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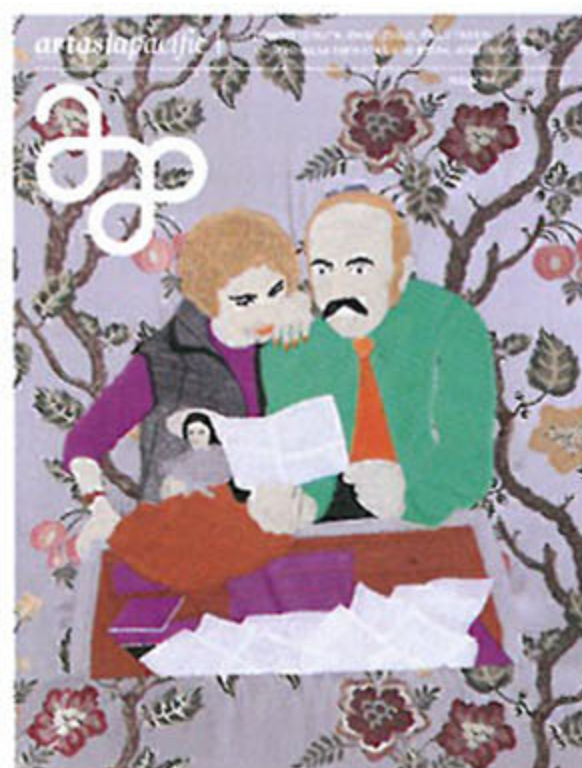
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Cover: RAED YASSIN  
Reading Letters From Saudi Arabia (detail),  
2013, from the series "Dancing, Smoking,  
Kissing," silk thread and embroidered silk cloth,  
85 x 105 cm. Courtesy the artist.

## Contributors

### STEPHANIE BAILEY

Stephanie Bailey is the managing editor of *Ibraaz*, an online platform focused on art from North Africa and the Middle East. She is contributing editor of *Art Papers* and *LEAP*, a writer for *Artforum* and *Yishu*, and was also assistant editor of *You Are Here: Art After the Internet* (2014), an anthology edited by Omar Kholeif. (See FEATURES)

### BARBARA BLOEMINK

Barbara Bloemink is a museum consultant, curator and writer on modern and contemporary art. From 2002 to 2006 she was curatorial director at Cooper-Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum in New York. Bloemink has contributed to numerous publications including *Women in Dada: Essays on Sex, Gender, and Identity* (1999) and *Design Is Not Art: Functional Objects from Donald Judd to Rachel Whiteread* (2004). (See REVIEWS)

### FENG BOYI

Feng Boyi is an independent curator and art critic based between Beijing and Shenzhen. He has curated numerous exhibitions of Chinese contemporary art both in China and abroad, including the first Guangzhou Triennial (2002). With artist Ai Weiwei, Feng has co-curated the important exhibitions "Fuck Off" in Shanghai (2000) and its sequel "Fuck Off 2" in the Netherlands (2013). He is currently artistic director at Shenzhen's He Xiangning Art Museum. (See DISPATCH)

### MICHAEL JOO

Michael Joo is an artist based in New York. His sculptural practice investigates notions of personal identity, perception and science. Joo has exhibited widely in the United States and abroad including at the Sharjah Biennial 12 (2015) and the 9th Gwangju Biennale (2012). His latest solo show "Drift (Bronx)" was held at the Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York, in 2014. (See ONE ON ONE)

### EDWARD SANDERSON

Edward Sanderson is an art critic and curator living in Beijing, with a particular interest in alternative cultural practices and artists working outside of the gallery system in China. Later this year, he will begin a PhD at the University of Nottingham in the United Kingdom, where he will address sustainable social and political strategies of contemporary artistic practices within the Chinese environment. (See REVIEWS)

### DORSEY WAXTER

Dorsey Waxter is a partner at Van Doren Waxter, a New York gallery specializing in artists' estates and secondary markets focusing on abstraction, primarily American, from the postwar period to the present. In 2007, Van Doren Waxter opened Eleven Rivington, a gallery that works with emerging artists and expands the careers of international artists with little prior exposure in the United States. Waxter is president of the Art Dealers Association of America. (See THE POINT)

### CHIN-CHIN YAP

Chin-Chin Yap is a writer and contributing editor for *ArtAsiaPacific* based in Berlin. Her Case Study column in *ArtAsiaPacific* focuses on novel matters of law and market economics in contemporary art. Her essay "A Handful of Dust" (2003) was included in *Ai Weiwei: Spatial Matters, Art Architecture and Activism* (2014). Yap is producing a documentary on Chinese human-rights defenders. (See WHERE I WORK)

### MICHAEL YOUNG

Michael Young is a contributing editor for *ArtAsiaPacific* based in Sydney. He studied art history at the University of London and has worked for several newspapers, including the *Times* (London), *Sydney Morning Herald* and *Herald Sun* (Melbourne), as an editor, photo editor and writer. (See PROFILES & FEATURES)

# Michael Joo on Kim Beom

## Who You Are, When You Are



**KIM BEOM**  
*Untitled (Intimate Suffering #13)*  
 2014  
 Acrylic on canvas, 491 x 348.5 cm.  
 Installation view at Sharjah Biennial 12, 2015.  
 Photo by Alfredo Rubio.  
 Courtesy the artist and Sharjah Art Foundation.

*A cloud of dust breaks the stillness of an African grassland, a shadowy form at its nucleus. Emerging from the cloud another form explodes, turns on a dime and doubles back on the first in a dynamic death-dance. The movements are familiar—lessons of nature, of predator and prey, as taught by educational documentaries.\**

\*My description of *Spectacle* (2010)

Through simple and seamless manipulation of video stills in this work, these familiar movements, as well as the space that frames them, require reexamination and reassessment, as the party in pursuit of the cheetah reveals itself to be an antelope. Not to be mistaken for the exotic, this is a television nature documentary, and you are on your couch at home.

I have been running into Kim Beom, or his artwork, for almost two decades now. From New York to Seoul, Berlin to Los Angeles, the encounters have usually been a surprise and frequent enough to seem like a slow-motion chase spread over time and continents, but one in which it is hard to tell who is following whom.

I first saw Kim's artwork in Seoul in the late 1990s and was struck by its powerful nature despite, or perhaps because of, its deceptive material simplicity. At a time when so much art (including my own) was pushing toward physical or bureaucratic boundaries, his dogged pursuit of human identity in society, the world and the cosmos resonated with me. His treatment of objects, images and space seemed inseparable and concise, hinting at a unique cultural point of view; but he was really only using it as a lure to access more universal experiences.

Kim came to study in New York City in the late 1980s and lived there through a good part of the 1990s. I first arrived in the same period, though it would be some time before we met.

*Video image: a rock to the left of frame sits in proximity to a person. It becomes clear, as the subtle poetry of a Korean master is pedagogically read to the inanimate stone, that perhaps the human sits in proximity to the rock. Installation in space: a rock sits in proximity to a video screen playing what has already been described... and so on...\**

\*My description of *A Rock That Learned the Poetry of JUNG Jiyong* (2010)

I am moved by the way that Kim evokes the notion of context in his works. I grew up Korean in the very un-Korean midwestern United States of the 1970s. Kim grew up Korean in a young modern Korea

awakening to its occupation by the US military, with which it had struck up a weird, symbio-econo-political relationship a generation before.

Through something beyond simple placement and situation, Kim teases out the idea of context and relativism from the subjects of his works in an arch way. It involves a kind of empowering of the objects, images or text-based protagonists he introduces, further playing with notions of Asian animistic beliefs, but with a contemporary outlook. If you consist of matter, there will always be something to reckon with... Even awakened to one's own agency, there will still be choices. This expanded consciousness implies technology, and the future...

Earlier this year, I had the pleasure of encountering both Kim and his work in the United Arab Emirates, where we were both installing projects for Sharjah Biennial 12. His contribution to the biennial was powerful and convincing, including a range of works from 1991 through to last year, which helped to reignite my long-standing admiration of his art.

Kim works in a pluralistic manner, as suits many artists of our day and contemporary situation. Another series I have always been drawn to is the "Intimate Suffering" paintings (2008–14). From the outset, the works look like mazes; if you come a bit closer, they look even more like mazes. When inevitably, you begin to get involved with them and try to follow the choices you perceive they offer, it becomes clear they are precisely what they suggested, *ha*. This strange and twisted treatment of both ideas of space and the universal nature of humor has only bolstered my perception of Kim's work as an examination of what it means to be human—to keep it honest, in Kim Beom's case; of what it means to be a human who happens to be Korean; and truly, of what it means to be who you are, when you are.