

Where You Stand: Kibong Rhee

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GALLERY

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'Where You Stand Green-1', 2022, Acrylic and polyester fiber on canvas, 186x186cm
Courtesy of the artist and Kukje Gallery, Photo: Chunho An, Image provided by Kukje Gallery

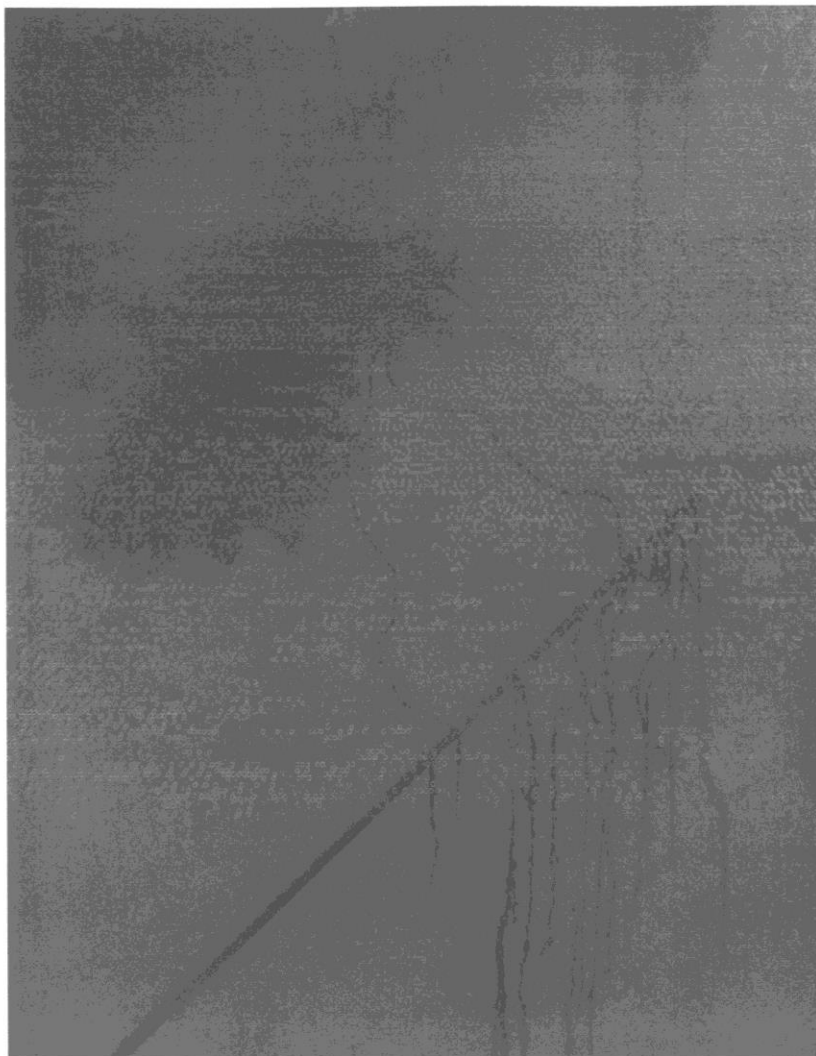
Kukje Gallery is pleased to present *Where You Stand*, a solo exhibition of Kibong Rhee from November 17 to December 31, 2022. Fourteen years since his last exhibition at Kukje in 2008, this fifth solo exhibition of the artist will be held simultaneously in both the gallery's Seoul and Busan spaces.

editor HELENA



'Stand on Shadow No. 9-3, 2022, Acrylic and polyester fiber on canvas, 110x110cm
Courtesy of the artist and Kukje Gallery, Photo: Chunho An, Image provided by Kukje Gallery

GALLERY



'Deeper than Shadow - Purple', 2021, Wood, silicon, thread and polyester fiber on canvas, 241x186cm
Courtesy of the artist and Kukje Gallery, Photo: Chunho An, Image provided by Kukje Gallery

Working across painting and installation, Rhee continues his long interest in experimentation with and mastery of the fundamental structures and dynamics of the natural world. His works balance a nostalgia for a bygone past while at the same time evoke a longing for the ephemeral, forming an uncanny balance between the unconscious, the real, and fantasy. Described by many as oneiric, Rhee's dreamlike landscapes exist as lyrical scenes that transcend time, while his material specificity captures the imagination of the viewer. This exhibition presents around fifty new works of Rhee's "vanitas," reflecting on the impermanence and certainty of life.

Rhee is best known for his paintings that use technical mastery and material inventiveness to create highly realistic spatial illusion. Painting directly on clear plexiglass, or polyester fiber, and then layering these translucent sheets onto another layer of painted canvas, Rhee is able to create a significantly affecting depth of field. Drawn to look closely at both the painting's surface while also discovering hidden depths that exist within the multilayered work, his viewers experience a sense of transcendence. In so doing Rhee varies what he calls, the "density of reality," destabilizing our experience of encountering the world, and activating natural elements such as water and the horizon line to appear simultaneously familiar and unreal. As was demonstrated through the artist's 2003 solo exhibition, *There is No Place – The Connective*, in which a water tank filled with blue liquid was exhibited, Rhee has persistently presented works that engage liquid states in

unique and enchanting ways. In both his paintings and installations, the artist has explored how water changes depending on its environment and how its characteristics mirror human qualities. The main focus of his interest in water gradually shifted towards fog or vapor, a state more elusive and temperamental in character, developing his unique technical approach to layering the pictorial field to create optical depth and density evoking mist. Fog, in particular, has become a primary theme in part because the artist maintains his studio in a remote, humid mountainside environment. By exploring the many states and qualities of water in his work, Rhee has been able to visualize the perceptual impact that space has on consciousness and our relationship to objects.

This long-awaited solo exhibition presents a significant number of new works, presenting Kibong Rhee's unique approach to exploring the invisible flow that exists as a force moving the world. With the recognition that humans perceive the world in ways presented to them, Rhee's multimedia work uses his mastery of pictorial realism as well as technical virtuosity to visualize processes and variations that govern awareness. As the title of the exhibition acknowledges, what and how you perceive depends on where you stand. As such, Rhee uses the device of painting to rediscover what is everywhere but nowhere. In this way the artist considers himself an "engineer who makes the art of reverie-image," inviting the viewer to reflect on the readily dismissed aspects of the everyday. N