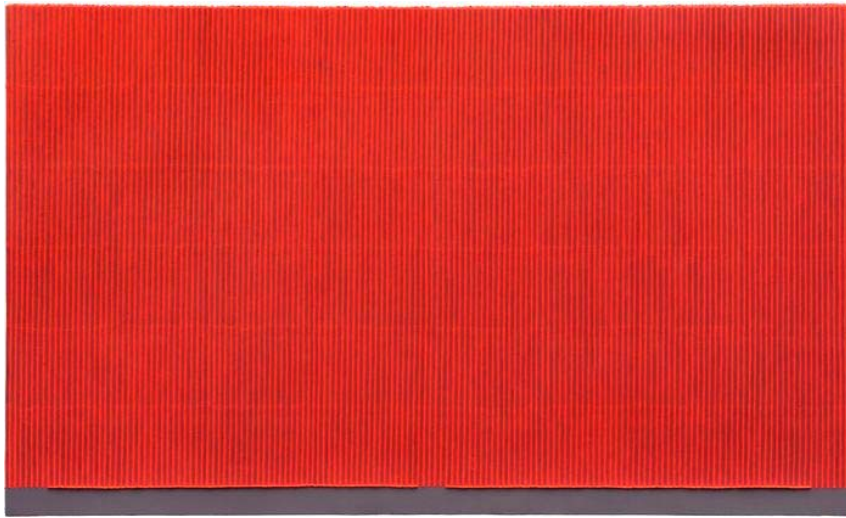


KUKJE GALLERY

Park Seo Bo



Ecriture(描法) No.100915

2010

Mixed Media with Korean hanji Paper on Canvas

180 x 300 cm

“Courtesy of artist and Kukje Gallery, Inc.,”

November 25, 2010 – January 20, 2011

○ **Exhibition Information**

Artist: Park Seo Bo (Korean, b.1931)

Duration: November 25, 2010 – January 20, 2011

Place: Kukje Gallery (K1, K2) (Tel 735-8449)

Opening Time: Monday-Saturday: 10am-6pm, Sunday: 10am-5pm

○ **Exhibition Introduction**

Kukje Gallery is very pleased to present a solo exhibition of widely celebrated artist Park Seo-bo. Park is well known as one of Korea's oldest and most important early modernists; in the 1950's he was one of the first to introduce abstraction into what was then a very conservative art world. This steadfast commitment to pushing boundaries and embracing new vocabularies of expression for over 60 years of practice have made Park Seo-bo one of the most important artists in the history of modern Korean art. Park's exploration of materials and the conceptual framework of abstraction have consistently resulted in new and influential bodies of work widely heralded both in Korea and abroad. Park's independent voice has also been hugely important in his role as an educator, having been a university professor since 1962.

The exhibition at Kukje Gallery highlights 40 years of Park Seo-bo's artistic career paying particular attention to the seminal Ecriture period and his Esquisse-drawings. Including over 50 works and displayed in both of Kukje Gallery's spaces, this comprehensive exhibition establishes Park's historical importance and innovative working method in addition to offering insight into his artistic philosophy that "painting is a way for oneself to cultivate the mind and body virtuously".

○ **Artist & Works Introduction**

Born in Yecheon, Gyeongsangbuk-do in 1931, Park Seo-bo graduated from the painting department at Hong-Ik University in Seoul, Korea. Following his first university lecture in 1962, he has taught as a professor, was the Director of College of Fine Arts at Hong-Ik University until 1990, and was appointed Professor Emeritus at the same university in 2000. In addition, Park founded the highly respected Seo-bo Arts and Cultural Foundation in 1994 and has served as its President. His work has been exhibited nationally and internationally in many prestigious institutions including a major survey show at the National Museum of Contemporary Art, Korea in 1991 and a solo exhibition at the Musée D'art Moderne, Saint-Etienne Métropole in 2006. Park Seo-bo's many awards include the President's Award (1972), the Culture and Art Prize of the Republic of Korea, An Order of Cultural Merits, and the esteemed Artist of the Year prize from the Korean Fine Arts Association (2008). Park's works are in the collection of many renowned institutions including the Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, Fukuoka Art Museum, FNAC (Fonds National d'Art Contemporain), France, Seoul Museum of Art, and the National Museum of Contemporary Art, Korea.

Pre-Ecriture Period (1967-1989)

Beginning in the 1950s, Park Seo-bo heralded the beginning of modernism and abstract painting in the Korean art world with his celebrated Primordialis and Hereditarius series. In 1967, he began to work in a new direction with his Ecriture series. Ecriture, which means “writing” in French, are works in which Park covered canvases with a light gray or other neutral-colored surface primer and manipulated the still-wet surfaces with repetitive carving gestures. Through this work, Park challenged and changed his philosophy to emphasize the essence of drawing, inspired, in part, by traditional Asian ink painting. He employed the simple act of carving to express the continual "writing" process found in drawing — erasing, repeating, defining, and expunging the meaning in his paintings. These Ecriture compositions, which at times bear a resemblance to gribouillage, were not produced in order to create a drawn image per se, but instead captured the moment the artist, in the act of drawing, merged and became one with his art.

Esquisse Drawings (1996-present)

Park Seo-bo's Esquisse drawings produced since 1996 allow a clearer opportunity to observe the multiple layers found in his paintings. They are composed of many layers of conscious thought processes literally manifested on the canvas like a type of blueprint or schematic drawing. Park first produces small compositions and then refines them while meticulously transferring them to larger plotting paper. Then, using the paper as the background, he composes the drawing, again using pencils and correction fluid to touch up certain areas while adjusting the space, depth and width of the work. This subtle and highly detailed technique produces a complex surface akin to a woven canvas matrix. In some ways the application of pencil, lithographic ink, and correction fluid to the same surface clearly illustrates the intricate and methodical thought process that forms the basis for the paintings

Post-Ecriture Period (1989-present)

In 1989, Park's oeuvre underwent another transformation when he began to use dakji, a specific type of hanji or traditional Korean paper. He piled layers of dakji on the canvas, saturated the layers with either gesso or colored paints and then shaped the wet stratum of paper with his fingers. This process added dimensionality and physical presence to the canvas that would have been impossible to achieve with just the medium of oil or acrylic paint. Most importantly, the artist sought to capture the elaborate gestures made in the act of painting in relief while simultaneously eliminating any tell-tale brush marks, thereby creating a unique and highly personal vocabulary of mark making.

This emphasis on three-dimensional composition was developed further beginning in the mid-1990s, when Park Seo-bo began to shape more uniform geometrical reliefs on the canvas. In lieu of his fingers, he began using either a stick or a carving tool to drive into the surface of the canvas, producing furrows in systematic lines.

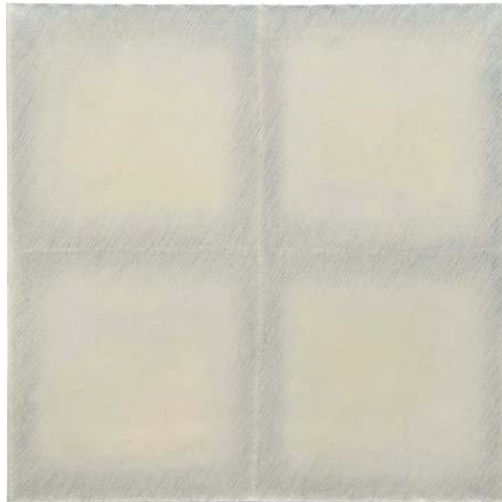
For Seo-bo Park, a flat surface is both the subject of the painting as well as a semitransparent surface that reveals what lies beneath it. This type of material ambiguity connects various binomial discourses such as writing / erasing, applying / scraping, stacking / removing, height / depth, opacity / light, repetition / dissolution, and composition / blank space, thereby leading to a deep meditation on the meaning and role of surface in painting.

In 2000, Park's *Ecriture* series evolved from neutral monochromes to lustrous polychromatic tones. Here, the base colors and the colors of the carved lines either overlap one other or appear independent, revealing a layered composition. By choosing highly saturated pigments, the artist intends his canvases to be considered as objects and not representational. As a physical layer, the carved lines either cover or push away from the surface, while simultaneously exposing the base layer that serves as the foundation of the composition.

If Park's *Ecriture* play with representational ambiguity, their vibrant use of color also stimulates a number of profound phenomenological questions: the relationship between symbols and marks, physical reproduction as compared to light, totality of the color spectrum versus individual colors, stationary surface versus waves, and distinct color classification versus nameless color. The rigor and play embodied in Park Seo-bo's recent works reveals the freedom and liberation that he has achieved with his art. On the one hand, they frame the realm of painting realized by the essence of *Ecriture*, and on the other, they serve as an index that measures the depth and insight of a mature and distinguished artist.

○ **Exhibition Images & Captions**

Use of images must clearly credit the artist and Kukje Gallery



Ecriture(描法) No.20 - 70

1970

Pencil + Oil on canvas

113 x 113 cm

“Courtesy of artist and Kukje Gallery, Inc.,”



Ecriture(描法) No.890530-3

1989

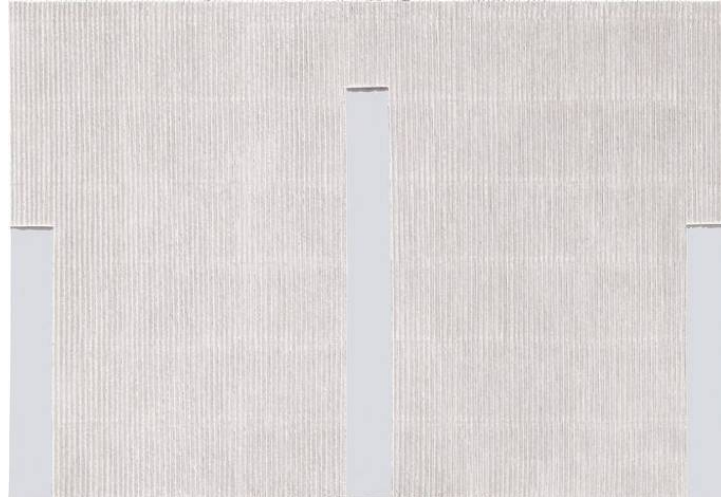
Mixed media with Korean hanji paper on canvas

300.5 x 228 cm

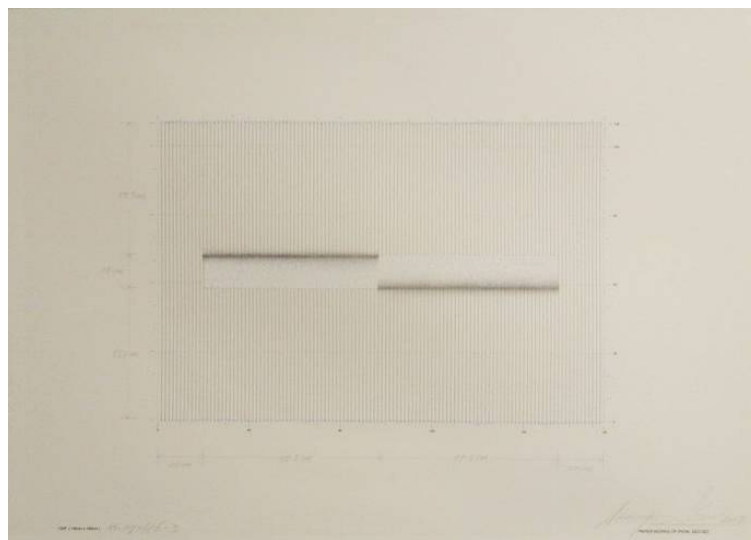
“Courtesy of artist and Kukje Gallery, Inc.,”

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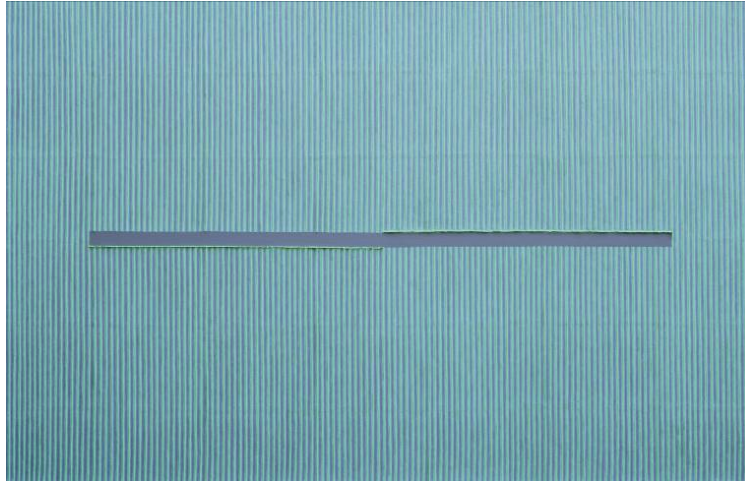
Ecriture(描法) No.020524
2002
Mixed media with Korean hanji paper on canvas
180 x 260 cm
“Courtesy of artist and Kukje Gallery, Inc.,”



Ecriture(描法) No.070616-3
2007
Litho Crayon, Pencil, Correction Fluid Pen
35.6 x 50.2 cm
“Courtesy of artist and Kukje Gallery, Inc.,”

○ **Exhibition Images & Captions**

Use of images must clearly credit the artist and Kukje Gallery



Ecriture(描法) No.080206
2008
Mixed Media with Korean hanji Paper on Canvas
165 x 260 cm
“Courtesy of artist and Kukje Gallery, Inc.,”



Ecriture(描法) No.071208
2007
Mixed Media with Korean hanji Paper on Canvas
180 x 300 cm
“Courtesy of artist and Kukje Gallery, Inc.,”