

Lee Kang-So: *Wind / Flow*

October 18 – November 30, 2023

LOCKSGALLERY



Lee Kang-So, *The Wind Blows-230322*, 2023, acrylic on canvas, 51 1/8 x 63 3/4 inches

Locks Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of paintings and ceramics by renowned Korean artist Lee Kang-So (b. 1943, Daegu, Korea).



Regarded as one of the most influential contemporary artists in Korea, Lee is widely known for his role in the avant-garde art movement of the 1970s and his later paintings from the 1990s onward which contain trace images of boats, ducks, or deer across monochromatic fields of gestural brushstrokes. Fusing influences of Western art history (Modernism, Expressionism, Minimalism) with Eastern philosophies and traditions (Taoism, neo-Confucianism, literati painting), Lee's artistic practice is grounded in an intuitive, embodied unity between self and object, between breath and movement, rather than driven by pre-determined thought or intention when composing an image or form.

Lee cites the Korean notion of “Pungryu,” roughly translated to universal harmony—or more specifically, “Pungryu-do,” which means the way of wind and flow—as a lifelong pursuit emerging from his discipline and work as an artist. Often using East Asian ink brushes with long handles and soft bristles, his paintings feature bold brushstrokes and calligraphic marks—controlled yet expressive—evoking a sense of spontaneity. His paintings and ceramics have a fluidity and sense of incompleteness that reflect this transient quality of wind and flow, of impermanence and change. Throughout his work he converses with the materials' physical qualities—the thickness of the paint, the moisture of the clay,



Lee Kang-So, *Becoming-17-C-021*, 2017, ceramic, 20 7/8 x 14 1/2 x 17 3/4 inches

and the humidity of the environment—to create what he calls “coincidences” rather than controlled, fixed forms. “I prefer a ‘painting that is painted’ over the expression of ‘painting a painting,’” the artist says, emphasizing his collaboration with materials and their “existence” or “being.”

Lee’s small-scale ceramic sculptures also reveal elements of this non-predetermined approach. By stacking repeating shapes—cylinders, blocks, and cubes—into towers which seem to barely contain themselves under the weight of gravity, Lee embraces the living qualities of clay, creating graceful, seemingly effortless compositions. “The state of kneaded clay, the energy of my body and mind, and their state of unison with the surrounding environment all determine the work at any given moment,” says the artist. “I aspire to the kind of work that, when people look at it, seems different each time it is seen.”

Lee Kang-So: Wind / Flow includes paintings from the artist’s current *Serenity* series alongside a selection of works from the past 30 years. This is the artist’s first solo exhibition in the U.S. in over a decade, coinciding with his participation in the survey exhibition *Only the Young: Experimental Art in Korea, 1960s-1970s* at The Guggenheim Museum. The show will be accompanied by a catalog with an essay by Lynn Zelevansky.

Lee Kang-So: Wind / Flow will be on view in the second floor gallery and open to the public Tuesday through Saturday, 10am - 6pm or by appointment.