



UNIVERSITY  
of HAWAII®  
MĀNOA

Department of Art & Art History  
University of Hawai'i Art Gallery

**PRESS INFORMATION: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**January 15, 2010**

CONTACT: Lisa Yoshihara, Director; or Sharon Tasaka, Associate Director  
(808) 956-6888, <gallery@hawaii.edu>, <http://hawaii.edu/artgallery>

ART EXHIBITION

***Eternal Blinking: Contemporary Art of Korea***

Features 18 contemporary Korean artists who were specially selected to highlight the historical dynamism of modern Korea. The artists experienced Korea's turbulent history from authoritarian military regimes through the dramatic democratization and flourishing industrial development of its formative years. Their work, which reflects on the past but incorporates contemporary exchange with the global art community, has received international recognition. This exhibition is organized by the Korea College Association of Art, a non-profit academic association of artists/faculty from leading art universities in Korea.

SPONSORS

Korea Foundation, which supports international exchange efforts of cultural and arts related institutions and organizations in Korea and abroad in order to foster the appreciation of Korean culture in the global community and strengthen international partnerships, <http://www.kf.or.kr/>; University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's Department of Art and Art History, the College of Arts and Humanities, and Mānoa Arts & Minds, a partnership that cultivates the mind and spotlights the best of art, music, theater, dance and special performances at UH Mānoa. [http://www.manoa.hawaii.edu/chancellor/arts\\_minds/](http://www.manoa.hawaii.edu/chancellor/arts_minds/)

LOCATION

University of Hawai'i Art Gallery  
Art Building, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

DATES

February 21 – April 9, 2010

HOURS AND ADMISSION

Monday – Friday 10:30 – 5:00; Sunday 12:00 – 5:00.

Closed: Saturdays; Spring Break, March 22 – 26;



Good Friday, April 2; Easter, April 4.

Admission is free. Donations are appreciated. Parking fees may apply.

2535 McCarthy Mall, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822  
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An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Institution

FREE TOURS

Sundays February 28 – March 21, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.

March 28, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m., special tour in Korean language

PUBLIC LECTURES

**Whui-yeon Jin, Ph.D.**, curator of *Eternal Blinking*, and professor at  
Sungshin Women's University, Seoul

**Wong Gi Sul, M.F.A.**, invited artist in *Eternal Blinking*, and professor at  
Korea National University of Art, Seoul

Sunday, February 21, 2:00 p.m.

Art Auditorium, Art Building, UHM

Admission is free.

OPENING RECEPTION

Sunday, February 21, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

The public is invited.

EXHIBITION SUMMARY

Following the stormy and devastating Korean War that ended in 1953, the Korean people and their country suffered from severe poverty and hardship. As a democratically elected government replaced military regimes and as their economy grew rapidly during the 1960s and 1970s, the Korean people enjoyed a strong and stable social and political environment that led to more liberal views of society, culture, and art. Korean artists turned towards the contemporary global art community for exchange, interaction, and participation and soon gained international recognition.

Curated by Whui-yeon Jin, Ph.D., from Sungshin Women's University, *Eternal Blinking: Contemporary Art of Korea* highlights the work of 18 active artists who have experienced these dynamic changes in Korea's recent history and culture. All the artists have explored and refined their work based on three major themes: the Western world as the outsider; Korea as a milieu; and the self as the subject. Their work has been shown in major exhibitions around the world. Many of the artists have studied at western universities. Some have been inspired by traditional Korean art while others have utilized contemporary media and materials, resulting

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in a diversity of formats. Since most of these artists teach at colleges and universities, they influence and encourage the next generation.

The eye and the act of blinking serve as a metaphor for these Korean artists' constant expansion and refinement of their scope of knowledge and creativity. Blinking removes irritants and protects the eye's cornea and conjunctiva. Between each blink, the eye constantly takes in visual information. Through constant seeing and blinking, these artists are able to look back at their unique experiences of Korea's recent historical events while incorporating and integrating international trends and media to create works that exemplify the spirit of contemporary Korean art. Their thought-provoking art works are highlighted in ***Eternal Blinking: Contemporary Art of Korea.***

***Eternal Blinking*** is organized by the Korea College Association of Art, a non-profit academic association of artists/faculty from Ewha Womans University, Kaywon School of Art and Design, Korea National University of Arts, Korea University, Kyungwon University, Seoul Institute of the Arts, Seoul National University, Seoul Women's University, Sookmyung Women's University, Sungkyunkwan University, and Sungshin Women's University.

Lisa Yoshihara, director of the University of Hawai'i Art Gallery states, "***Eternal Blinking: Contemporary Art of Korea*** is a continuation of a remarkable relationship developed in 2003 when the University of Hawai'i Art Gallery, The Contemporary Museum, and the Honolulu Academy of Arts organized *Crossings 2003: Korea/Hawai'i* to commemorate the Centennial of Korean Immigration to the United States. Nine galleries and museums in Honolulu and on the island of Maui featured the work of 56 artists making *Crossings 2003* the largest collaborative project ever undertaken by art organizations and museums in Hawai'i. The University of Hawai'i Art Gallery is grateful to the Korea College Association of Art for this opportunity to further the University of Hawaii's mission to broaden intercultural and educational interchange for students, faculty, and the community. We also appreciate and acknowledge the major support from Korea Foundation, without which this exhibition would not have been possible."

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**Featured artists:**

The University of Hawai'i Art Gallery is honored by the return of *Crossings 2003: Korea/Hawai'i* artists Duck Hyun Cho, Changkyum Kim, Tai-Ho Kim, Nam-shin Kwak, Young Sun Suh, and Wong Gi Sul, and welcomes Bien-U Bae, Hwajin Chang, Jong Mee Jung, Airan Kang, Yong-sik Kim, Bohn-chang Koo, Hee-Yeon Kwon, Sangbong Lee, Kibong Rhee, Geun-Taek Yoo, Dongchun Yoon, and Young Seok Yoon.

Changkyum Kim, known for his video and large-scale installation works, explores personal identity by placing the words *I, You, He, She, We, They* over close-up images of human eyes, hands, and mouths in *Converse 1*, a single channel video. Beneath a glowing chandelier, portraits are arranged as if they were facing each other in a mirror in *The Nora Collection* by Duck Hyun Cho. Based on Nora, Korea's first woman fashion designer, the work questions female identity. Professor of plastic art at Ewha Womans College, Cho often explores ideas of conflict and division through his work.

Nam-shin Kwak, professor of printmaking at Hong-ik University, contrasts the real and abstract, and two- and three-dimensionality with his work of a crisp, flat, white silhouette of a skateboarder in mid-air over a dark, obscure background. *Early Fall*, by Wong Gi Sul is a multi-layered abstract painting that features turquoise blue viscera-like shapes and red lozenges over light blue cloud forms and a deep brown background. Sul, who teaches at Korea National University of Arts, is active in organizing exhibitions for Korean artists. Painted in orange and yellow, the doughnut-shaped canvas by Yong-sik Kim is a re-interpretation of monochrome painting that was esteemed during the 1970s. Kim teaches western painting at Sungshin Women's University.

A photograph of illusive air through dark, dense trees by Bien-U Bae shows influences of traditional brush painting. Bae, who believes that the pine tree can express the beauty of Korea, teaches photography at Seoul Arts College. Rhee Kibong invites deeper contemplation in an evocative black and white landscape

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of trees in the fog. Professor at Korea University, Rhee often creates dream-like installations in which ordinary objects become extraordinary.

EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

An exhibition catalogue that features essays by Korean scholars will be available. Price to be announced.

PUBLICITY PHOTOS

Digital images are available.

University of Hawaii System

Established in 1907 and fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, the University of Hawaii is the state's sole public system of higher education. The UH System provides an array of undergraduate, graduate, and professional degrees and community programs on 10 campuses and through educational, training, and research centers across the state. UH enrolls more than 50,000 students from Hawaii, the U.S. mainland, and around the world. For more information visit [www.hawaii.edu](http://www.hawaii.edu).

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