



## Haegue Yang Presentation *Latent Dwelling* at Kukje Gallery *Hanok*

Dates: August 30 – October 8, 2023

Venue: Kukje Gallery *Hanok*



Kukje Gallery *Hanok* Haegue Yang presentation  
*Latent Dwelling* installation view

Image provided by Kukje Gallery

Kukje Gallery is pleased to announce Haegue Yang's presentation *Latent Dwelling*, on view from August 30 to October 8, 2023. Greeting visitors at the gallery's *Hanok*, a traditional Korean house, the presentation actively engages with its current "latent" state, a transitional stage frozen before its renovation into a full-fledged exhibition space.

In August 2006, Yang presented *Sadong 30*, her first solo exhibition in Korea, in a private residence. The place was, in fact, an abandoned house in Sa-dong, a neighborhood next to the western coastal pier of Incheon, a satellite city of Seoul. *Sadong 30* continues to be a topic of conversation among art professionals.

The artist herself encapsulates the fundamental preparations that had to be undertaken for *Sadong 30*, a showcase of works that were scarcely considered conforming to the body of works, into two primary actions: "cleaning" and "connecting electricity." The house, uninhabited for years, was brimming with waist-high trash from the neighborhood and had lost access to electricity and water for a long while. As the issues were being resolved, the artist started to bring in devices emblematic of the "ghostly" life into the space.

Mundane items, such as broken mirror pieces, light fixtures, IV stands, wall clocks, origami objects, and fluorescent paint, made their appearance. Although there was no laundry to be washed, a cloth-wrapped drying rack found its place in the master bedroom, and a vintage ventilator placed in front of a stroboscope appeared to slowly rotate. In place of storage vessels, a lookout station was constructed, where visitors could rest and also freely take a bottle of water

from a cooler to drink or to sprinkle on the garden balsams and chrysanthemums planted in an unused old-fashioned outdoor wash basin without running water. Introduced for the first time in *Sadong 30*, the drying racks and IV stands later became Yang's signature materiality representing her oeuvre; however, such display of non-traditional art materials and unfamiliar objects throughout the space was not only unconventional, but completely alienating. It was the feeble old house that brought all these disparate elements together.

In contrast to the loose composition of fragmented elements in *Sadong 30*, *Latent Dwelling* presents a defined body of work in a relatively set environment. Nevertheless, the reliance on daylight or handheld flashlights at night instead of proper ceiling lights is somewhat reminiscent of the condition of *Sadong 30*. This sense of place, coupled with the inherent temporality of the under-construction *Hanok*, establishes an impression of an eternal transitional status intertwined with the ever-accumulating layers of time.

Yang's methodology for this presentation revolves around the sensation of latent energy during hibernation. Upon entering the presentation, the first sensory experience is the herbal scent of Chinese medicine and the flickering lights of electric candles dispersed throughout the space. In one corner of the *Hanok*, sculptures are simply lying on the floor, while in another corner, sculptures occupy the space as storage jars or straw sacks used in a granary. The works, densely displayed in the modestly scaled interior of the *Hanok*, vary in their series as well as their years of production.



Kukje Gallery *Hanok* Haegue Yang presentation  
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Turning right past *Totem Robots* (2010), a work from Yang's light sculpture series showcased behind the glass front, visitors encounter *The Intermediate – Five-Legged Frosty Fecund Imoogi* (2020), a work from *The Intermediates* (2015–) series, primarily interwoven with artificial straw. With the head of this lifelike creature lifted above the ground, it remains uncertain whether the positioning suggests its recent ascent from or descent to the floor. One arm extends over a distant crossbeam, while bell seedpods drape beneath its tentacles. Moving past this enigmatic being, which evokes an image of the legendary *Imoogi* on the cusp of becoming a dragon, visitors are introduced to one of the artist's most recent works, *Sonic Planet Pockets – Iridescent Botanic Map* (2023). This captivating creature, reminiscent of a colossal beehive or fruit, comprises a body covered with iridescent bells and pockets containing artificial plants symbolizing various regions such as the ocean floor, desert, and tropics, integrating the artificial and the natural at once. Moving past the wall-mounted reflective black sculpture *Obscure Rotating Reflective Running Black Cube-Handle Faucets – Scaly Squirrels #17* (2023), visitors enter a relatively dark, compact rear space filled with large sculptural pieces from the *The Intermediates* series. Among them are *Sonic Rotating Whatever Running on Hemisphere #22* (2022), a recent work that features a hemisphere covered with metal bells and faucets, and sculptures from the ongoing *Sonic Clotheshorse – Dressage* series (2020–), which explores all possible configurations that can be formed by wrapping a drying rack with bells. The richly populated space emanates an atmosphere that seems to store time itself. Continuing, the audience's gaze passes through the window located on one side of the space and encounters *The Intermediate – Seven-Legged Carbonous Male Imoogi* (2023), wrapped around trees in the *Hanok's* backyard.



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On the other side of the entrance is a relatively well-organized space, previously used as a showroom. In addition to sculptures, the space features monoprints that the artist has been creating for over a decade; works from her *Lacquer Paintings* (1994–) series that capture impressions of the environment—raindrops, dust, pollen, and insects—that have accidentally settled on top of the intended composition; and the *Carsick Drawing* (2006–) series that abstractly and non-literally record the terrain and movement of bumpy roads that the artist vividly perceived while traveling by car in the border region between China and Vietnam. Alongside these works are the sculpture *Biped Chalky of Innate Black* (2015), which demonstrates the artist's long-standing interest in folklore and handicrafts, and *Mesmerizing Two-Leaf Folding Screen – Glossolalia-Powered Spring-Summer Flagbearers #3* (2022), a wooden folding screen that draws its essence from the *Mesmerizing Mesh* (2021–) series inspired by sacred paper objects employed in shamanistic rituals.

Hanging under the eaves of the *Hanok*'s courtyard are three pieces from the *Mesmerizing Mesh* series, inspired by the shamanic tradition of Sacred Paper Cutting, which involves folding and cutting paper to create sacred paper objects. Also draping down from the rafters beneath the eaves is *Sonic Rope* (2023), an installation inspired by the Korean folktale *Sister Sun and Brother Moon* and taking the form of a rope that symbolizes an escape from the hardships of reality.



Instead of envisioning the *Hanok* solely as a neatly organized, neutral setting for displaying artworks, Yang aims to transform the given space into a context where artworks, distributed throughout, possess their own distinctive sense of time and space. Additionally, Yang hopes that *Latent Dwelling* will present an opportunity for her works to greet visitors in a more “natural state,” reminiscent of how sceneries look during the offseason or how actors appear offstage.

\* *Latent Dwelling* will remain open until 8 pm during Frieze Week (September 4–9, 2023) and until midnight on Thursday, September 7, 2023, in celebration of Samcheong Night.

## About the Artist

Born in 1971 in Seoul, South Korea, Haegue Yang currently lives and works between Berlin and Seoul. One of the most significant artists of her generation, Yang is a prolific artist who consistently experiments with her artistic language and maintains a steady stream of exhibitions worldwide. Yang moved to Germany in 1994 to study at the renowned art school Städelschule, where she received a Meisterschüler. She is currently Professor of Fine Art at her alma mater. In 2018, she received the prestigious Wolfgang Hahn Prize as well as the Republic of Korea Culture and Arts Award (Presidential Citation) in the visual arts category in October of the same year. In 2022, she won the 13th Benesse Prize, presented by Benesse Holdings Inc. in collaboration with the Singapore Art Museum (SAM), leading to her forthcoming project in Naoshima, Japan, slated for June 2024.

Yang has held solo exhibitions in numerous museums across the globe, including Pinacoteca Contemporânea, São Paulo (2023); Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen (2022); Tate St Ives, Saint Ives (2020); Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York City (2019); Bass Museum of Art, Miami Beach (2019); Museum Ludwig, Cologne (2018); Centre Pompidou, Paris (2016); Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing (2015); Leeum Museum of Art, Seoul (2015); Haus der Kunst, Munich (2012); Aspen Art Museum, Aspen (2011); and Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (2009). Yang participated in Kassel Documenta 13 (2012) and represented Korea at the 53rd Venice Biennale (2009). In October 2024, Yang will stage a major survey show at the Hayward Gallery, London, UK, which will then travel across Europe.

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