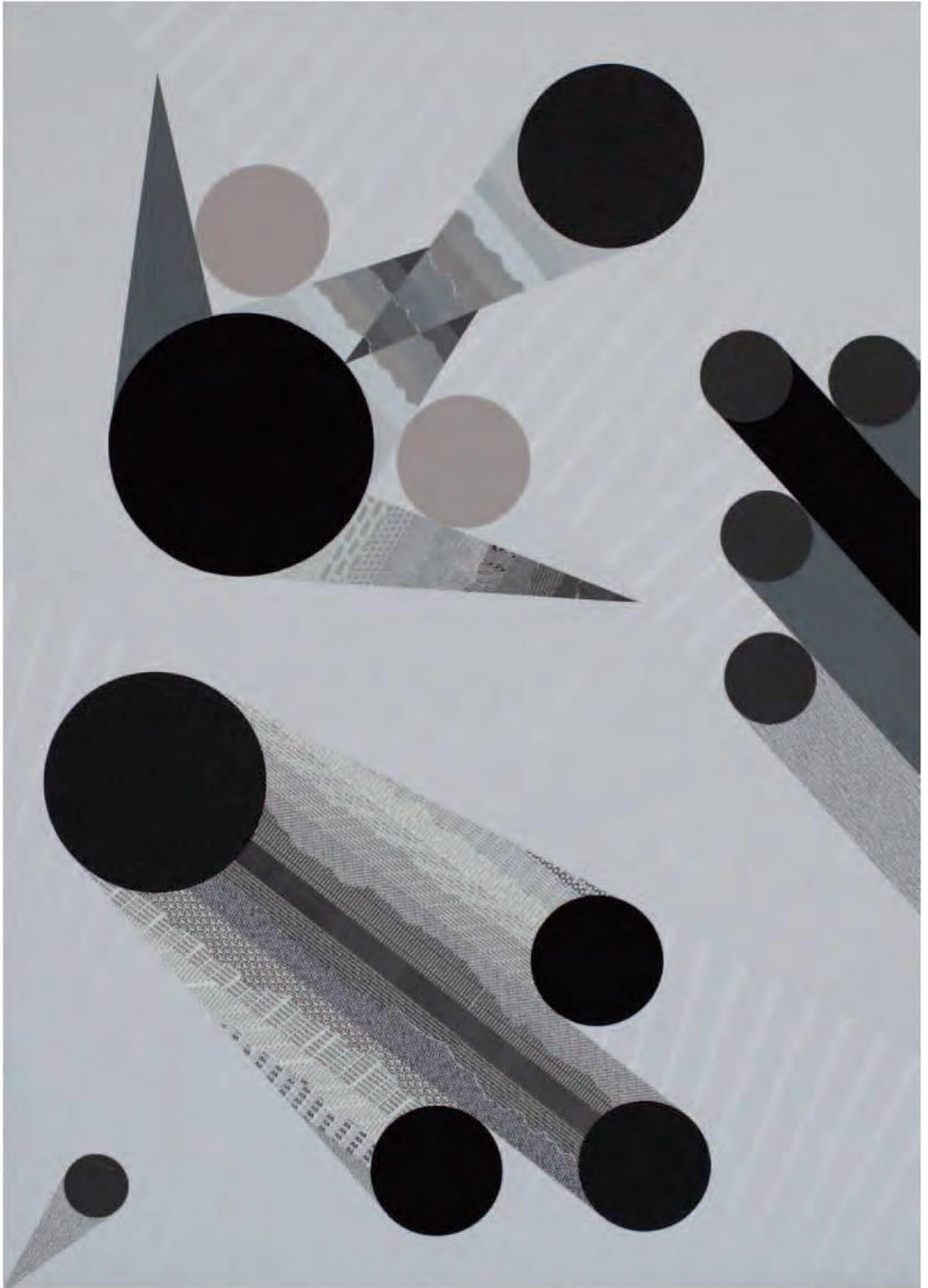
In her *détournement* of a A3 block of graph paper that plays havoc with standardization (*Grid Bloc A3*, 2013, in collaboration with Jeong Hwa Min) or her hanging interlocking aluminium blinds (at *DOCUMENTA (13)* in 2012, for instance) that produce beautiful *moiré* effects, there is a geometrical rigour characterized less by norm-based inflexibility than by the breaking of such strictures. She populates exhibitions with anthropomorphic sculptures (*Warrior Believer Lover*, 2011), at times accompanied by Igor Stravinsky's ballet music *Le sacre du printemps*: the vision of a pagan sacrifice that caused riots when first

performed in Paris in 1913. Another classic 20th century avant-garde work for the stage, Oskar Schlemmer's *Triadic Ballet* that premiered in 1922 in Stuttgart, provided a point of reference for the bell-covered sound sculptures that visitors were invited to touch and move at Bonner Kunstverein last autumn (*Sonic Figures*, 2013/15). Through reference to dance, movement is understood here as including a more flexible relationship between viewer, object and space. Although these sculptures refer to specific moments in art history, they come across as contemporary. This may be because Yang's sculptures have an aesthetic that oscillates between the object's original practical nature and its character as a work of art. This was true of the bell-covered Schlemmer sound sculptures: they stood there majestic and golden, but as soon as one took hold of their black foam-rubber handles, there was a certain feeling akin to being in physiotherapy.

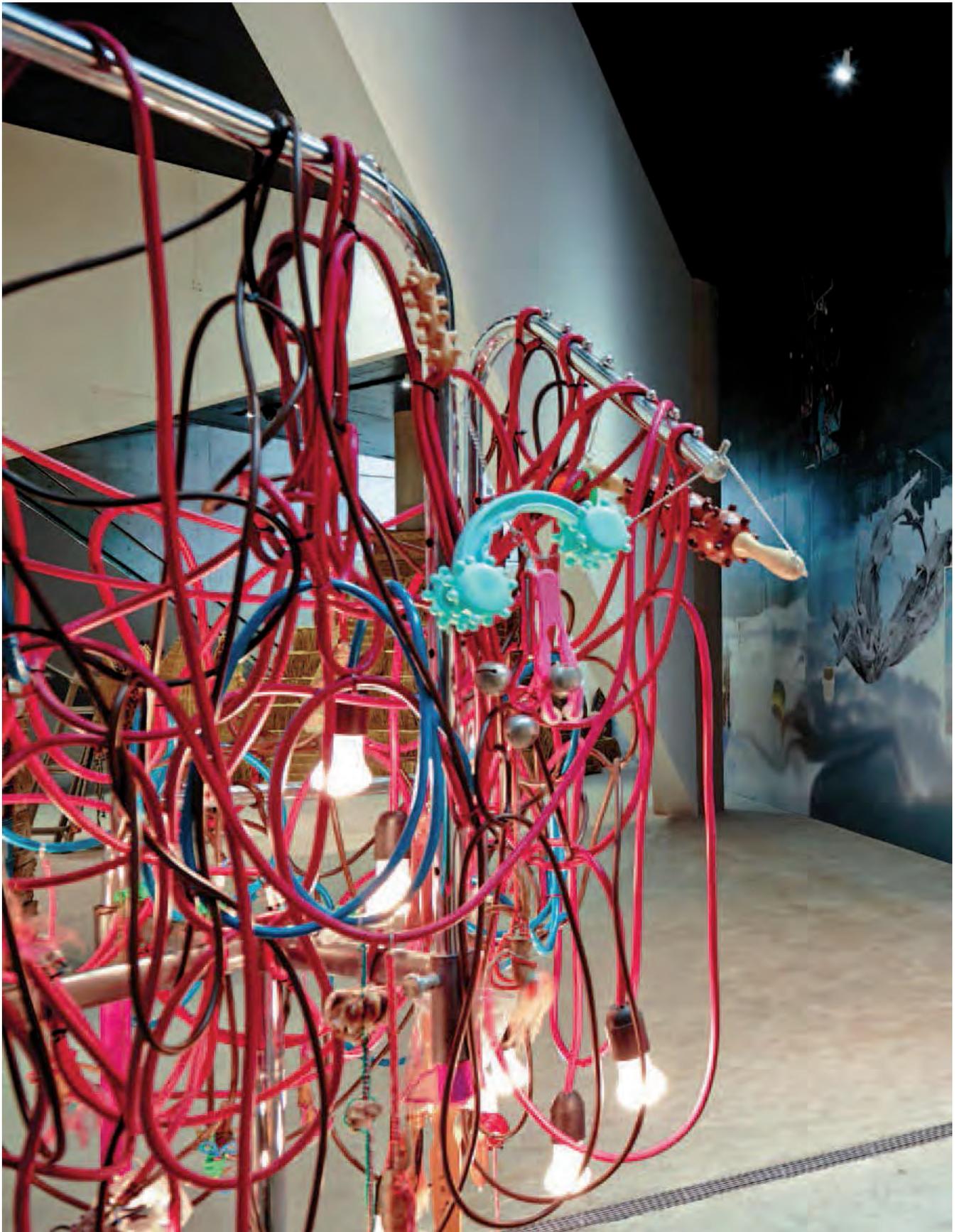
Yang's installations are thronged with avatars that appear to have been beamed into the exhibition space from very different worlds. She takes the space between objects as seriously as the objects themselves. This is reflected, for example, in her deliberate use of sounds, music or smells and by the mobile hospital stands she often uses as the basis for her avatar sculptures. The resulting field of associations allows the mind to wander, but also the art itself. It is in these interspatial

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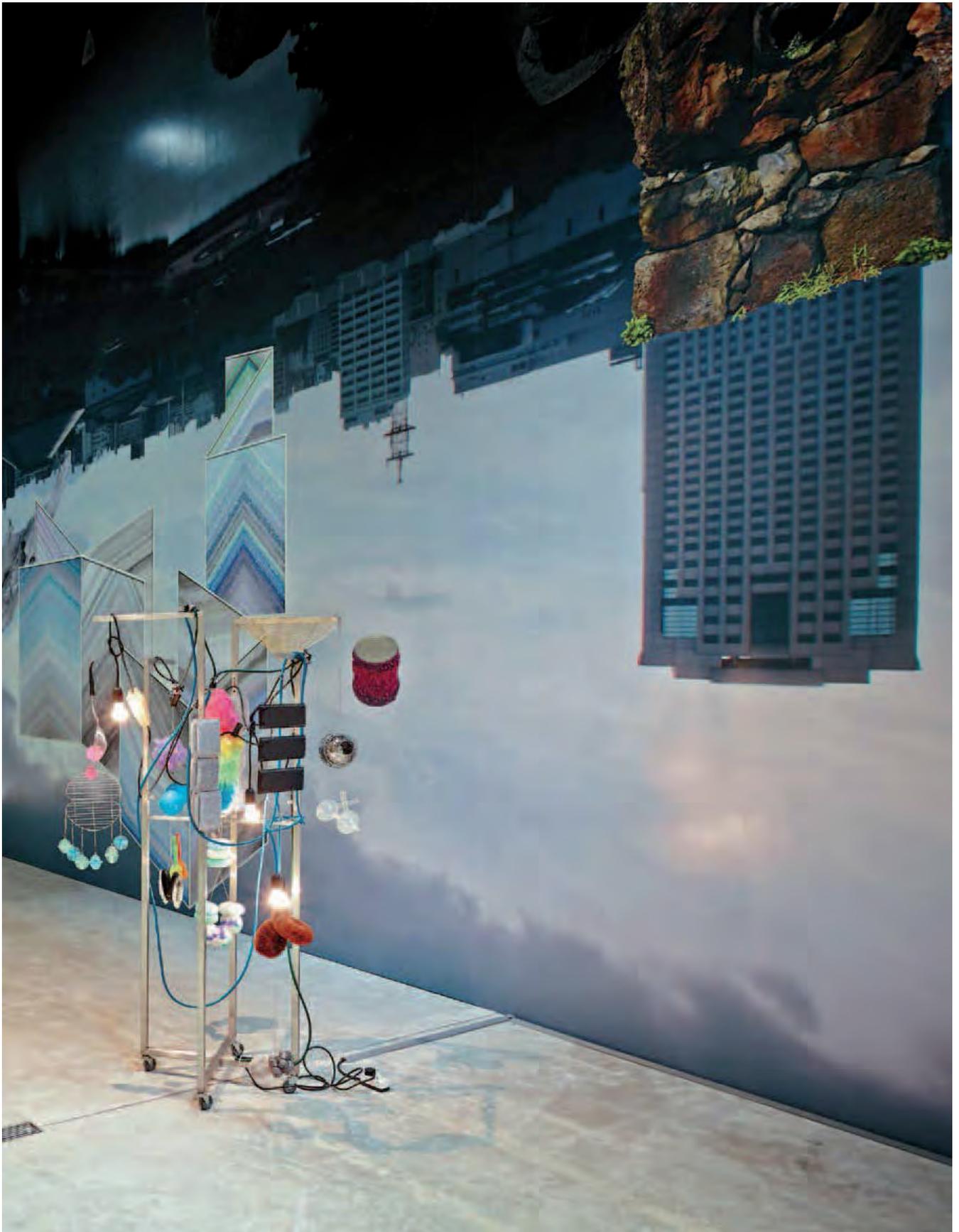
È courtesy Galerie Wiro, Lubasz, Parigi, photograph. © Studio Haegue Yang, Berlin



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HAEGUE YANG

In ihrem Werk sind einige solche Spuren vergraben, denn statt Eindeutigkeit setzt die Künstlerin auf den Überraschungsmoment, auf Widersprüche und abrupte Wendungen, darauf, eine bestimmte Offenheit zuzulassen und einen Raum zu schaffen, in dem Bezüge, Ideen und Objekte – sowie das Verhältnis zwischen ihnen – in Bewegung geraten. Selbst so ein im Grunde wenig umstrittener Begriff wie Konzeptkunst wirft in der Auseinandersetzung mit Yangs Werk mehr Fragen auf, als er Antworten gibt. „Die Anwendung des Begriffs Konzept fällt mir sehr schwer“, sagt sie im Gespräch. „Ich würde zustimmen, wenn jemand meine Arbeit als konzeptuell betrachtet, aber gleichzeitig bin ich sprachlos, wenn ich selbst begründen soll, inwiefern sie wirklich konzeptuell ist. Vielleicht leben wir in einer Zeit, in der der Begriff Konzeptkunst auf der Kippe steht. Was die Konzeptkunst der 1960er Jahre war, wissen wir, aber was der Begriff aktuell heißt, muss, glaube ich, noch neu definiert werden.“

und Herumschieben (*Some Figures*, 2013/15), die im letzten Herbst im Bonner Kunstverein ausgestellt waren. Bewegung wird hier, über die Referenz auf den Tanz, dahingehend verstanden, dass auch das Verhältnis von Betrachter, Objekt und Raum flexibel wird. Auch wenn sich diese Skulpturen auf Kunstgeschichte beziehen, wirken sie so gar nicht historisch, sondern im Gegenteil sehr gegenwärtig. Was vielleicht daran liegt, dass Yangs Skulpturen eine Ästhetik innewohnt, die sich in einer Art Pendelbewegung mal zum ursprünglichen Gebrauchscharakter neigt, dann wieder zum Kunstcharakter. So auch bei den schellenbesetzten Schlemmer-Klangskulpturen: Majestätisch und gleichglänzend standen sie im Bonner Kunstverein. Doch faste man sie an den mit schwarzem Schaumstoff umwickelten Griffen an, stieg sofort ein Gefühl von Rehabilitik auf.

In Yangs Installationen wimmelt es nur so von Avataren, die aus ganz unterschiedlichen Kontexten in den Ausstellungs-

In einer Art Pendelbewegung neigen Yangs Skulpturen mal zum ursprünglichen Gebrauchscharakter, mal zum Kunstcharakter.

Für ihre Installationen arbeitet Yang oft mit alltäglichen Dingen und Materialien, gibt sich jedoch nicht mit ihrem Ready-made-Charakter zufrieden, sondern unterzieht sie einer weitergehenden künstlerischen Bearbeitung – ohne sie ihrer ursprünglichen Gebrauchskonnotation zu berauben: Handeltübliche Wäschetrockner umhüllte sie mit verschiedenfarbiger Wolle (*Now-Indispensables*, 2006/09–10), was diese Massenwaren in Folk-art-hafte Unikate verwandelte; sie manipulierte Filofax-Kalender-Einlagen (*Week on Two Pages Diary*, 1999), indem sie Firmenlogos, Feiertage und Typografie fast unmerklich veränderte, oder stapelte 16 leere Getränkeldosen in zwei Türmen auf eine kleine Holzrampe, deren Neigung die Türme fast – aber nur fast – zum Kippen brachte (*Tilted on a Plane*, 2002).

Bei der grafischen Verformung von Millimeterpapier, mit der die Norm zum Tanzen gebracht wird (*Graphic Logic A3*, 2013, gemeinsam mit Jeong Hwa Min), oder ihren frei hängenden Lichtmetalljalousien (etwa auf der *DOCUMENTA* (13), 2012), die ineinander verschachtelt schöne Moiré-Effekte produzieren, herrscht geometrische Strenge vor, die sich weniger durch ihre genormte Strenge, sondern mehr durch die Brechung ebendieser auszeichnet. Dann wieder bevölkert Yang ihre Ausstellungen mit anthropomorphen Skulpturen (*Warrior, Believer, Lover*, 2011), zeitweise untermalt mit Igor Strawinskis Ballettmusik *Les noces de printemps*; die Vision eines großen heidnischen Opferrituals, die bei ihrer Uraufführung in Paris 1913 für Tumulte und Empörung sorgte. Auf ein anderes klassisches Avantgarde-Bühnenwerk des 20. Jahrhunderts, das 1922 in Stuttgart uraufgeführt wurde, *Fräulein Ballet* von Oskar Schlemmer, beziehen sich wiederum die großflächig mit Schellen besetzten Klangskulpturen zum Anfassen

raum hineingebeamt erscheinen. Den Raum zwischen den Dingen nimmt die Künstlerin dabei genauso ernst wie die ausgestellten Dinge selbst. Das lässt sich etwa am gezielten Einsatz von Geräuschen, Musik oder Gerüchen ablesen. Oder auch an ihrer Verwendung von beweglichen Krankenhaus-Infusionsständern, die oft die Basis für ihre Avatar-Skulpturen bilden. In dem Assoziationsraum, der sich öffnet, sollen nicht nur die Gedanken des Betrachters wandern, sondern die Kunst gleich mit. Und genau in diesen zwischenräumlichen Gefilden geistert in Seoul dann auch der Elefantenmann umher. Und sind nicht auch die von Yang so oft verwendeten Jalousien – in der seltsamen Fort-Da-Logik, der sie gehorchen, wenn sie von einem Moment zum anderen zwischen Abschluss und Durchlässigkeit umschalten – perfekte Sinnbilder für Zwischenräume?

Nichts läge Yang ferner, als mit dem Holzhammer auf ihren Inhalten herumzuklopfen. Das würde die konstitutive Offenheit dieser Arrangements in einem Akt der Sinnzuschreibung sofort wieder abschließen. Statt dessen provoziert sie Ahnungen und unterschwellig platzierte Assoziationen – wie in Seoul, wo sie erstmal Objekte zeigte, die aufgrund ihrer Form und handwerklichen Gemachtheit wie ethnologische Artefakte wirkten. Formal beziehen sich die drei Strohkulpturen aus der Werkreihe *The Intermediates* (2015) auf kulturell-religiös konnotierte Orte oder Denkmäler: eine antike Maya-Pyramide, die buddhistische Tempelanlage Borobudur in Indonesien sowie Ljalja-Tulpan – eine der größten modernen Moscheen in Russland, eröffnet Ende der 1990er Jahre in Ufa, der Hauptstadt von Baschkortostan, rund 26 Bahnstunden östlich von Moskau. Zwischen diesen architekturbezogenen Konstruktionen platzierte die Künstlerin weitere Strohkgebilde,



fields that the Elephant Man finds himself in Seoul. Aren't the blinds so often used by Yang (with their strange now-you-see-it-now-you-don't logic of a sudden switch between closure and transparency) the perfect symbols for this interspace?

Yang is not one to hammer away at her subject matter and attribute specificity to her meanings, however, as that would immediately dose the constitutive openness of her arrangements. Instead, she provokes intimations and subliminal associations – as in Seoul, where many of the works' forms and crafted quality made them look like ethnological artefacts. Formally, three large straw-looking totems from the series *The Intermediates* (2015) refer to places or monuments of religious significance: an ancient Maya pyramid; the Buddhist temple complex of Borobudur in Indonesia and Ljalja Tulpan, one of the largest modern mosques in Russia, opened in the late 1990s in Ufa, the capital of the Russian republic of Bashkortostan, around 26 hours east of Moscow by train. Between



die in ihrer anthropomorphen Anmutung an kultische Kostüme erinnern (ähnlich denen, wie sie etwa im alten Schweizer Silvesterklausen-Brauchtum auftauchen). Doch das Flair des Traditionellen, Handgemachten und ethnografisch Inspirierten wird durch einen Touch Industrie gebrochen: Das vermeintliche Strohmateriale ist aus Plastik. Deshalb handelt *The Intermediates* nicht so sehr von der Vermittlung zwischen Unterschiedlichem, sondern von der Unvermittelbarkeit und Unvermitteltheit selbst. Die künstlerische Anspielung auf das Verhältnis von Natur, Mensch und Kultur ist gut imprägniert gegen jede naturromantische Verklärung.

Kito Nedo ist als freier Journalist für verschiedene Zeitungen und Magazine tätig. Er lebt in Berlin.

Haegue Yang's Einzelausstellung Temporary Permanent ist vom 1. Mai bis 31. Juli in der Galerie Wien Lukatsch, Berlin, zu sehen.

these architecture-invoking constructions, the artist placed other straw figures whose anthropomorphism recalled unusual cult costumes (like those of traditional Swiss New Year Mummers). But the aura of the traditional, handmade and the ethnographically inspired was broken by a technical note: the 'straw' of these figures was actually plastic. Consequently, *The Intermediates* is not so much about mediating between different spheres as about things that are not and cannot be communicated and reified. Through this Yang's artistic allusions to the relationship among nature, man and culture are immunized against any rose-tinted romanticization. Translated by Nicholas Grindell

Kito Nedo lives in Berlin where he works as a freelance journalist for several magazines and newspapers.

Haegue Yang's solo exhibition Temporary Permanent at Galerie Wien Lukatsch, Berlin is on view 1 May – 31 July.

8+7
*Shooting the Elephant &
Thinking the Elephant*
Installation views
Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art
Seoul, 2015

«When Heman met Haegue», *ArtReview Asia Hong Kong Special Edition*, 2015.

ArtReview Asia

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Take me, I'm free

Eko Nugroho

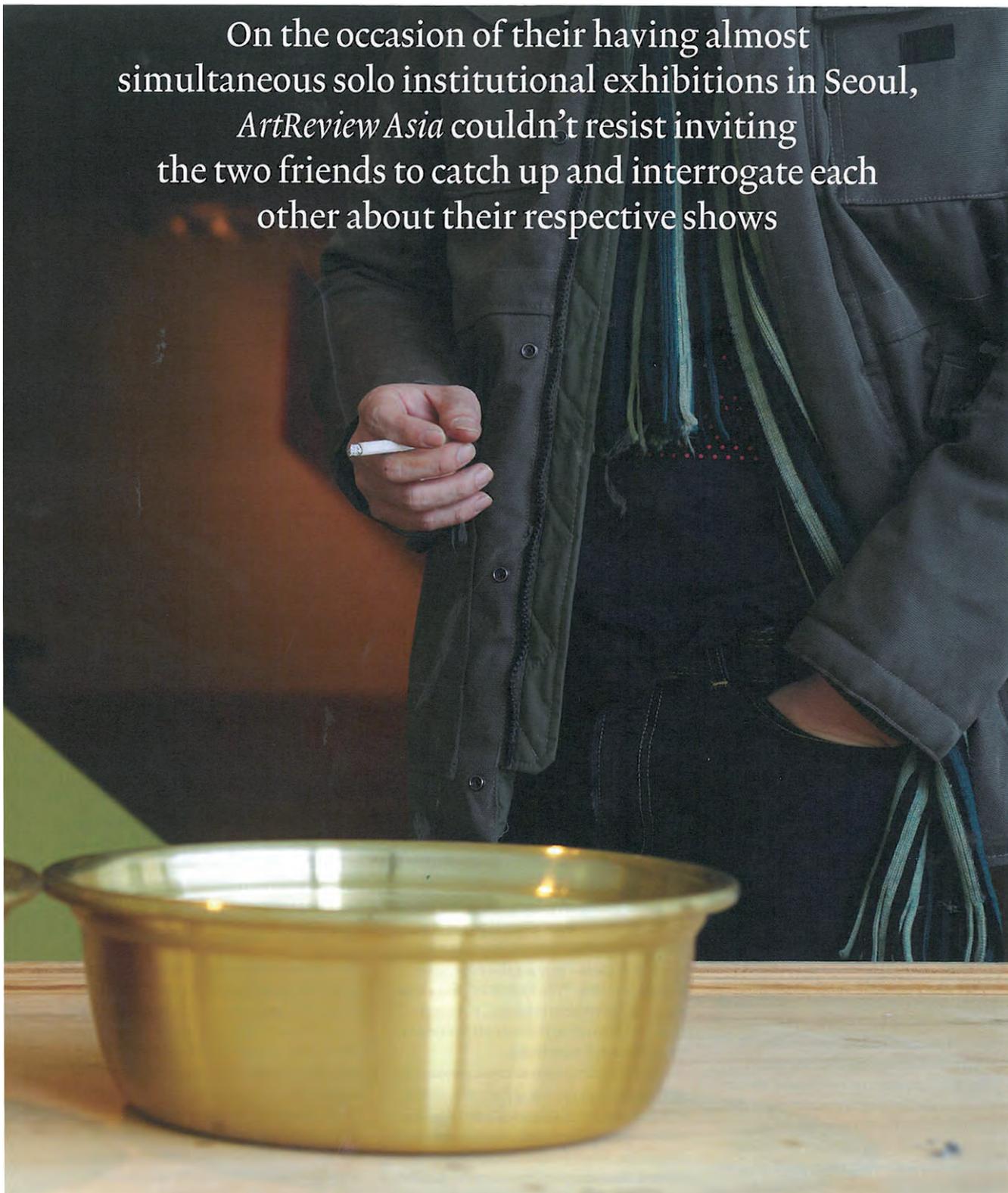
Ho Tzu Nyen Heman Chong Haegue Yang

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On the occasion of their having almost simultaneous solo institutional exhibitions in Seoul, *ArtReview Asia* couldn't resist inviting the two friends to catch up and interrogate each other about their respective shows

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Part One

Haegue Yang discusses her current solo exhibition at the Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art in Seoul

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HEMAN CHONG *Your exhibition has a curious title...*

HAEGUE YANG *Shooting the Elephant* 象 *Thinking the Elephant* contains a Chinese character, 象, which is a hieroglyph in itself. I found it fascinating to imagine the origin of this character, since the elephant doesn't inhabit any region in which Chinese was or is used. The same goes for another metaphor of the exhibition, which is a Lion Dance, a folk dance that's widespread across the whole of Asia, a region that's not inhabited by lions. You won't find an elephant or a lion in the show either. They served as a metaphor of living – a living that was only imagined, yet which was territorialised as a part of folk culture so that it could be even claimed as 'ours' and understood as something 'familiar'.

Another reference in the title comes from literature, George Orwell's short story 'Shooting an Elephant' [1936, about a British police officer in Burma who feels forced to shoot an elephant] and Romain Gary's novel *The Roots of Heaven* [1956, about an environmentalist in French Equatorial Africa who sets out to preserve elephants from extinction]. In the first, the elephant appears as an unpredictable, yet innocent animal (or cipher for nature), killed by the irrelevant human-centric power system of colonialism. Orwell (who is recounting his experience as a police officer in colonial Burma) was pressured by that system and eventually had to shoot the elephant when he was surrounded by thousands of Burmese expecting to witness the violence of their coloniser. In the other work, the elephant shows its power as well as weakness: on the one hand it provides a most unlikely source of hope to Morel (the main protagonist of Gary's novel), who subsequently wishes to preserve the African elephant from extinction; on the other hand, the elephant is nothing but a helpless and vulnerable species, which can't be saved despite Morel's complete devotion and eventual sacrifice.

Besides that, there are two general aspects of the show that are worth mentioning at the beginning: one is the lighting, the other is the wall treatment. The lights on the ceiling of the Ground Gallery at Leeum are all pointed in one direction, not so as to illuminate the

work, but so as to act autonomously. This is done to liberate the lights from their functional existence in this completely open space.

Three right-angle-triangle-shaped built-in walls, hung upside down from the ceiling, have been treated so that each side is distinctly different from the other: the outer surface has an ordinary finish while the inner side is rough and grainy like sandpaper. Also I've allowed the grid of the panels on this inner side to be revealed. Over the course of the exhibition, there will be some stains from people touching this side of the walls: this contact and the sensation of texture, as well as the collective trace of visitors, will be significant.

HC *Let's talk about Storage Piece [2004]. It is a work that has been discussed greatly within the context of your practice. Why did you choose to exhibit it now, among the other works in the show?*

HY *Storage Piece* is located in the middle of the exhibition, it's a work originally made for a show while I was on a Delfina Foundation residency in London. It is often said that *Storage Piece* marks an important turning point in my practice. The background to it was that there was an offer of a commercial gallery space for an exhibition but I had no ability to make the show, either financially or physically. And parallel to this offer, there were numerous requests that I should pick up works, returning from other exhibitions for which I couldn't afford any storage space. So I proposed to use the exhibition budget to bring all those works – which remained packed on palettes – together in an exhibition. There were about 13 pieces in all, some are complete, some of the works only survived in parts. There are also early pieces included in *Storage Piece*, for instance from 1994, which had never been exhibited, but which I was asked to remove from my flat in Frankfurt, where I was no longer living.

This type of personal circumstance hadn't been a part of my practice at that time; indeed it had seemed inevitable not to assert this kind of circumstance, but it came to a point, through *Storage Piece*, where I did, and this helped me to break this conceptual boundary. Within the tendency to cling to both the physicality and

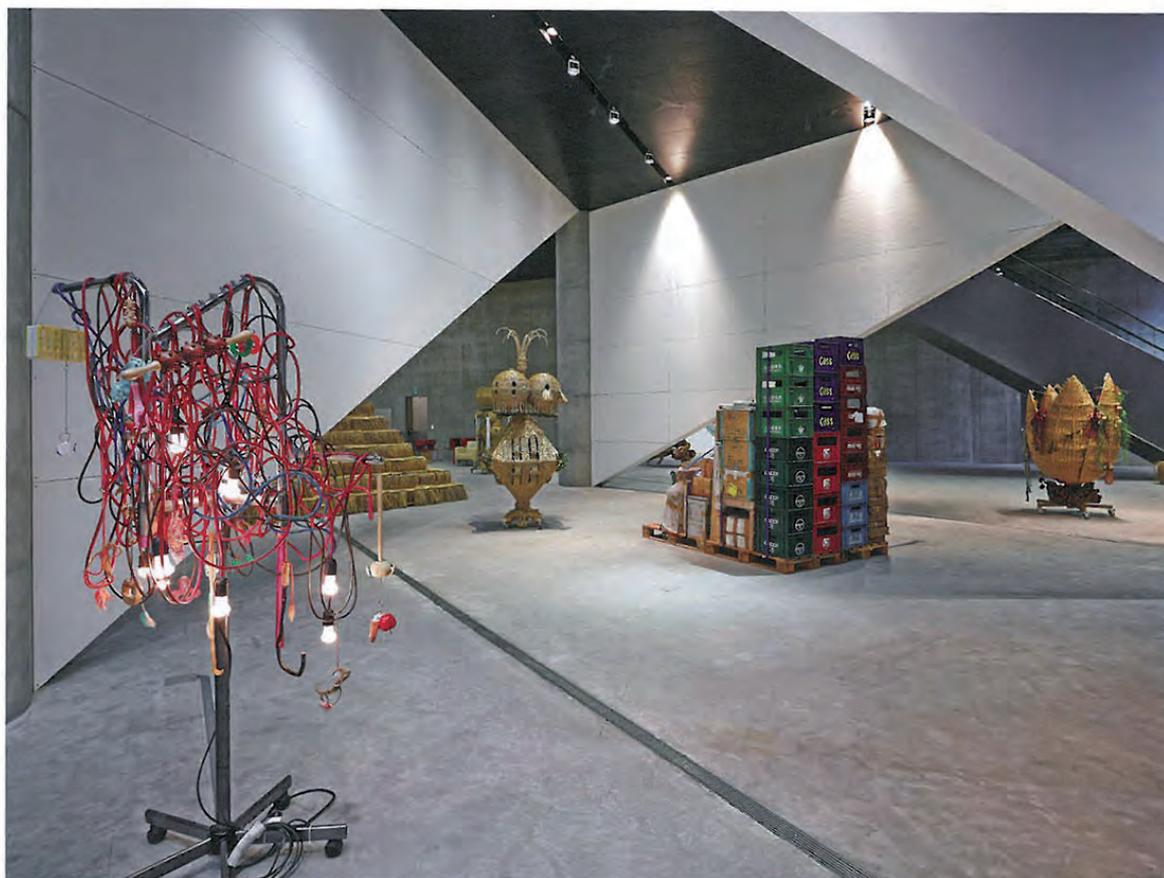
the fetish of conceptualism inherent in *Storage Piece*, there is a kind of concern and doubt that remains and that is contained within it. Personally, I'm very pleased to have *Storage Piece* on view here, a work that a lot of people have heard about many times, yet not so many people have encountered; it is important that people face the work in person.

Storage Piece is always accompanied by a speech that will be given at the opening of the exhibition by someone other than myself. The script for this speech has been modified slightly each time it has been delivered, reflecting the changed circumstances and the ways in which my own reaction to the work cumulatively changes over time. The crisis born out of a simple, poor circumstance disappears, while new challenges around the piece emerge, so the modification is necessary. The speech describes a couple of pieces found within the work that people cannot see, because everything is wrapped up. Very much a monologue, which fluctuates from being super-confident on the one hand – suggesting that this is a great solution, even a brilliant one, given the challenge of the circumstances – but at the same time being filled with doubt, based on a belief in concept and idea – that one should not hold on to the physicality of the work. Overall, this oscillation itself reinforces the potential and the ecology behind the work. It reflects a kind of timid negation of the 'either/or' dichotomy of an object. When *Storage Piece* was sold, I handed over the conceptual authority over the work, thus the collector could unfold the piece according to his own desires and situation.

HC *So he could have unpacked the work?*

HY Indeed. In 2007 the collector Axel Haubrok proposed that he unpack the work in order to see what he had collected. As part of this agreement, under the title 'Unpacking the Storage Piece', everything would be fiercely unpacked and neatly installed. I agreed, and the traces of *Storage Piece* – the packaging – were also included in the exhibition, as 'Cabinet of Packaging'. And there was a new speech written for this chapter. So ever since then, *Storage Piece* has been unpacked many times, sometimes gradually, sometimes as it is.

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opening pages Heman Chong, *Smoke Gets In (Your Eyes)*, 2015,
two ashtrays. Photo: Sang-tae Kim. Courtesy the artist,
Art Sonje Center, Seoul, and Wilkinson, London
above Haegue Yang, *Shooting the Elephant* & *Thinking the Elephant*, 2015
(installation view, Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art, Seoul).
Photo: Kim Hyunsoo. Courtesy the artist

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Haegue Yang, *The Intermediate – Triple Sphere on Pyramid Totem*, 2015 (installation view, *Shooting the Elephant & Thinking the Elephant*, Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art, Seoul), artificial straw, steel stand, powder coating, casters, Indian bells, artificial plants, plastic twine, cord, metal rings, metal bells, 280 × 120 × 120 cm. Photo: Kim Hyunsoo. Courtesy the artist

HC *Let's move along to the next work. Tell me more about your light sculptures.*

HY Here there are six individual light sculptures, which are in the collection of Leeum, shown as one installation, *Seoul Guts*, which was first exhibited at Artsonje Center in 2010 (that exhibition, *Voice Over Three*, was also my first institutional exhibition in my hometown; this one is my first in five years). I spent three months in Seoul preparing the show, and *Seoul Guts* is one of very few light sculptures that I produced out of my studio. The portrait of the city of Seoul is articulated by the small objects, mostly expressing ridiculous and trivial desires and the nostalgia of people. Here you see an object made of seashells and urban waste, disguised as a romantic souvenir of a possible holiday, which I collected from seafood restaurants, day by day. There you see some artificial plants, cosmetic supplies, pseudo health devices, all of which constitute a pitiful portrait of Seoul. Pill cases were somehow most touching to me.

HC *Why were these the most touching for you?*

HY Seoul is full of people who are 'sick': in a sense they're all not fit, they're tired and wasted. The daily life in Seoul is just tough, you come up with ideas to survive – taking vitamins or medicine against cancer, for diabetes, it's just crazy. They're all functioning, but at the same time they're not functioning at all. There is no border any more between healthy and sick. These two things build a parallel, and in this you still have to keep going. For example, these objects I use, these small objects for massaging your body, it's at once humorous and pitiful. You only can spend a small amount of money with such a big hope that it will make you feel better. These items I discovered while I was shopping, or 'hunting' for material; I think this shopping process in the city was crucial.

HC *What was the trigger for you to use these standing structures to hang these objects on?*

HY At the very beginning I started using IV (intravenous) drip poles, which are frail, much like a line in space, on which you cannot hang so much. I used them for the first time in 2006, in a project called *Sadong 30*, at an abandoned house. The ceiling in that house was about to collapse, so you couldn't hang anything from it. In order to illuminate the space, I registered and reinstalled the electricity supply, but I needed a stand from which to hang lights. The IV poles were easy to get and it seemed natural to have them in that space. But I wasn't aware of the association of that object with body and health. After using them once as a lighting device, I started to make sculptures of out this stand. I was very touched by the melancholic look of it, how the cables are

draped from/over it. Over time, it became an autonomous sculpture. By the time I switched over to the much chunkier clothing racks, each stand became anthropomorphic, to portray certain qualities of possible figures.

HC *In a way you're building characters.*

HY Yes, quite. In this series it comes across very strongly. Originating from the *Sadong 30* project, where I plugged in the lights, it became apparent to me that this work comes from this gesture: plugging into a power source. This gesture meant a lot to me. The house was locked up for many years, and the address, Sa-dong 30, was dropped out from the redevelopment of the city of Incheon. So there was no electricity, no water, and the house was kind of dead. When I succeeded in reregistering the address in the city council's system in order to reconnect the electricity, the house could finally be illuminated. I locked the space with a lock that had a number code on it so that people with the code could have 24-hour access. I had limited the luminosity of

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or language group, etc.

each bulb to under 25w; again, at the beginning I was afraid that the bulbs would get too hot while there was no guard or other attendant there, so it was a practical decision. But over time I really liked the low luminosity, because it prevented the lights from being absolutely functional: they would be able to light up little corners – efficient enough. The light sculptures inherited this principle, where each bulb is only 15 to 25w.

HC *What are these chairs and tables on the other side of the space?*

HY In 2001 I was commissioned to conceive the so-called VIP lounge for an art fair, Art Forum Berlin. Commenting on the aspect that one can only access this space with a VIP pass, I decided to equip the space with furniture pieces borrowed from Berliners, whose equivalent significance (VIP) can be only measured by their participation rather than predetermined and hierarchical status. And people (VIPs) could sit on the furniture (from VIPs), achieving an open heterogeneity. The loan of the furniture would be for the duration of the exhibition,

and each piece would be returned after the show. I continued to adopt this principle and made a lot of lounges ever since in the middle of exhibitions, and now this is the Seoul version. Seen in the same space as *Storage Piece* and *Seoul Guts*, you can sense that they are different configurations of similar observation, an expression of my position as a semi-insider/outsider.

HC *Let's address your new work in this show. Can you walk me through it?*

HY This is a new series of sculptures titled *The Intermediates*. They are made of straw, woven into different architectures and figures. They create a kind of 'parcours' through a set of obstacles. These pieces reference actual architectural sites, such as those produced by the Mayan civilisation, the Borobudur Temple, and features found in a contemporary Islamic mosque with minarets in Russia. In between them there are figures. Some of them are abstract, some are more figurative.

HC *This material that you use, is this real straw? How did you discover and begin to work with this material?*

HY No, it's artificial straw. By critically reexamining the notion of 'folk', I realised that the use of natural straw would only conform to the given narrow idea of 'folk art', confirming the notion of 'us,' which is often a race, nation, religious or language group, etc. But this artificial straw gives me a bit of distance from this definition of 'our tradition', empowers the works and makes them immune to this tribal claim. The project is not about expressing traditional craftsmanship, but to take a step out of it, to become alien to or a hybrid of it. In a sense, for me, they rather associate with rituals and exotic forms than the familiar.

HC *You are personifying the technique, extending the technique as a metaphor, rather than simply mastering the technique of straw weaving. It's far from rejuvenating the idea of folk.*

HY It has never been a primary feature of my production method, but I always worked with two very different ways simultaneously. One relies on using industrially manufactured objects, while the other is based on craft – almost a domestic way of approaching craft – believed to be of low efficiency – such as crochet and knitting. At some point I realised that I'm completely into weaving. But a very inefficient weaving. I used to take a lot of photographs of these straw wraps around trees over the winter in Japan and Korea. These appeared once in a while as reference material in my catalogues, but I never used the observation of straw wrap, realised as a production yet. But when I settled in Seoul a year ago, the first thing I wanted to learn was straw weaving from a craftsman, and *The Intermediates* was initiated.

OCULA



Haegue Yang (b.1971) is a South Korean artist, who lives and works in Berlin and Seoul. She is best known for drawing on a wide repertoire of ordinary household objects to create visually abstract sculptures and installations that often evoke the senses on several levels and delve into a cacophony of social, historical and political narratives.

While venetian blinds have come to be the most recognisable motif of Yang's practice, they obscure a far reaching exploration of both materials and ideas that has continued to evolve. Two presentations of the artist's work this year will serve as timely reminders of the scope of her work and the ongoing development and exploration of her practice, namely *Medicine Men and Female Natives* (2010) which will be shown at the Taipei Biennial and the sculptural ensemble of so-called 'Sonic Sculptures' for *Mediacity* in Seoul. While the first part of this two part interview investigates her earlier works, and some of the ideas underpinning her practice, this second part delves into her upcoming projects, and in particular the works that will appear at the Taipei Biennial and *Mediacity* Seoul, as well as the challenges she still wishes to explore.

OCULA

WHAT NEXT

What projects do you have coming up?

There are only several projects on this year, often where I will be showing older works, yet juxtaposing them with a new context. There is one group show and two Biennale participations: there is the light sculptures *Medicine Men* and *Female Natives* from 2010 for Taipei Biennial, blind installation *Mountains of Encounter* from 2008 for a three-men show at the Contemporary Art Museum in Houston and lastly, a sculptural ensemble of so-called sonic sculptures for *Mediacity* in Seoul.

There are also some pending projects in 2015 and 2016, including solo shows in Seoul, Beijing, Berlin, Brussels and presentations at Biennales, such as Sharjah Biennale and Asian Pacific Triennial in Brisbane. One of my current areas of focus is my solo exhibition at Leeum, Seoul in February 2015. I am conceiving some new pieces, while setting up a second studio in Seoul, which is in fact my first working space ever other than in Berlin.

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Haegue Yang
Sonic Full Moon – Medium Regular #2, 2014
Steel frame, metal grid, powder coating, brass plated bells, metal rings
173 x 54 x 54 cm
Courtesy of Kukje Gallery, Seoul
Photo: Studio Haegue Yang



Haegue Yang
Approaching: Choreography Engineered in Never-Past Tense, 2012
Motorized aluminum Venetian blinds, aluminum hanging structure, powder coating, steel wire, cable, module box, DMX recorder
Dimensions variable
SBS Prism Tower Art Collection, Seoul
Installation view of dOCUMENTA (13), Kassel, Germany, 2012
Video: Nils Klinger

O C U L A

TAIPEI BIENNIAL 2014

You will show *Medicine Men and Female Natives (2010)* at the Taipei Biennial 2014. Both *Medicine Men and Female Natives* were part of a large group of 33 sculptures, *Warrior Believer Lover* that you created in 2010. What was the impetus for originally creating this group of sculptures?

Originally conceived for Kunsthau Bregenz in 2011, *Warrior Believer Lover* is a selection of thirty-three anthropomorphic light sculptures that can be further distinguished into groups, couples and individuals, including the group of six of *Medicine Men and Female Natives*. Each light sculpture is a composition of light bulbs, electric cords and readymade and handcrafted materials such as artificial plants and wigs around a commercial metal stand, conjuring up figures imbued with personality and history. I have been creating light sculptures since 2006 and when thinking about the title, the human-like quality of these sculptures prompted me to consider archetypes whose lives testify deep commitment to a particular value. For instance: the warrior who fights for something with intensity; the believer who lives with absolute faith; and the lover who courageously exposes themselves to the other.

Is there a specific significance in the process and materials you used to create these works?

Each set of sculptures are adorned with elaborate ornaments and I work intuitively, drawing on the associations and origins of the industrial, readymade or handcrafted objects, while decontextualizing them - allowing their inherent qualities to emerge in new and unfamiliar ways. For example, in using artificial plants for *Female Natives*, there is an evident narrative around understandings of nature and artifice. One could possibly relate to these sculptures as indigenous females who have a close relationship to a nature that is apparently manmade. Isn't all that we seek or obtain artificial, in some way? Is our nature in fact essentially akin to an extraterrestrial being?

Questions on humankind's achievements and pursuits come into play too. The selection of plants addresses various vegetation and climates; and is also made to draw a landscape of multiple cultures and communities.

OCULA



Haegue Yang
Installation view of Journal of Echomimetic Motions, Bergen Kunsthall, 2013
Photo: Thor Brødreskift

Galerie
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Haegue Yang
Sonic Dances, 2013
Installation view of Ovals and Circles, Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris, France, 2013
Photo Credit: Florian Kleinefenn
Courtesy of Galerie Chantal Crousel

And what about Female Natives male counter-part, Medicine Men?

Medicine Men are decked out with party wigs of multiple colors and hair types, destabilizing the title's masculine connotations. If we look at medicine men in animalistic religions, many assume an ambiguous gender. A myriad of decorative objects from mylar to tinsel, aluminum reflectors, feather dusters, dried spices, plant leaves, and even seashells, reinforce this ambiguity. Wigs are also part of the transformation that shamans went through when they intended transforming their appearances to 'connect' themselves to spirits, inhabiting another world.

The original shapes and substances of the readymades are retained and the sculpture is at times, an insight into crisscrossing migratory and trade routes. Yet, one should venture beyond the conventional readings of these objects. Assembling these objects, often ordinary and domestic items, decontextualizes and transforms them in surprising ways. They become foreign, yet strangely familiar. I am interested in both my own process of discovery, and also that of the viewer. I am also interested in how the chance encounters with an object can open up new, and sometimes unexpected narratives or emotions.

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Haegue Yang
Sonic Rotating Oval – Brass and Nickel Plated #3, 2013
Steel sheet, powder coating, ball bearings, metal grid, brass plated bells, nickel plated bells, metal rings
103 x 73 x 8 cm
Private collection, Trets
Installation view of Ovals and Circles, Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris, 2013
Photo: Florian Kleinfenn



Haegue Yang
Series of Vulnerable Arrangements – Shadowless Voice over Three, 2008
Aluminum Venetian blinds, aluminum hanging structure, powder coating, steel wire, moving spotlights, mirror, infrared heater, fan, sound system, microphone, speaker, amplifier, scent emitters ('Fresh Air', 'Fresh Cut Grass', 'Earth, Dinosaur Dung', 'Buddha Temple', 'French Bread', 'Coffee Shop', 'Garlic Butter')
Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art, Seoul
Exhibition view at Voice over Three, Artsonje Center, Seoul, South Korea, 2010
Photo: Kim Sang Tae

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Research into cultural, social and political history often underpins your work. I understand the sculptures in *Warrior Believer Lover* refer to a multiplicity of cultural references from the ballet and orchestral concert work, *The Rite of Spring* to Walter de Maria's *Lighting Field*. Can we discuss some of these references?

For installations of *Medicine Man* and *Female Natives*, Igor Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* (1913) is played two to three times a day and at the Islamic prayer hour. *The Rite of Spring* was written for the 1913 Paris season of Sergei Diaghilev's *Ballets Russes* company; and the original choreography was by Vaslav Nijinsky. Its dissonance and primitive rhythms underline the anthropomorphism of the light sculptures and the asynchronous layering of ritualistic practices. Through the ballet and allusion to Islamic prayer, we encounter layers of multiple cultural references, which in turn are intended to build upon those already implied by Stravinsky and Nijinsky's use of Native Indian's spring ritual in the radical eclectic choreography and challenging musical score of the ballet. It is as if the sculptures are Nijinsky's dancers, gathered together as historically marginalized cultural subjects, demonstrating the different topography and chronology of the globe and juxtaposing the primitive with the industrialized; and ultimately in pursuit of hybrid bodies that capture the moment of community in constant mutation.

In complete violation of classical traditions and representing a sacred pagan ritual, shudders, jerks and thumps dominated the choreography of Nijinsky - a reflection of the anticlassical trajectory of my light sculptures. Written for the *Ballets Russes*, the primitivism of the dance did not enjoy the same radicalism claimed by Gauguin, Picasso, and other Parisian artists. As Russians bearing pagan and mysterious origins, they were considered exotic which ironically worked against them, as only those from within were deemed capable of producing exotic art. The ambiguity of exoticism is, still today, an issue for artists. But I am less interested in political correctness around post-colonial discourse. I am more interested in the concept of 'detour' - the strategy of diversion and the presentation of alternative paradigmatic formulas for understanding identity.

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Haegue Yang
Storage Piece, 2004
Collection of various wrapped and stacked art works
on four europallets
Haubrok Collection, Berlin
Installation view, *Your Bright Future: 12 Contemporary Artists from Korea*, LACMA, LA, USA 2009
Photo © 2009 Museum Associates/LACMA

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Haegue Yang
*Installation view of Warrior Believer
Lover; Arrivals*, Kunsthaus Bregenz, Bre-
genz, Austria, 2011
Photo: Markus Tretter



Haegue Yang
*Accommodating the Epic Dispersion – On Non-cathartic
Volume of Dispersion*, 2012
Aluminum Venetian blinds, aluminum hanging structure,
powder coating, steel wire
Dimensions variable
Courtesy of Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris and Kukje
Gallery, Seoul
*Installation view of Der Öffentlichkeit – von den Freun-
den* Haus der Kunst, Haus der Kunst, Munich, 2012
Photo: Nozomi Tomoeda

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MEDIACITY SEOUL

Tell me about what you will be showing at Mediacity Seoul, which opens soon?

I will create an entirely new ensemble for Mediacity in Seoul.

"Ghosts, Spies, and Grandmothers", is the theme of the upcoming Mediacity Seoul, and my contribution to this event is very much driven by these keywords. Against the prevailing socio-political climate in Asia of rising nationalism and mutual distrust, and underpinned by economies powered by technological advancements, figures whose voices have been silenced or under the radar are being awakened. These otherworldly and traditional figures from a past era, typified by the 'Ghost, Spy and Grandmother', are summoned back as alternative voices of counsel, tradition and hope to the dominant narratives of today.

On the ground floor of Mediacity Seoul, a spherical bell sculpture, Sonic Full Moon – Medium Regular #2 (2014) is hung from the ceiling, right above the start point of the taped drawing, implying a kind of orbital constellation while Sonic Dance – Half Sister (2014) and two Windy Orbits, Windy Orbit– Brass Plated and Windy Orbit– Brass and Nickel Plated (2013), are placed at a junction of lines.

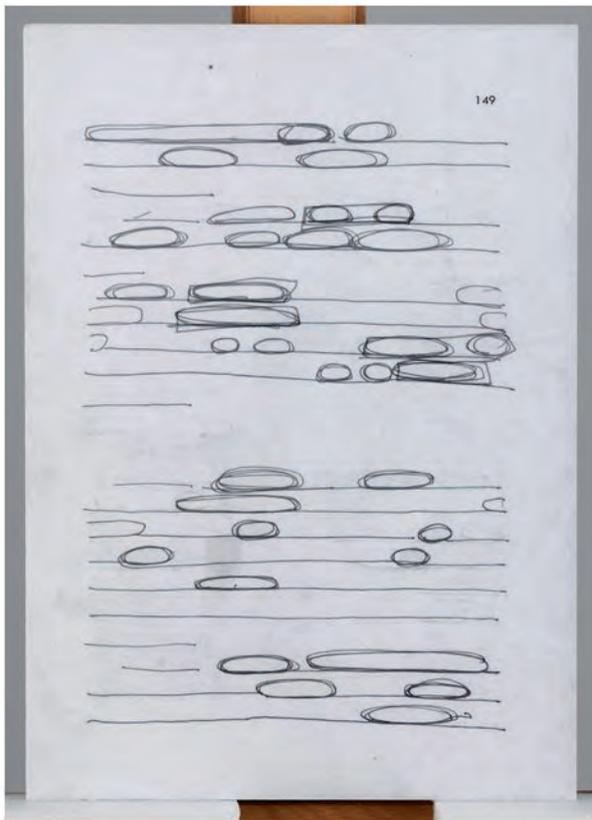
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Haegue Yang
Lethal Love, 2008
Aluminum Venetian blinds (gunmetal gray, perforated), hanging structure, free-standing mirror wall, moving spotlights, scent emitters (wildflower, gunpowder)
Courtesy of Artist Pension Trust, Berlin
Installation view of *Lethal Love*, Cubitt, London, 2008
Photo: Andy Keate

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Haegue Yang
Traces of Anonymous Pupil Authors, 2001
16 b/w offset prints, each 42 cm x 29.7 cm
Edition of 30
Courtesy of Galerie Wien Lukatsch, Berlin

I understand movement is very relevant to these works?

The notions of movement animated by visitor's manual input, as well as the cosmic geometry resulted from each movement is one of the focal interpretations of this ensemble. The viewer could actually 'dance' with the sculptures, supplying the given space with new sonic effects that are created by bells attached on the surface of metal-mesh structures. The bells are intended to trigger associations with ancient times in the history of civilisation, where they were often used for shamanic rituals, calling out to the spirits through their sound. In my recent sculptural development, the bells seem to be endowing a life-giving and communicative quality to robot-like and rigid figures.

The bells also mirror and therefore multiply the viewer's reflection. In the Mediacity presentation, these visual as well as the non-visual sensorial and metaphoric aspects are accentuated by focusing on the wind, sounds and patterns that movement brings to the work. This ensemble on the ground floor of Seoul Museum of Arts at Mediacity will construct a constellation of an imaginary cosmic order, which is less rational, yet valuable to reconsider less pre-determined ways of thinking.

In the upper floor, a range of Sonic Rotating Ovals are hung, where the 'blurring' of the initial geometric form that occurs through the rotation suggest the 'unlearning' of the original form and material. This spinning transforms the ovoid shape of the piece into a circular form, a moment close to a 'perfect geometry.'

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Haegue Yang
Medicine Man - Indiscreet Other World, 2010
Clothing rack, casters, light bulbs, cable, cord, water-color, lacquer, metal ring, metal chain, milar, aluminum reflector
180 x 90 x 110 cm
Photo: Nick Ash



Haegue Yang
Mountains of Encounter, 2008
Aluminum Venetian blinds, aluminum hanging structure, powder coating, steel wire, moving spotlight, floodlight, platform ladder, cable
Courtesy of Galerie Wien Lukatsch, Berlin
Installation view of Wessen Geschichte (Whose History), Kunstverein, Hamburg, Germany, 2008
Photo: Fred Dott

REFLECTION

When looking back over the course of your career – from early works like *Traces of Anonymous Pupil Authors* (2001) to *Storage Piece* (2004), to more recent work like the sculptures in *Warrior Believer Lover* (2011) or the *Sonic Rotating Ovals* and *Sonic Dances* that will be presented at *Mediacity Seoul 2014* – is there a common thread that you feel defines who you are as an artist?

Well, I guess I am not an artist whose practice could be bound to specific topics or subject matters easily. In fact, I am almost ignorant to that. My aspirations relate to fostering an understanding of how human interests extend beyond the given boundaries and categorisations. In other words, an artistic practice should be something actual; something to experience, not necessarily to understand; and it should rather resist the conventional idea of possessing a common thread or summary in the sense of an understandable message.

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There is an evolution of an artist's practice and even if I feel I am aware of this, I might be not the best person to analyse it or draw conclusions from it. The only thing I could tell for a moment is what unknown mental adventure my work attempts to cause and what goes beyond that. I would rather hear from the audience, writer and various recipients a desire to interact further with my work, or an idea fostered by the work.

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Haegue Yang

Series of Vulnerable Arrangements – Blind Room, 2006

Aluminum Venetian blinds, aluminum hanging structure, powder coating, steel wire, DV-PAL Trilogy, MDF, spotlight, mirror, humidifier, infrared heater, fan, origami objects, photocopies, found objects, seating, scent emitters ('Wood Fire,' 'Fresh Linen')

Collection of Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, T. B. Walker Acquisition Fund, 2007

Installation View of *Como Viver Junto – How to Live Together*, 27. Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil, 2006

Photo: Juan Guerra, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo



Haegue Yang

Medicine Man - A Good Hunk of Safety, 2010

Clothing rack, casters, light bulbs, cable, cord, wig, paper mâché, watercolor, lacquer, metal ring, metal chain, pine cones, sea shells, hair rollers

200 x 90 x 110 cm

Photo: Nick Ash

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Is there anything in particular you feel you would like to explore that you have not yet tapped into?

Well, I wish to explore more about Korea, especially the significance of the country's division. I also generally would like to further explore Asia as a region, which ranges from Istanbul via the Middle East and Central Asia and up to the so-called Far East (over India or via Central Asia). I guess it will be a long-term engagement that will occupy me for a while as an almost-subconscious task underlying all the projects I am currently conceiving. It is exciting and terrifying, since whatever I attempt to delve into, requires a visual response through materials, method and the creation of a new way of perception. It is a long way..., but I guess I am willing to face a new chapter of challenges. Since my development from 2006 up to now has been rich and rewarding, I look forward to a new complex and difficult chapter to struggle through.

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Haegue Yang
Quasi MB – in the Middle of Its Story,
2006/2007
18 Plates, original writings on paper or
photography
each 37 x 52 cm, framed

Courtesy of Wien Lukatsch, Berlin
Photo © Roman März



Haegue Yang
Quasi MB – in the Middle of Its Story,
2006/2007
18 Plates, original writings on paper or
photography
each 37 x 52 cm, framed

Courtesy of Wien Lukatsch, Berlin
Photo © Roman März

Anna Dickie. "Ocula conversation. Haegue Yang - Part II", *Ocula*, 2014.
<http://ocula.com/magazine/conversations/haegue-yang-part-ii/>

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Haegue Yang
Three Kinds, 2008
Aluminum Venetian blinds, aluminum hanging structure, powder coating, steel wire, moving spotlight, floodlight
Courtesy of Galerie Wien Lukatsch, Berlin
Installation view of *Life on Mars*, the 55th Carnegie International, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, USA, 2008
Photo: Tom Little

Eric Loret. "Haegue Yang, compliment d'objets", *Libération*, August 22, 2013.
http://next.liberation.fr/arts/2013/08/22/haegue-yang-compliment-d-objets_926401



Haegue Yang, compliment d'objets par Eric Loret

Arts. Dans son exposition «Equivoques» présentée dans deux lieux à Strasbourg, la plasticienne sud-co-réenne poursuit son travail conceptuel de mise en scène et de poétisation des articles du quotidien.

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«Blind Curtain- Flesh Behind Tricolore», 2013. - Photo M. Bertola. Musées de la Ville de Strasbourg. Courtesy Gal. Ch.Crousel, Paris

On avait vu le travail de Haegue Yang, séoulienne de Berlin, entre autres à l'expo «documenta (13)» l'an passé, une flopée de stores vénitiens s'ouvrant et se fermant lentement au-dessus des rails de la gare désaffectée de Cassel : *Approaching : Choreography Engineered in Never-Past Tense* (2012). A la galerie Chantal Crousel à Paris, aussi, ses *Dress Vehicles*, encore des stores vénitiens, richement décorés, arrangés en costumes délirants dans lesquels le visiteur est convié à se glisser pour, peut-être, interpréter une danse dada.

Eric Loret. "Haegue Yang, compliment d'objets", *Libération*, August 22, 2013.

http://next.liberation.fr/arts/2013/08/22/haegue-yang-compliment-d-objets_926401

Strasbourg propose la première grande expo française de Haegue Yang, 42 ans, où le conceptuel plus dur cohabite avec les expériences sensorielles des stores. Avec les Certificates (2010-2011), par exemple, œuvres qui consistent en contrats conclus entre l'artiste et leurs acquéreurs, aux termes desquels Yang livre à celui qui l'achète un secret (un code bancaire, un mot de passe en ligne, etc.). Si l'interface du Certificate est un bout de papier, son contenu est une épreuve mentale, fondée sur l'engagement et la confiance.

Hameau. Résistance, opposition et contre-pied passifs par réarrangement de l'espace (Grid Bloc, série de papiers millimétrés non standards) et des gestes, en tissant un «milieu» où tous les rapports sont potentiellement inversables, l'univers de Haegue Yang n'est pas très aisé à résumer ni même à appréhender - on ne va pas faire les malins.

Une de ses œuvres «anciennes» (Picture Study, 2003) consiste en deux murs de photos faites par les enfants d'un hameau nippon. D'un côté, les images dans l'ordre de leur prise de vue, chaque ligne correspondant à un écolier. En face, les mêmes clichés réorganisés par l'artiste en fonction des thèmes, matières ou couleurs car, de fait, eu égard à la petite taille du village, les photographes en herbe ont souvent immortalisé les mêmes objets, animaux et lieux : où l'on se rappelle que l'art précède le réel, dont nous ne voyons que ce que nous en avons appris à voir.

Encore plus tôt, Yang s'était intéressée aux traces, autre grand passage obligé de la création conceptuelle : Traces of Anonymous Pupil Authors (2001, jamais exposé jusqu'ici), des soulignages de manuels scolaires (lignes, encadrés, etc.) dont le texte a été effacé. Il ne reste plus qu'une sorte de dessin étrange de la page, témoignant du plan de lecture des élèves qui l'ont eue entre leurs mains, comme pour Carsick Drawings (2006), créé en bus sur des routes cahoteuses du Japon, où Yang entourait des blocs de texte dans un journal, le trait obtenu rendant compte à la fois de la suspension (mauvaise) du bus et du trajet oculaire de l'artiste dans la feuille de papier.

On comprend donc à peu près que c'est sur l'appropriation, la façon dont on saisit les objets et les idées, comment ceux-ci glissent des mains et des synapses, comment ils s'imposent à nous tout en se refusant : ainsi d'un miroir ovale retourné vers le mur (Back, 2006) ou des frustrants Whatever Beings de 2011, «sculptures murales avec déviation tangentielle vers le haut et sur le côté», à savoir des rectangles moulés dans le mur, mais inclinés à 10 degrés d'un côté, et dans les tailles exactes des papiers de format A0, A1, A2, A3, A4 et A5, qui sont des normes internationales. Le résultat est la matérialisation d'un étalon sous une forme inhabituelle et littéralement «déviante», puisque nous ne connaissons généralement la série des «A» qu'en fournitures de bureau. On a envie de décrocher ces Whatever Beings (pour quoi faire, on l'ignore), de les prendre en main, et l'on ne peut pas.

Contrariété. Dans un entretien de 2006 pour le BAK d'Utrecht (traduit à partir du catalogue d'«Equivoques»), Haegue Yang explicite le principe de contrariété sensorielle qui régit son œuvre : «J'aimerais [...] créer dans le public une impression d'immédiateté et d'accessibilité. Ce faisant, j'entends aussi mettre en place un cadre étrange mais "(en) commun", où puisse prendre corps l'idée quelque peu fragile et vulnérable de "communauté d'absence".» On croirait entendre Maurice Blanchot revisitant Marguerite Duras. Normal, Haegue Yang compte l'écrivaine parmi ses sources et elle a déjà mis en scène plusieurs fois la Maladie de la mort, dont la dernière fois à Kassel avec Jeanne Balibar.

Origamis. La Maladie..., on le sait, est le socle de «La communauté négative», article de Maurice Blan-

Eric Loret. "Haegue Yang, compliment d'objets", *Libération*, August 22, 2013.
http://next.liberation.fr/arts/2013/08/22/haegue-yang-compliment-d-objets_926401

chot. Ce dernier s'intéressait peu à la danse, autant qu'on se rappelle. Il existe en revanche chez Haegue Yang un geste inversé de la «communauté d'absence», qui est le «déploiement du corps» par la chorégraphie : à la fois accueil et annulation.

Qu'il s'agisse de tancarvilles (2006-2011), photographiés en train de faire leur gymnastique quotidienne ou d'origamis dépliés et écrasés en 2D, les objets mis en scène par Yang sont vivants et, dit-elle, «généreux», à l'instar du portant ou de l'étagère : «Pour moi, cette capacité du portant de recevoir des objets très hétérogènes est presque touchante. Comme s'il était suffisamment tolérant ou généreux pour accepter la différence et la variété. [...] J'aime "lire" des choses dans des objets simples et apparemment insignifiants et m'intéresser à leur capacité cachée d'accueillir autre chose» (catalogue page 37).

Les tendances de Haegue Yang à l'ouverture, au déploiement, à la danse, se manifestent dans des œuvres à la limite du cinétique (*Rotating Notes*, 2010) et de l'op art (65,21 m² et 35 m², 2013) mais surtout dans les *Trustworthies* de 2012-2013, grands collages géométriques réalisés à partir de motifs d'enveloppes, déchirés d'un côté, découpés de l'autre et assemblés par couleurs ou formes. La déchirure, explique Haegue Yang, est d'origine, puisque toutes ces enveloppes ont été ouvertes. Le découpage est de son fait. Les arrangements de l'artiste ressemblent ainsi à des origamis, dépliables et repliables à l'infini, «l'état animal ou animé par excellence : l'inquiétude», comme disait Gilles Deleuze, qui s'y connaissait en plis.

HG Masters. “Family of Equivocations Haegue Yang”, *Art Asia Pacific*, July 2013.

<http://artasiapacific.com/Magazine/WebExclusives/FamilyOfEquivocationsHaegueYang>



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HAEGUE YANG, *Dress Vehicle – Zig Zag*, 2012, mobile performative sculpture, aluminium Venetian blinds, powder-coated aluminium frame, magnets, knitting yarn, bells, rubber ropes, castors, 278 cm high, 343 cm diameter. Courtesy Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris. Installation view, *Aubette 1928*, Strasbourg, 2013. Photo: Musées de la Ville de Strasbourg, Mathieu Bertola.



HAEGUE YANG, *Sonicwear – Poncho*, Nickel Plated, 2013, nickel-plated bells, rings, 60 × 82 cm, 8.90 kg. Courtesy Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris. Photo: Studio Haegue Yang.

Between the modern art capitals of Paris and Berlin, the modest city of Strasbourg made a just brief cameo in the interwar chapter of European Modernism. This oft-forgotten moment is central to the plot of Haegue Yang’s first large-scale solo show at a French institution, “Family of Equivocations,” a project two years in the making with Strasbourg Museum’s curator Camille Giertler.

Historical personages—often intrepid, and sometimes tragic, women—are central figures in Yang’s practice, their lives and works serving as inspiration for the artist’s diverse sculptures, installations and conceptual projects. In Strasbourg, the central protagonist was Sophie Taeuber-Arp, the Swiss-born artist, textile maker and dancer, who, until her death in 1944 of carbon monoxide poisoning, was a major figure in Zürich’s Dada movement and an early Constructivist. Her work, however, was often overshadowed by that of her husband, fellow Dada-ist Jean Arp. In 1926, the couple had relocated to Strasbourg from Switzerland and there were commissioned to design a new social space at the heart of the city, the *Café de l’Aubette*. They invited Theo van Doesburg, founder of the De Stijl movement, to join them in what was intended to be the “Sistine Chapel of Abstract Art.” Together they produced a jubilant and elegant modern banquet hall, foyer-bar area and Ciné-Dancing hall, including a film screen, with large, colored square panels on the walls and ceiling. Before World War II, *L’Aubette* was a temple to both abstraction and the popular arts of film and dancing, where locals spent the evenings in the company of friends.

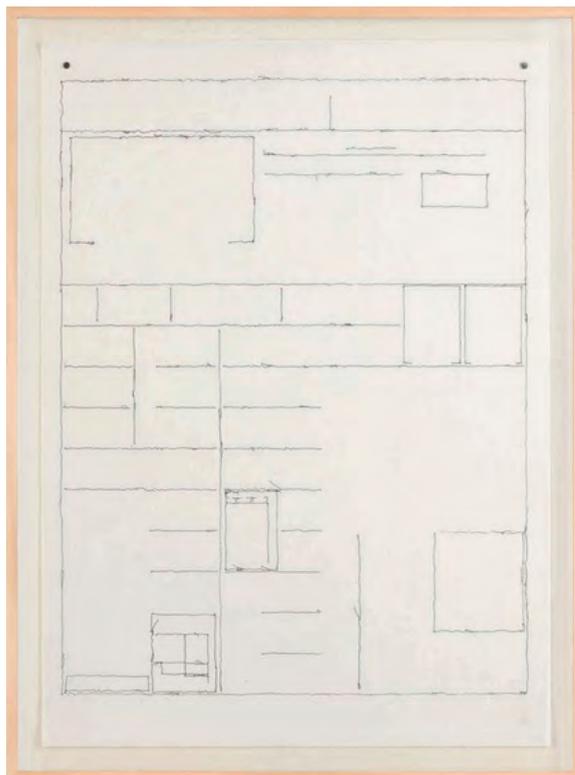
The commingling of the modern and popular arts—including painting, sculpture, architecture, design, film, dance, music and theater—is perhaps lost from the vantage point of today, when the exhausted 20th-century avant-garde disciplines look codified and discrete. Yet Yang’s recent sculptures, as hybrid objects, return to the early 20th-century when artworks were much more free to be their own curious things. In



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HAEGUE YANG, *Non-Foldings – Scenarios of Non-Geometric Folding*, 2013, flattened origami objects, spray paint, framed, 6 pieces, each 62.4 × 62.4 cm. Courtesy of Kukje Gallery, Seoul. Photo: Musées de la Ville de Strasbourg, Mathieu Bertola.



HAEGUE YANG, *Carsick Drawings*, 2006, ink, tracing paper, framed 10 pieces, each 65 × 47.6 cm. Courtesy the artist. Photo: Musées de la Ville de Strasbourg, Mathieu Bertola.

Yang’s case, her *Dress Vehicle – Zig Zag* and *Dress Vehicle – Yin Yang* (2012), located in the *Salle des Fêtes*, in the *Aubette 1928*, which served as the first exhibition venue for Yang’s solo show, are three-meter-tall sculptures on wheels. The panels of colorful macramé, yarn and bells and Venetian blinds can be wheeled (and danced) around the space, and have bells and blinds that make noise and rattle. From the inside, a walker drives the sculptures, while from the outside, their many pointed sides can be swung open or closed and the blinds lifted and lowered. Wonderfully awkward to steer, they are at once machines, structures, costumes, prototypes and models.

Making noise and dancing about was further encouraged in the *Ciné-Dancing* hall, where Yang’s new series of garments made from miniature bells, “*Sonicwears*” (2013), were placed on tables in the middle of this film-viewing and dance salon. Made of nickel-plated bells, some of the “*Sonicwears*” are like ponchos or vests, others like shawls, bracelets, ankle socks, or elaborate (and vaguely kinky) handcuffs. All are terrifically heavy to wear, like chain-mail armor, and offer a wide percussive range of sounds—depending on the wearer’s motion while strolling, skipping or twirling around the space. They are homages to *Taueber-Arp’s* Dada costumes and an invitation to the audience to make something like a performance.

Between these two festive spaces is the *Foyer-bar*, where dancers and revelers could cool off and quiet down with the introspective sculpture *Incarnation of Wind and Condensation* (2013), which features a black metal fan atop a custom-designed bar where two bottles of frozen water taken from a small freezer underneath are placed at regular intervals throughout the day. Situated between the two grand rooms of *L’Aubette*, the two perspiring bottles perhaps represent the chance meeting of two revelers, or for the meeting of past and present. The new work harks back to Yang’s sculptures from the 2009 Korea

HG Masters. “Family of Equivocations Haegue Yang”, *Art Asia Pacific*, July 2013.

<http://artasiapacific.com/Magazine/WebExclusives/FamilyOfEquivocationsHaegueYang>



HAEGUE YANG, *Central Composition in Explosion – Trustworthy #184*, 2012–2013, various envelope security patterns, framed, 11 pieces either 98.1 × 98.1 or 68.1 × 68.1 cm. Courtesy Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris. Installation view, MAMCS, Strasbourg, 2013. Photo: Musées de la Ville de Strasbourg, Mathieu Bertola.

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Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, “Condensation,” and an earlier cycle of her works that featured fans and heat-lamps. In these works, the motif of “condensation” (the transformation of vapor into liquid) was an analogy for how intellectual ideas become tangible realities, or for the survival of progressive ideals long after their originators had physically departed from the world.

The exhibition’s second venue, Strasbourg’s Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, houses a model of L’Aubette 1928 and many artworks by both Arp and Taeuber-Arp, including her *Coupe Dada* (1916), a rounded painted-wood object resembling a hat stand and assuming a kind of anthropomorphic presence. Yang’s “Family of Equivocations,” located in a two-storey gallery nearby, is demarcated by a hanging installation of colored Venetian blinds, *Blind Curtain — Flesh Behind Tricolore* (2013), comprised of seven vertically suspended rows of 60-centimeter-square shades. The semi-transparent forms allow the colors—ranging from white, gray and “flesh-tone” to solid reds and forest green—to mingle and vary depending on the vantage point. This work, like their siblings that Yang has created in recent years, may be a “domesticated” object—being made of this simple household material—yet, as an abstraction, it is a sharp rebuke to the principles of High Modernism that command a single, frontal vantage point, a flat surface and solidity of form. In other words, the blind series are made of a material that light passes through, rather than a flat structure that dominates a space or reflects the light off its surface. These hanging structures—in their colors, variations and lightness—are everything that a minimalist steel sculpture or Barnett Newman canvas is not. This is abstraction as we have not known it before.

Inside the galleries were many new works by Yang, several ongoing series shown in a new, fuller form, and several works that had never or rarely been shown before. Greeting one in the middle of the

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<http://artasiapacific.com/Magazine/WebExclusives/FamilyOfEquivocationsHaegueYang>



gallery, like a familiar, old friend, is *Non-Indépliable, Azuré* (2010), a drying rack covered in a blue fabric with its “arms” outstretched—an inadvertent figure. On the walls is *Eclectic Totemic* (2013), a wallpaper created in collaboration with London graphic designers OK-RM (Oliver Knight and Rory McGrath), that, in the manner of the Surrealist game “cadavre exquis,” combines figures taken from 1920s literature and dance.

On top of this, on the wall in frames are “Non-Foldings – Scenarios of Non-Geometric Folding” (2013), which are flattened origami objects used for the “Non-Folding — Geometric Tipping” series (works made by placing origami objects on paper and spray-painting the paper in black, leaving behind only their outline forms). The “Non-Folding — Geometric Tipping” works, themselves austere black-on-white constellations of forms from the origami figures, return to the idea of a single geometric form (the origami object) dancing across the page to produce these improvised images. *Hardware Store Collages* (2012–13) translates animatronic-motion across a flat surface with its catalog clippings of light bulbs, door handles and other fixtures pasted across a black surface. Motion and abstraction arises again in the never-before-seen *Carsick Drawings* (2006). Yang made the jagged tracings around the perimeter of articles in Japanese newspapers while riding the bus in the rural Akiyoshidai region in Japan. A whole room upstairs is devoted to the *Trustworthies*, which are Yang’s collages made from the security linings of envelopes and graph paper. *Diagonal Composition in Flow — Trustworthy #183* (2013) takes up three walls of the gallery, the colorful forms spanning multiple framed panels, and on the fourth wall *Central Composition in Explosion — Trustworthy #184* (2013) uses more complicated, octagonal forms.

While the “dancing object” and “abstraction in motion” are key motifs in Yang’s oeuvre, these are abstractions that do not privilege one vantage point or one material—they are aspects of a larger conception of the “minority” that runs throughout Yang’s works in Strasbourg. For one thing, *Taeu-berg-Arp* herself had long been the neglected partner in her marriage with Jean Arp, and thus within the Dada movement at large. Textiles feature less prominently in the history of abstraction than paintings. Materials such as the macramé, Venetian blinds, origami, the inside linings of envelopes, hardware-store catalogs, the reverse side of a mirror (a piece called *Back*, 2006), the slightly malformed or “defective” origami objects in the photograph series “*Imperfections*” (2010) and the hand-knitted sleeves of *Roll Cosies – Cash Register Rolls, 50 Meter* (2012) are Yang’s veneration of the humble, marginalized and overlooked. You don’t have to name the structures and ideologies that she is pushing back against—or even know that there are any—to appreciate the ways in which Yang is proposing a revised understanding of abstraction, modernism and 20th-century history.

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Documenta 13

VARIOUS VENUES,
KASSEL, BANFF, CAIRO, AND KABUL
Daniel Birnbaum

WHAT WOULD IT MEAN to think that things could have stories as troubled as those of people? Many of the objects in this year's Documenta—among them engines, a beehive, a palette knife—had complex, sometimes difficult, stories to tell. Take the Korbman, a German apple. Its origin arguably lies in 1923, when the Bavarian priest, activist, and apple lover Korbman Agner saw Adolf Hitler speaking in Munich. Agner began to protest the Nazi regime, was arrested in the fall of 1939, and was subsequently moved to Dachau—where, unbelievably enough, he tended a small orchard between two barracks and even bred several new varieties of apple. Using the German abbreviation for *concentration camp*, he named them KZ-1, KZ-2, KZ-3, and KZ-4. Documenta 13 curator Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev included nearly four hundred of the priest's drawings of apples in her sprawling exhibition, which was so full of odd objects and curious constellations that nothing, in the end, should have surprised us. The meticulous illustrations, made between circa 1912 and 1960, were installed in strict grids reminiscent of 1970s Conceptualism. They looked monotonous from a distance, but on closer inspection the graceful depictions—some shown singly, some in pairs—displayed all the quirks and blemishes we'd expect from real fruit. Together with artist Jimmie Durham, Christov-Bakargiev

also planted two apple trees in Kassel's Karlshof Park as a modest monument to the rebellious priest, whose KZ-3 was renamed the Korbman in 1985.

In the Kunsthalle Fridericianum, Documenta's central venue, the grids of apples were displayed in the same room as the late Mark Lombardi's large drawings mapping the personal and financial connections behind major political scandals such as the Iran-Contra affair. The adjoining gallery contained tables with scientific instruments exploring the nature of light and speed—a "work" by Austrian physicist Anton Zeilinger. The mathematical calculations scribbled on an adjacent wall were impenetrable to me, but according to the catalogue they pointed to a necessary "renewal of the discussion of the definition of reality." The diversity of these examples can perhaps serve as an illustration of the vast ambitions of this exhibition and of the radical heterogeneity of the projects included.

Christov-Bakargiev—who, as the hundred pamphlets published in the run-up to her exhibition demonstrated, is not opposed to metaphysical speculation or to the most complex of thinkers—insisted that her project was not limited by an overarching theme. What was on offer instead, for those of us who wanted some guidance, was a section of the exhibition called "The Brain," located in the rotunda of the Fridericianum and separated from the other rooms by a glass wall. This was described as an "associative space," in which "a number of artworks, objects, and documents [were] brought together in lieu of a concept." It was posited as the very locus of Christov-Bakargiev's vast project, as Lawrence Weiner's *THE MIDDLE OF THE MIDDLE OF THE MIDDLE OF*, 2012, applied to the glass partition, made clear.

The Brain was thus pushed as a "puzzle of an exhibition that condenses and centers the thought lines" of the whole Documenta. Among the items on view were artifacts from the National Museum of Beirut that had melted into one another when the museum was shelled during the Lebanese Civil War, an excerpt of a video made by the Egyptian artist Ahmed Bassiony just three days before he

died from gunshot wounds inflicted by the Egyptian police in the winter of 2011, a palette knife used for more than thirty years by the marvelous Lebanese poet and painter Erel Adnan, a barbituric thermometer that the photographer Lee Miller took from Hitler's Munich apartment in 1945, and a selection of figures made some three thousand years ago in Central Asia that are today known as the Bactrian Princesses. Many of these objects could be considered troubled—as the catalogue puts it, there are "innocent objects and objects that have lost something; destroyed objects, damaged objects and indestructible objects . . . hidden or disguised objects, objects on retreat, objects in refuge, traumatized objects." That's where we may want to pause: traumatized objects?

There was, I think, a conflict—perhaps a productive one—at the heart of this enormous multidisciplinary show, and it can be located exactly in the tension between those two words. On the one hand, many of the artworks and the stories they told circled around collective traumas: those of Nazi Germany and, much more recently, those of

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Afghanistan or the countries involved in the Arab Spring. Indeed, Christov-Bakargiev's focus on what she calls "collapse and recovery" is so familiar from recent cultural theory that it is almost a cliché to speak of a traumatic temporality at the very core of all avant-garde artistic developments. But on the other hand, such psychoanalytic language here collides with the idiom of a new, object-oriented philosophy that wants to liberate us once and for all from anthropocentrism and consider instead what the catalogue calls the "inanimate makers of the world." In fact, Christov-Bakargiev's project is in many ways perfectly in tune with the approaches today discussed as "speculative realism,"

Galerie
Chantal Crousel

From left: Korbman Agner, *Apples (detail)*, ca. 1912-60. 302 drawings, graphite, pencil, watercolor. Colored pencil on cardboard, each 4 1/2 x 6 1/2", Kunsthalle Fridericianum, Kassel. View of "The Brain," 2012, Kunsthalle Fridericianum, Kassel. Photo: Roman März.



with its ambition to rid our thinking of the obsession with that historically overemphasized relationship between a perceiving subject and a known object. Instead, the argument goes, we should look into other equally exciting and productive relationships in the world, consisting of so many human and nonhuman actors, or "actants," as Bruno Latour would put it. Philosopher Graham Harman goes so far as to claim: "Atoms and molecules are actants, as are children, raindrops, bullet trains, politicians, and numerals. All entities are on exactly the same ontological footing." One can go further still: To quote from an interview with Christov-Bakargiev, "The question is not whether we give dogs or straw berries permission to vote, but how a strawberry can assert its political intention."

Things have stories, but are they so much like us that they are capable of experiencing trauma or having political intentions? If we end up attributing human subjectivity to nonhuman actors, isn't there a risk of making anthropocentrism a model for the rest of the world, rather than eradicating the problem? Indeed, the show's own structure illustrated this paradox: Its center was called the Brain, after all. But it was not at all clear whether we should understand the Brain as importing subjectivity to the entire exhibition or take it as a neutral scientific metaphor pointing a new relationship to things (including artworks) and other living beings.

Either way, the resulting tension played out among numerous assemblages and apparatuses that hovered indecisively at the division between subject and object. What were we to make of the impressive array of car engines that Thomas Bayrle had made into praying machines—as well as the windshield wipers whose movements became inseparable from an audio track of Hail Marys? How, and in what language, were we to respond to the scenario that Pierre Huyghe staged in the composing area of the Baroque park, a scene involving a female statue reclining in the mud with a beehive taking the place of her head, an *acephale* who was guarded by an uncanny dog with a fluorescent leg? It was as mysterious

a tableau as that behind the wooden door in Duchamp's *Etant donné* and reminded us that one of the show's "thought lines" led back through the history of Surrealism. Collected in the Brain were several versions of Man Ray's *Objet indestructible*, 1923/1965, in which Lee Miller's wide-open eye, set atop a meteoric, never-blades, although it has seen unlikely things, including Eva Braun's perfume flask and the Führer's monogrammed towel on the day of his suicide.

In several of the roughly dozen works installed at the Hauptbahnhof, Kassel's former main train station, the ghostly presence of the past reminded us of the function of the German railway not so many decades ago. It was addressed directly in Susan Philipsz's *Study for Strings*, 2012, installed at the end of a functioning platform, where seven speakers played music composed by Pavel Haas in the Terezin concentration camp in 1943. In a disused part of the station, meanwhile, Haegue Yang's *Approaching: Choreography Engineered in Never-Past Tense*, 2012, comprising motorized venetian blinds suspended above the tracks, created an uncanny sense of trains arriving and departing. Yang's installation was one of the most substantial works in an exhibition with many great new pieces. Another, also at the Hauptbahnhof, was Clemens von Wedemeyer's riveting three-channel film *Muster (Ruhes)*, 2012, a tightly knit narrative about the former Benedictine monastery Breitenau, just outside Kassel. The work is a mazelike telling of a German psychohistory spinning out from the history of the site. (The Nazis converted it into an early concentration camp, and after the end of World War II it housed a reformatory for girls; parts of it are used today as a psychiatric clinic.) Installed in a large dark space in a triangular fashion, von Wedemeyer's piece could only be viewed from one side at a time, so one kept circling to get a grip on the connections between Breitenau's history and such scenes as the liberation of a concentration camp's inmates by American soldiers, a punk concert, and fragments from Ulrike Mühlhof's 1970 film *Bambule*.

This Documenta, with a firm footing in Kassel as well as outposts unknown to most of us in Cairo, Kabul, and Banff, Canada, was a wildly ambitious and in many ways outrageous exhibition. It created its own imaginary geographies, insisting that there are secret relationships that most of us have never paid attention to. Kassel, Kabul, Kassel, Kabul. Mention the two cities often enough together and things start happening. Energies start rubbing off, layers of meaning migrate. Naturally, there were plenty of times such frictions did not go anywhere, plenty of non-so-fantastic projects, and a few yarn decisions. An awkward handwritten letter in which Kai Althoff explains to Christov-Bakargiev why he could not participate in the show was displayed prominently in the Fridericianum's ground-floor gallery, which was otherwise almost entirely empty, albeit suffused with an artificial freeze. Ryan Gander's *I Need Some Meaning I Can Memorize (The Invisibile Pull)*, 2012. But much more evocative was the exhibition's plethora of magnificent projects, which included immersive installations by Theater Gates and Tino Sehgal, both of which made viewers part of musical activities that went far beyond anything they might have expected, as well as subtle meditations on painting in spite of everything by the likes of Paul Chan and Francis Alys. Wandering into a beautiful cinema in the north of Kassel, I saw a truly majestic and inexplicable shiny entity appearing and disappearing on the screen, elusive, like some sort of cosmic quicksilver. This piece by Trisha Donnelly (*Untitled*, 2010) existed—like everything else the artist has ever touched—without any explanation. A more modest film elsewhere in the exhibition, Tamiara Henderson's *Shaded Ballot & Anonymous Team*, 2011, showed everyday objects being manipulated by invisible hands. There is, after all, so little we actually know about the true nature of the things that surround us. However contradictory, the show's attempt to blur the line between the perceiving subject and the rest of the world left me with a question: Was I looking at this show, or was it looking at me? □

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From left: Clemens von Wedemeyer, *Muster (Ruhes)*, 2012, 27 minutes, installation view, Hauptbahnhof, Kassel; Franziska Alys, *Untitled (Glass)*, 2011–12, performance, photographs, installation view, central dimensions variable, Ocula Kunststraffe, Kassel; Haegue Yang, *Approaching: Choreography Engineered in Never-Past Tense*, 2012, motorized installation, steel, gas, fabric, suspension, 2.5 x 2.5 x 2.5 m, 100% variable, installation view, Hauptbahnhof, Kassel; Photo: Nils Hinger

