

Lee Kwang-Ho at Kukje Gallery

BY Darryl Wee

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(Courtesy Kukje Gallery)

SEOUL — Kukje Gallery is currently hosting a solo exhibition of 21 new paintings by Lee Kwang-Ho, running through January 25.

Lee's suite of new works depicts the barren yet tranquil winter landscapes of Gotjawal Forest on Jeju Island. By turns raucous, gnarly, and finely enmeshed, Lee's portrayals of dense foliage can be traced back to an enduring interest in the tactile elements of complex ecosystems and ecologies found in the forest.

The first floor showcases Gotjawal forest landscapes by daylight that masterfully demonstrate the artist's finely controlled gradations of light, moisture, and shade, while the second floor of the gallery attempts to recreate something of the dusky, enigmatic conditions of the forests by night, using subtly dimmed lighting and painted black walls.

Fusing both the improvisatory, sketch-like qualities of en plein air painting and the assiduously achieved order of obsessive retouching using knives and needles to both smooth out and scrape away the paint on

the canvas, Lee has created a immersive, psychologically dense environment that mirrors the inscrutability of the actual forest itself.

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URL: <http://enkr.blouinartinfo.com/news/story/1070857/lee-kwang-ho-at-kukje-gallery>