

Yang Ji Won

2017-2020
selected works

Act _ drawing

Engaged with the act of drawing and writing, my practice revolves around sound, installation, and (physical/conceptual) drawing actualized in the form of art.

The work is prompted by a set of principle questions on drawing and writing.

I develop the work relying on particular moments when a question leads to another question, in the process of my inquiry and probe into letters—especially the original form of letters, the protoplasm (thing in its original form) of language, and the relationship between language and sound.





Detail view

Inside the bag

I decide to place some things.

The bag should be just enough to hold texts and this space, the studio. I would like the bag to carry things, as if it were to transport a part of my studio into the bag. I gather the unremarkable everyday things scattered around my studio that I have been habitually collecting—the stones from a nearby beach recently, driftwoods that have been resting in the sidelines of the shore after being soaked in the sea water and dried under the sun, unassuming seashells that have been abraded over time, and plants from the neighborhood of the studio. Incheon is a beautiful place to experience the sunset.

I think of filling the bag with the west coast sunset and its variations of color orange. Regrettably, I am not yet able to hold the sunset. Since I failed to find an appropriate way to pack my experience of the sunset into the bag, I would like to imagine instead how the driftwoods, stones, and seashells that have experienced over countless times the saturated sunsets of Angel Rock Beach may somehow convey their experience to the unknown beholder of the bag.

I have been writing a text under the title, Thing : Regarding Form. It is yet an incomplete text. I have not set a deadline, as I plan to give this text a plenty of time. It was never intended to be a work description, but rather a fragmented articulation of my practice. And yet, the text gradually heads towards the unforeseen thing within it, gradually disjoining itself from the work and becoming another work with a separate body.

Thing: Regarding Form

In my recent exhibitions, I've sought to use the vowels in letters to present something that cannot be categorized as either drawing or writing. The scope of that journey seemed to have expanded over time from foreign languages that I have studied and used in the past to my own mother tongue, and to all other languages.

Not associated with either thing, it exhibits a nature where, just as it seems like it might be read from a certain perspective, it slips away to the other side; when the other perspective attempts to view it simply as drawn, it proceeds in a direction where it can be read once again. I define this in terms of the word image, and simply try to pin it in place.

Letters. Letters in their original form. As you trace the stories that concern and emerge from those forms and letters, you encounter something whose end cannot yet be known, but which awaits discovery. It anticipates an encounter, contingent on not readily reacting to or being defined by anything.

Possessing an original form, a prototypical form, the letters are not all that independent. But as we inquire into how and when they are used with other letters, here and everywhere, it is not difficult to discern their course. Within that process, however, we may find ourselves encountering something that veils itself in darkness, something that exists before any original, something more intrinsic. The letter existed very close by, like **something already created**, and I continue to use it. All letters have this sentiment to them - as though they existed long before they came to be, awaiting their use. And now the letter insists unwittingly that the letter itself must be mastered, that we must familiarize ourselves with and employ it, sometimes proficiently. And if we cannot fully accept that insistence, it may become unacceptable, a fact that must be concealed.

I recall someone looking at an arborvitae seed and proclaiming that it had already been made. I immediately force the words from my mouth, insisting they should be closer to a shout. The phrase operates as though included within that seed like an object in a box, recalling the arborvitae seed as though it were already paired to the words. I have no idea when they were planted, the arborvitae and juniper trees that ring the provincial office building in the Cheongju neighborhood known as Su-dong. But the structure was built in 1937, and a juniper tree as large as a stone statue at its entrance stands now as a shape with that statue at its feet, suggesting the tree almost certainly has existed there since the building went up. This rugged seedlike thing covers a seed and is often called a seed. But as you look closer, the shape of this tiny seed evokes the word wonder.

It becomes a resolute monologue - viewing the regular and elaborate shapes of these seemingly irregular objects from nature and coming to the personal realization that all things have already been made. Along with the realization, I find myself asking whether all of my actions, all of the creating I do now, are not simply a form of repetition of representation, or repetitious representation.

It is a question forever oriented toward the word origin. There is such a thing as an origin, and it will continue firmly in that place being called by that name. At the same time, a thickening arises in the layer of something that is merely an endless variation on that, so that the origin seems extinguished. It is merely something transformed, translated, spun off from the origin, yet it also misperceives itself as an origin. Because of this unwitting illusion, the person who sees this thinks that the origin before them is indeed the origin, unable to fathom or approach the existence of an unseen origin located deep down below. I repudiate this, instructing myself to strip away the origin-disguised-as-origin and locate the origin within the abyss. Where does it come from, this search for an origin whose face I have never seen and this belief that I could detect that it is not an origin?

I remember having experienced this thing before. It is a momentary experience, like a flash of light. Neither the spoken nor the written word is suited to revealing this experience - but it awakens the desire to approach it as much as possible, using language and music and image as means. Origin - a word arrived at through a seed. Yet I question whether language, music, and images are appropriate means for demonstrating that word. This desire to approach that word more closely through language, music, and image - where does it stem from?

* It is a part of the first of the three texts, <Thing : Regarding Form>, with each different content according to the title along with the format of the title <Thing: >.



floor
<JWY.D.001.19>
wall
<JWY.D.002.19>
vinyl sheet
dimension variable
2019
SeMA Storage



<JWY.D.003.19>
paint, oil pastel, medium,
chalk, wood on vinyl sheet
dimension variable
2019

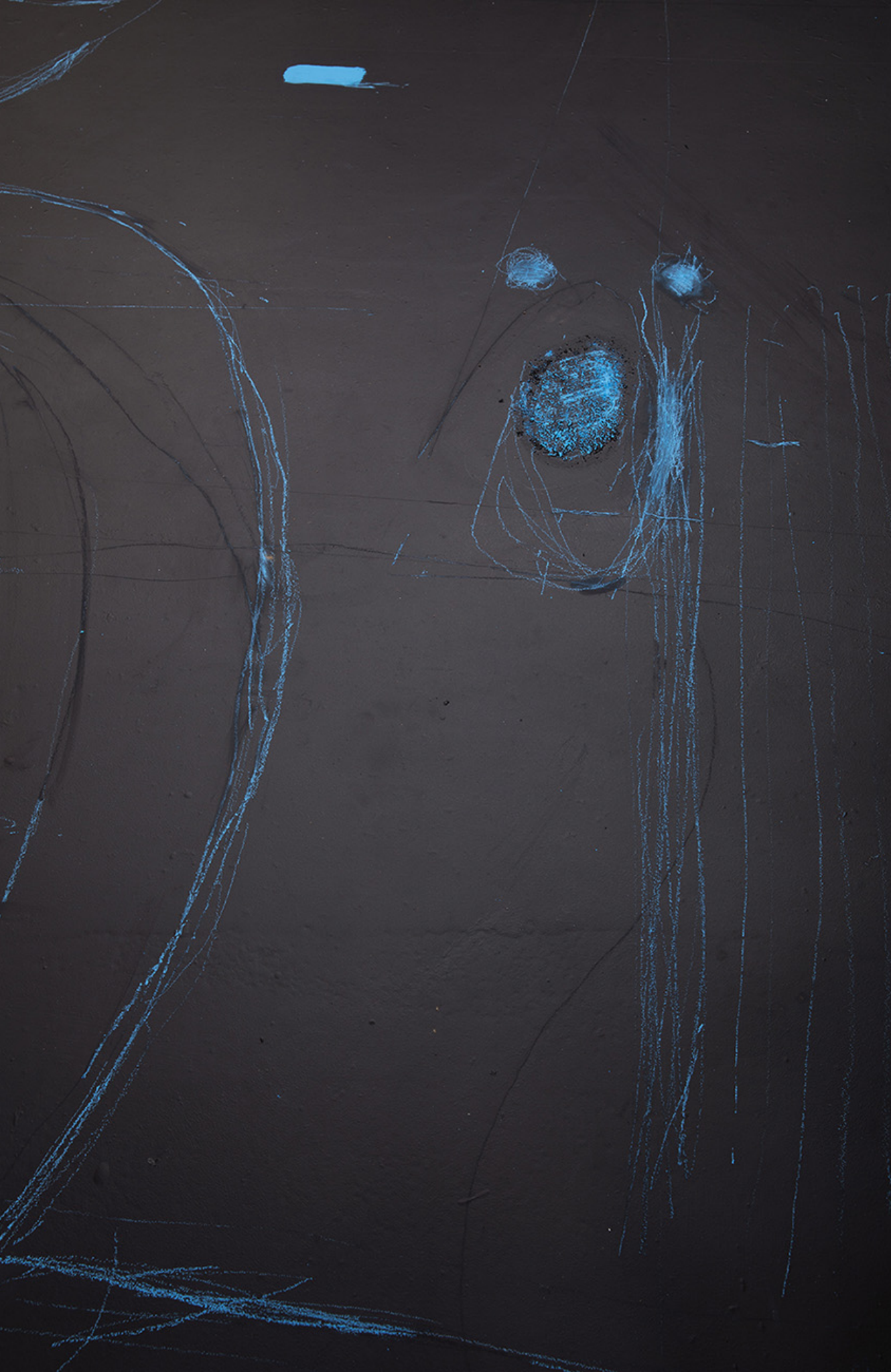
<Vowel étude>
sound, looped
voice performing by Yang Ji Won
5:04min.
2019

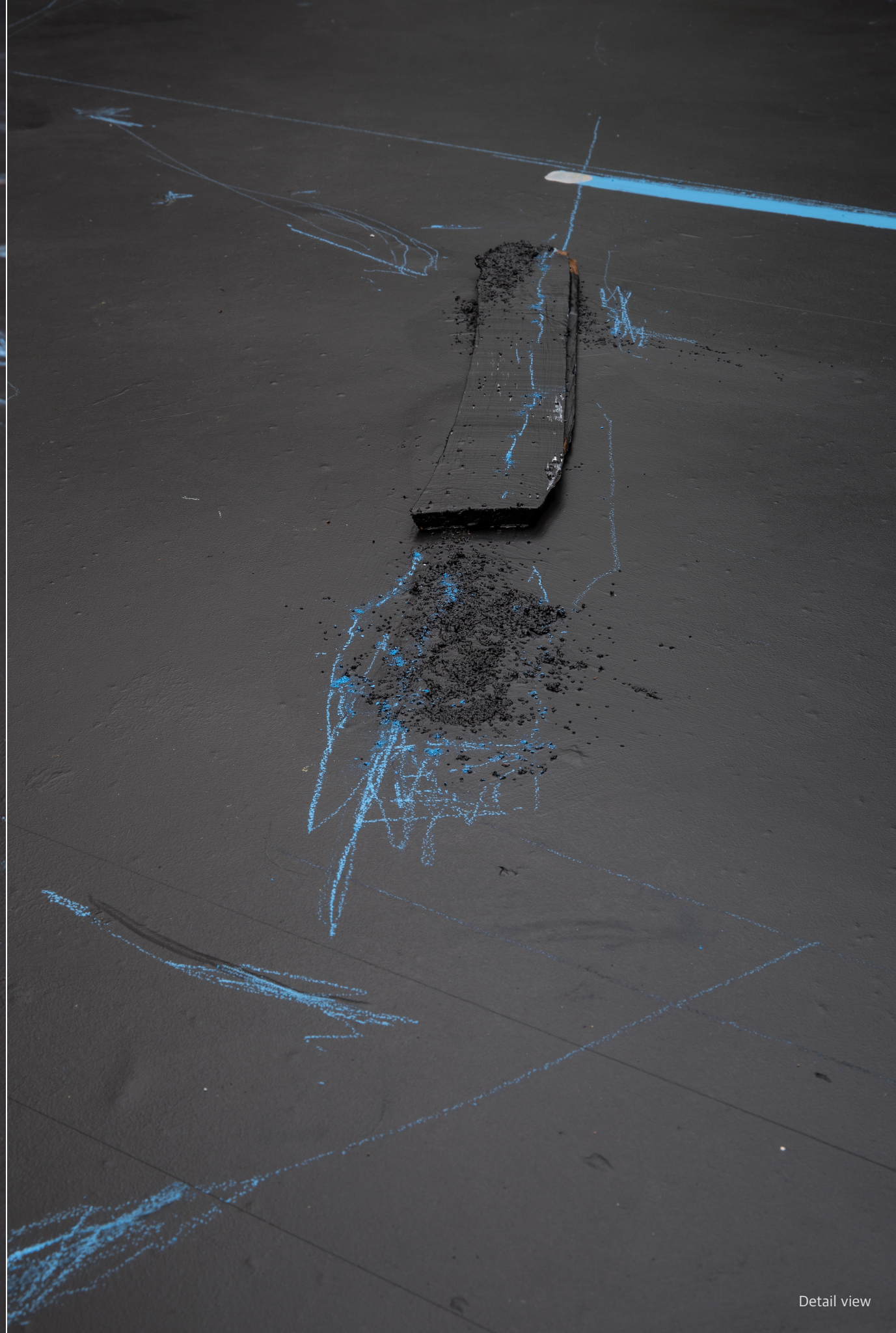


<JWY.D.003.19>
paint, oil pastel, medium,
chalk, wood on vinyl sheet
dimension variable
2019

<Vowel étude>
sound, looped
voice performing by Yang Ji Won
5:04min.
2019



















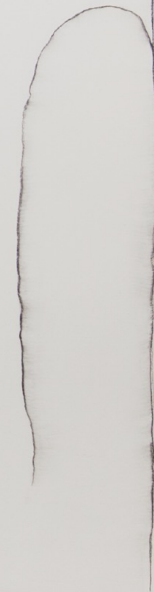
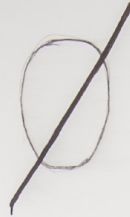
<https://youtu.be/NwfQNbc coyDQ>

<Moeum> the solo exhibition of the artist Yang Ji Won takes place at the SeMA Storage from 5 to 24 July. The artist has been formulating questions about the relations between 'drawing' and 'writing' through the media of drawing, while she suggests this in shape of holistic space combined with sound and lighting.

At this exhibition, considering the physical particularity of the SeMA Storage where the outside light and sound penetrate through the intricately woven roof rafters, the artist is constructing the space for the installed drawings and sounds to be enunciated in harmony with the space-specific elements.

The title of the exhibition, 'moeum', meaning at the same time 'vowel' and 'collection' in Korean, bespeaks the contemplation on language that the artist has been exploring for many years. Vowel is a sound pronounced by the air coming up from the lungs passing through the vibration of the vocal cords without any stricture. The artist converted the vowel, a basic unit of language and sound, into a visual form through drawing. The drawings embodied in the exhibition venue and the each single sound build their relations in the physical structure of the venue and reveal the delicate and formless boundary between drawing and language.

Kim Jung Hyun, Curator of SeMA



<https://youtu.be/jk85UCvhk90>

<Floral Arrangement -004. 19>
wood framed pigment print on paper
60 x 90cm
2019
Dear Drawing, drawingRoom





Yang Ji Won x Kwon Byung-jun <C-Eum>
sound, wireless headphone, stone, light, conté
paint, acrylic, chalk, oil, oil pastel on the wall
dimension variable
2018
CMOA_Daecheongho Museum of Art



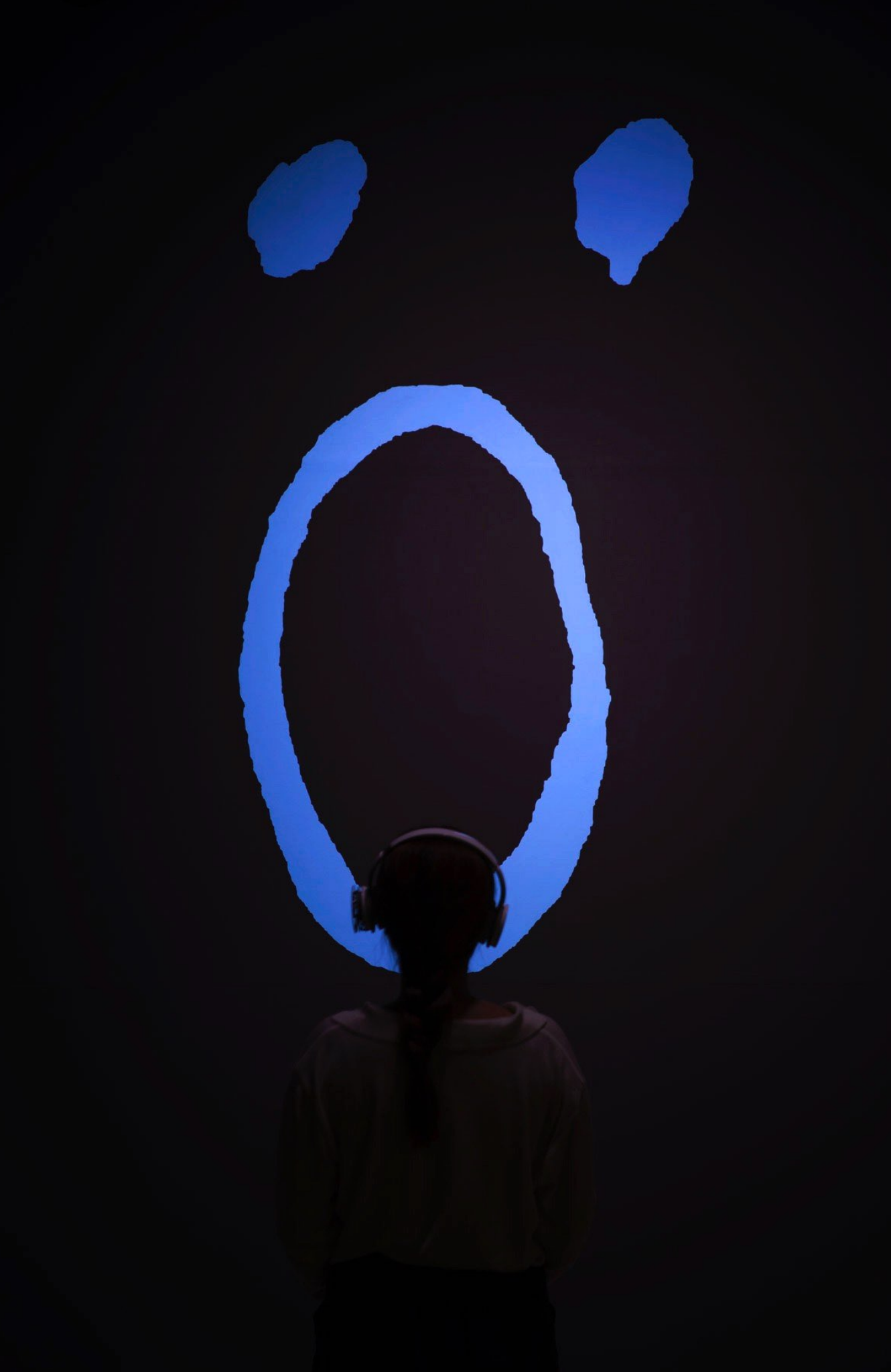
Yang Ji Won x Kwon Byung-jun <C-Eum>
sound, wireless headphone, stone, light, conté
paint, acrylic, chalk, oil, oil pastel on the wall
dimension variable
2018
CMOA_Daecheongho Museum of Art

<Umlaut Ö + Uneasy whistling>

paint on the wall, sound 1:06

dimension variable

2018





<Landscape 1>
chalk on the wall, light
dimension variable
2018



<Wttm+ Womb Tomb_0:44>
oil pastel, light, paint, chalk on the wall, sound(0:44)
dimension variable
2018



<Cracking & Stone + Two analog metronomes and digital delay_ 9:56>
sound, wireless headphone, stone, light, conté, mixed media on the wall
dimension variable
2018

<Untitled>
oil, oil pastel on the wall, light
dimension variable
2018



Wall

Nails that remain, traces that could not be cleaned, marks and holes that are difficult to guess. The walls, which seem to show the inside of the building, are the remains of past exhibitions. What is drawn and erased on the wall is repeated, and images are busy trying to find their place. Things drawn and written on the wall begin to try to tune in with the sound. When you put on your headphones and walk into the exhibition hall, the first thing you meet is sound. However, despite the auditory devices worn on the body, they concentrate on what they see and hear according to the intensity of their sense organs. Walking is required to see and hear. As you walk, you meet images and other sounds planted around them. The sound of nature, the sound of familiar nature, the melody, the sound of hard-to-guess noise, the sound of things, voices, instruments. The sounds may sound as close as whispering in the ear. So are the images. In addition to the large, conspicuous images, however, there is not enough light and the minute images written must bend, tilt, or lower the body's head, and images can be found by such active body movements.

Ö, schön, ciel, arbre, womb, thomb, o, b, 's' handwriting, phonetic symbols, punctuation marks, records on behalf of the landscape, images between reading and viewing, The lines drawn and crushed are intermixed with the traces of the wall's past. Signs from the sentences, such as '()', ' and ', seem to stop functioning and change their appearance to a different image. Text is naturally read to viewers who know the system of language, but there is no obligation to convey meaning within this space. There is something that does not belong to sound and image, which appears and is not audible. Write or erase from left to right with your right hand and draw lines with your right hand, or write and erase with your right hand and write with your left hand and write and draw with your left hand with your right hand. It is the act of disorganizing and alternating erasing. Within this space, the wind of the lips playing whistles and instruments seep into the image on the wall and attempt to change its appearance to a different shape. What is written becomes a drawing what is drawn becomes a sound, and the sound is repeated and returned to what is written.



<Growing Drawing>
 acrylic on paper(40x50cm),conté, acrylic, oil pastel on the wall
 dimension variable
 The Village Project
 2018

I tried to draw something, but I'm using a word. In addition to the text, look at the image drawn in the notebook. What is written and drawned like this is chosen in some circumstances to permeate into the work and to come out. On standby or just, in it. Texts and drawings with different tenses from 11 or 15 years ago appear on the wall from inside the note and change their bodies. Every day during the exhibition, I write and erase what's drawn on the wall little by little. And repeat writing and drawing again. When the exhibition is over, it will only be covered with records.

노티나무 가지가 뻗어 나고
왕버들에 목을 매어 그 옆에 소나무가,
한대 노티나무에서 새싹을 피르기 위해서 큰 잎(이)을 그 밑에 받쳐
노티나무를 보듬고 지켜주어. 돌켜 큰 나무를 나고 그 밑에
왕버에서 목을 매어 그 자리에서 자라난 나무,
어부도 삼킨 노티나무 큰 가지를 받는데, 뱃속에서 씨앗을 발견하고 심어서
노티나무를 키우며 아들을 얻는다느니,
나무줄기 속에 새싹이 나와 자라나고 도시를 뛰어다니며 나무에서 떨어져도 다치지 않는다는,
노티나무 줄기에서 새싹이 나오는데 지상에서 땀이 잠잠함이 나았다는,

노티나무 가지가 뻗어나며 왕버에서 향나무가 내려와서 새싹을 피우고
노티나무 가지가 뻗어나고 왕버에서 새싹이 나오는데 노티나무 줄기에서 새싹이 나오는데
노티나무 줄기에서 새싹이 나오는데 노티나무 줄기에서 새싹이 나오는데



<Growing Drawing>The Village Project, 2018
acrylic on paper(40x50cm),conté, acrylic, oil pastel on the wall
dimension variable



WOMB



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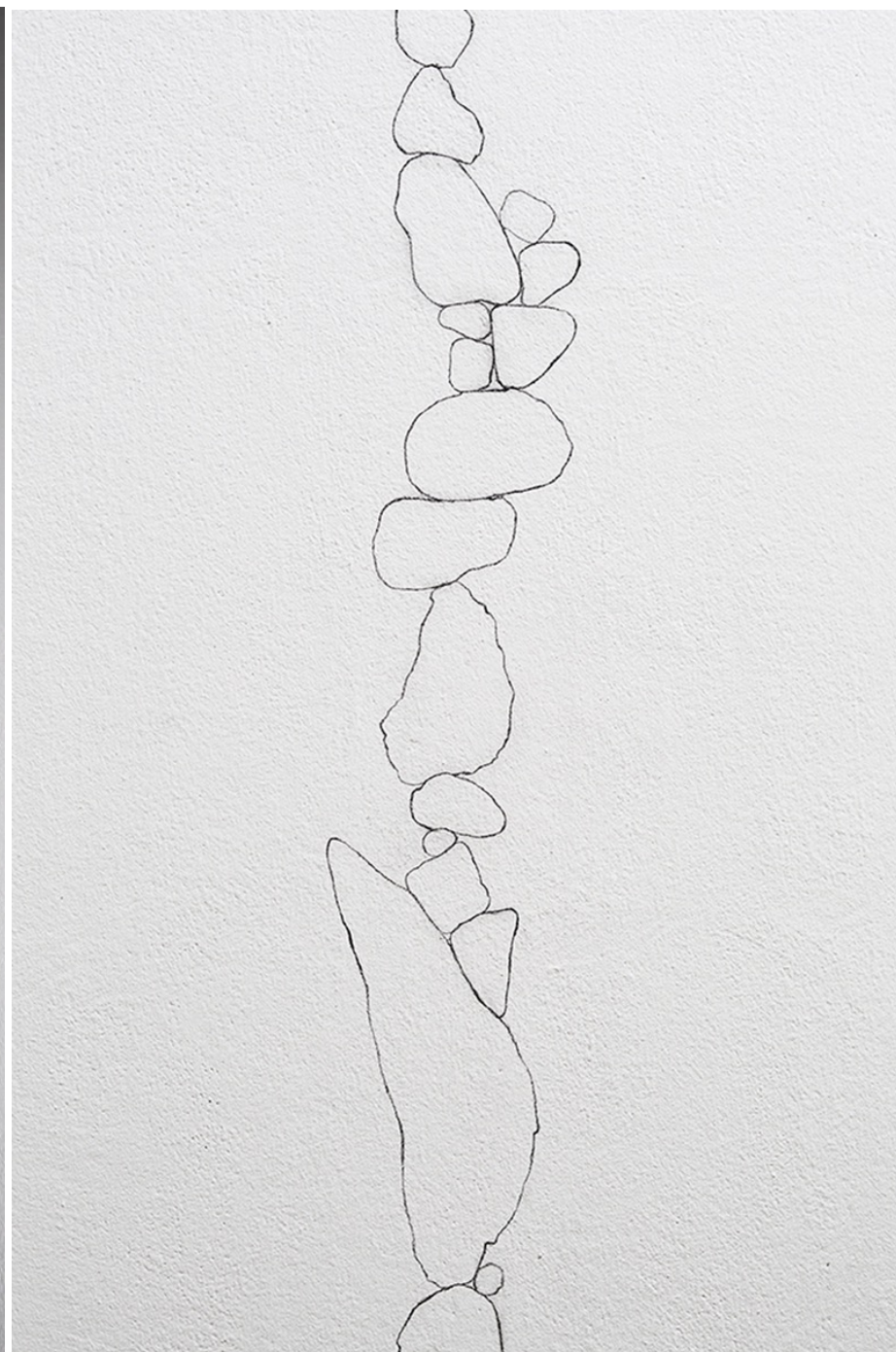
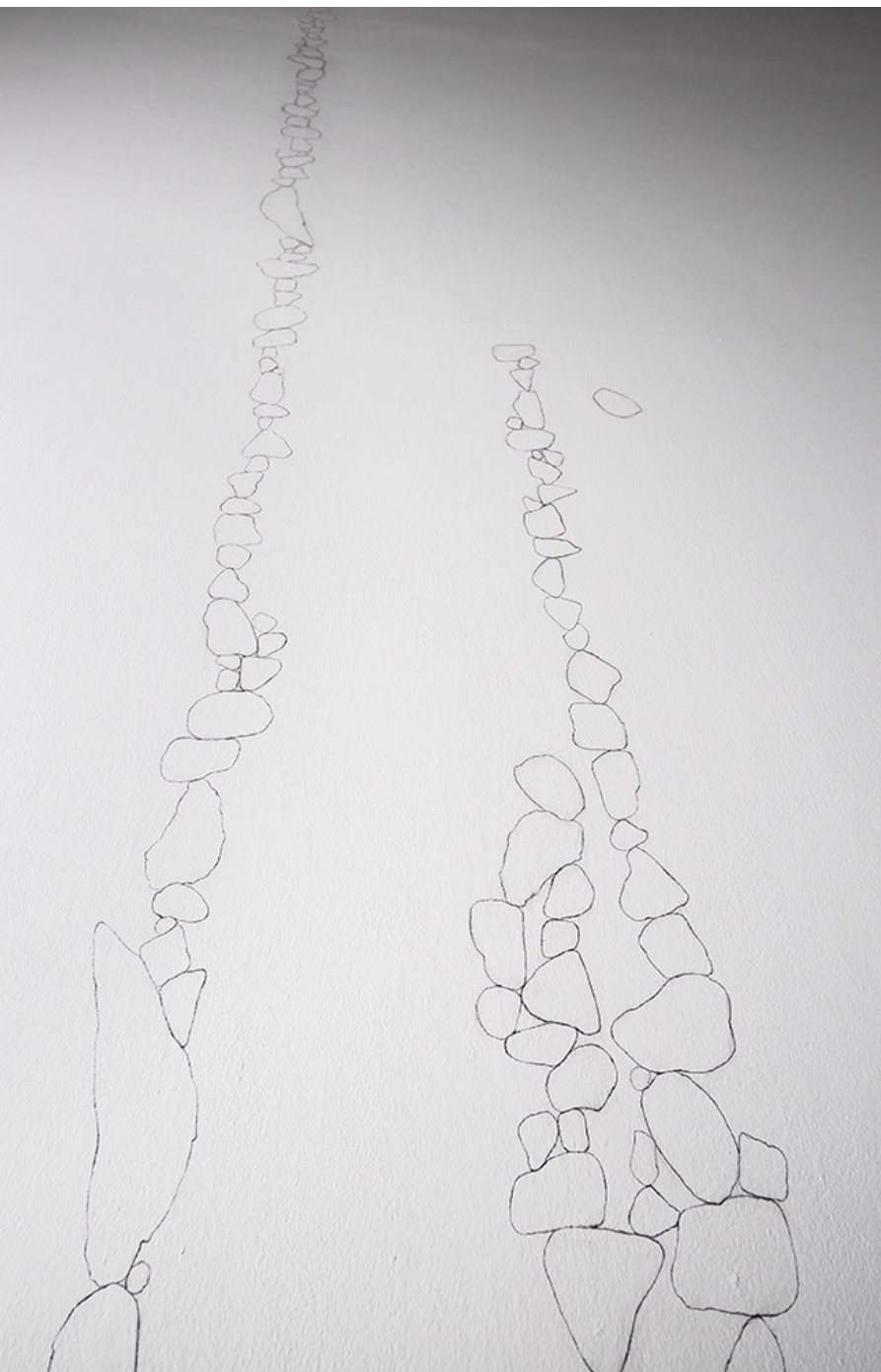


Installation view of Tower, Seed, Floral arrangement
Cheongju Art Studio, 2017



<Stone_Goesan, Chungbuk>
acrylic on wall
dimension variable
2017

Tower, Seed, Floral arrangement at Cheongju Art Studio



<Stone tower>
 pencil, conte, stone on the wall
 dimension variable
 2017
 Tower, Seed, Floral arrangement at Cheongju Art Studio



< Grape # 1 >
printing on paper
dimension variable
2017

Tower, Seed, Floral arrangement, Cheongju Art Studio

Walked and walked

Walked and walked. Under the shimmering sunlight of August that suffocated with heat, she was frowning, breathless. When the stray thoughts crowd her mind, she comes back to this road covered with evergreen trees and walks to the end of the road. Without any particular destination or reason to hurry up, she accelerates the steps until she gets short of breath. Suddenly, she slows down, looks around, then realizes that she is walking on an unknown street.

'Where am I?'

She stops, looks back at the path behind her. But she cannot know since when she took the wrong path. Disconcerted, she feels frightened. But she soon notices a piece of branch on the ground, put just like a road sign. Did anyone put it there on purpose for those who got lost, or did the latest storm just happen to cut it off the trunk? She thinks it over for a moment, to decide if she will follow the direction indicated by the stem or not. Suddenly, a puff of wind brushes against her left cheek and reaches her hair.

'Actually, it does not really matter if I follow the sign or not.'

Before she knows, she is back on the road again, the branch is already forgotten. Humming a tune, contemplating the red sunset. Walked and walked.

Draws lines

Draws lines. When she draws lines, she feels at ease. In her childhood, her mother often pruned the orchid. Where old stems were removed, young new buds sprouted. Watching these new buds seemed to be the only thing that made her mother happy.

Cleaning the leaves, watering, pruning the orchid every morning. These repetitive tasks filled most of her mother's day, yet it sometimes seemed that she was also bored and did it only out of responsibility. Once in a while, we could see an unexpected type of bud coming out of the pruned part. Instead of firm and lustrous leaves, a thorny, inert and withered stem is out. She believed that the bad stalk should be cut off immediately, but her mother left it as it was. Despite the appearance of a mutant, the stem eventually bloomed in flower.

Each time she draws a line, the memory of this orchid, placed at the corner of the veranda of her old house that she has already left, comes back to the eyes and at the end of her fingers. The leaves of the orchid that used to float so fragile in the wind, now decisively slice the ray of shining sun. After drawing and erasing lines repeatedly, she is absorbed into the state of absence of thought and focuses on the sensation at her fingertips. The sound of the pencil, moderately worn, scratching the paper is crystalized around her ears. After an eye-blink, she draws a form using a movement from the shoulder to the wrist, the tiptoes put together, and nerves on the edge. After exhaling her long-held breath, she observes the form for a while standing apart, and then extends her hand to grab an eraser. She approaches the paper as if she wanted to erase all, but she drops the eraser. Grabbing a coat in her hand, she turns off the studio light and goes out. Soon, the light comes back in her studio and she holds a pencil, draws lines.

Makes sound

Makes sound. Even though it was in the middle of a park, she was excited to see her mother sitting in the distance and called her out loud, waving her hand. Without answering her, her mother was staring up at the sky. She approached and tapped lightly on her mother's shoulder. Finally, her mother turned to her and smiled at her.

" The sky is beautiful, as if the whole world was feeling comfortable."

She looked up, and then closed her eyes. When she opened her eyes again, she saw all people scattered on the street taking pictures of the sky.

On their way back home, her mother whistled happily, and the wind escaped her through her lips.

Awaken from this dream, she tries to make sound imitating her mother's lips. The wind in the dream is completely gone, only the silence dominated the space. Along with the sound of the ticking of the clock, night falls. With eyes closed, she recalls the blue sky of that day, rounds her lips and then tries to make sound. The fine wrinkles on the skin of the lips are getting visible. Listening carefully to the sound, she inhales deeply and then exhales. The wind that passes between the rounded lips creates an even clearer tone. One more deep inspiration, eyes still closed, she makes a rounded sound.

This text is a kind of 'faction' in three parts written by curator Kim Jung Hyun of the Seoul Museum of Art, in order to present the works of Yang Ji won through the medium which is the 'book' (it would be a different way of approaching from the exhibition). The text selects three acts (walking, drawing lines, making sound) as the main images associated with the works of Yang Ji won, trying to offer clues with which readers could re-perceive all, using inspiration from their own experiences. 'She' who is the protagonist of the text could be Yang Ji won, the curator-author, or the reader. This text describes some daily scenes with which anyone could sympathize very easily. It is written so that the reader has an opportunity to appreciate the works of Yang Ji won in a visual and tactile way.

Let there be light, for the night will come again.

Soyeon Ahn
Art Critic

*

Incidentally, a sound is heard from an expanse, as a sublime light spilled down from the ceiling clutching onto unknown formations contained within four walls. 'Look over here, there is something here!' I pressed my weighty body against the walls and walked, trying to avoid touching the light and not to block its way. As the walk soothed my body, my gaze slowly wandered through the areas where the light has settled and observed the ground below the expanse. Just when the sense forgets its body, unknown formations emerge into view, where time and space are being formed by the weaving of a certain flow. The inevitable experience (of the void) promptly brings the formations into existence within space-time. Then, this unintentional discovery urges the unknown formations to cause a fleeting event, leaving its mark as an image. It is the light. A gaze (freed from the body, yet of the body) led by the light. The formations touched by the light and my gaze are scooped up as words, texts, images, sculptures, or bodies of things. They may simply be illusions that would disappear as they touche the darkness of the night. In this empty space (of light), unforeseen delusions leave a thick shadow and a trace of their gaze. Possibilities of such experience are condensed in Yang Ji Won's exhibition, MOEUM (2019).

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On a wide area readily covered with blue-black vinyl sheets, Yang drew certain configurations using paint, chalk, and oil pastels. "To draw," the verb I chose here, like it or not implies both "to write" and "to erase." Mostly drawn in blue lines, the configurations induce continuous visual arousal by oscillating between image and text or certain (intended) signs and (unintended) marks. Moreover, hovering flat on the ground are pieces of (dead) wood. Where they came from and how they will disappear is unclear. The expanse. Its boundary is constantly being redefined by dissolution and amplification of the rotating light and sound. From the beginning, it seems like an endless return to the empty space and its chaos. However, this visual "form of deprivation" awakens the experience of the potential, a term mentioned by a philosopher. In other words, even though it will ultimately "be nothing," it is about the potential to confront (someone) of its existence, as is. Purposefully imagining Giorgio Agamben's explanation of the "potential" or its configuration, I once again stumble through this space-time where countless illusions transpire. Let me push my imagination a little further. I do have my senses.

* * *

MOEUM, where one's senses encounter the subliminal formations, implements the experience of language inherent in Yang's previous works with (multiple) new incidents. Following C-Eum at CMOA Daecheongho (2018), the current exhibition explores the experiential relationship between writing (letter) and drawing (image). In order to transform abstract experience (of the mind) into the sensory experience (of the body), space or an "empty place" becomes a substratum of her work. That is to say, space is a vehicle that carries experience and events. For example, the empty exhibition space in MOEUM and C-Eum tirelessly awaits bodies' presence. The experience that arises from an (inevitable yet serendipitous) encounter between the space and a body creates unpredictable sensorial exceptions outside historical and mythological events. Through a stroll and observation, the body's sensory system calls upon its experiences to reveal hidden potentiality. By realizing the existence of nonexistence, a new way of being transpires. In earlier work, Action for Work (2016), Yang completed a simple handwritten text with three words arranged in vertical order: "walk", "observe" and "collect". Back then I described it as "a kind of declaration by and for the artist herself." Today, as I walk along the edges of the space, those words are back with me to point to the possibilities of my own body. Presently, the text's black words gaze upon an anonymous body carrying out a nonverbal experience.

* * * *

Penetrating the expanse, the light and gaze falls upon scattered blueish forms, which are rather physical. As the materiality of its texture, touch, and weight assures its existence, one is immediately immersed in what is at hand. One experiences the site of the blue marks rather than its configurations in the forms of writing, drawing or other traces. Without implying "for" or "towards" something, the recognition of existence itself in this expanse leaves an imprint of its form (as is) on multiple senses. In the context of Agamben's theory, what kind of (verbal) loss can my body face amongst countless other bodies situated in this unfounded abyss. Forms that can only be defined through unrepeatable potentialities are juxtaposed as writing-drawing or letter-image, where Yang points to the "potentiality" of an intent experience at these boundaries. Perhaps, through a temporary light and gaze, Yang means to reveal the rare "face" of the gap in between, to whomever that passes through.

Umlaut (Ö), I think I saw this letter, faintly erased, where the light has touched halfway. Maybe it was an illusion of Ö, overlapped with the precarious sound from a speaker that pointed towards the expanse. Oh-oh-, the vowels created out of someone's body, or the mixed sounds of whistles and ruptures cause one to experience the existence that is possible within chaotic debris of cluttered image chains and languages. Since C-Eum, Ö has appeared in Yang's work fulfilling the (dual) role of a letter and an image. The image of Ö, repeatedly drawn in the empty space and the sound that endlessly stimulates and transforms the cognitive possibility innate within the form, collectively renew the potentiality of the (previously untouchable) exceptional existences mediated and experienced by each new visitor's senses. In MOEUM, Yang Ji Won deliberately focuses on the (exceptional) sensorial experience of the visitor's body, who arrives in the midst of a series of actions. In an unexpected space, she attempts to establish a link between light and gaze, voice and language, writing and drawing, and you and me.

Lastly, where have I seen it. A large circle. A round and hollow outline. A void hinted by an unidentifiable abstract form... JWY.D.001.19 (2019) and JWY.D.002.19 (2019) reminded me of Yang's previous work, where on a white wall she held stones that has been gathered and drew its outline one on top of the other, a process reminiscent of stacking a stone tower. Another one. I recall a form: a single stone enlarged and transferred onto a wall using multiple outlines. In Tower, Seed, Floral arrangement (2017), Yang deepened her understanding of the empirical existence through the exploration of a particular object's outer form and the possibilities of abstract meanings carried within the void of the outline. Yang's interest in "form" that has progressed from a seed to stone to a vowel is beyond precise "representation". Rather, it touches upon the "surfacing" of an exceptional existence concealed within the form. She resists reality's impulse to shed light upon something to define it eternal. Quite the opposite. She drives it back into the empty space and its chaos and urges us to reach a sensational experience from the "undefined" that lies in front of us. Let there be light, for the night will come again.

lives and works in KR

Jusoba@naver.com

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2019 <Moeum>, SeMA Storage, Seoul, KR

2018 <Growing Drawing> The Village Project, Donuimoon Musuem Village, Seoul, KR

2017 <Tower, Seed, Floral Arrangement>, Cheongju Art Studio, Cheongju, KR

DUAL EXHIBITION

2019 Yang Ji Won + Kim Ji-hyeong <Dear Drawing>, dR_drawingRoom, Seoul, KR

COLLABO. EXHIBITION

2018 Yang Ji Won + Kwon Byung-jun <C - Eum> ,

2018 CMOA Daecheongho Competition Exhibition 'Slightly Inclined Ears',

CMOA Daecheongho Museum of Art, Cheongju, KR

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2020 <The Show Must Go On x IAP>Warehouse Gallery, Incheon Art Platform, Incheon, KR

2020 <Questions For Now>IAP Gallery Sites, Incheon Art Platform, Incheon, KR

2018 <When i grow up, i wanna be> Foundwill Art Society, Seoul, KR

2016 <Walking Future> Cheongju Art Studio, Cheongju, KR

2016 <异质同构, Hainan Danzhou International Biennale> Danzhou, CN

2016 <Bon Bon Bridge>, Bongbong bangagan & Alternative Space Concrete Platform, Gangneung, KR

2016 <Travel to the Garden>CMOA Daecheongho Museum of Art, Cheongju, KR

2016 <Document The traces of 10 Years, The future of the 10 years>, Cheongju Art Studio, KR

2016 <Hybrid_New Vision> Cheongju Art Studio, Cheongju, KR

2016 <Asia Art Highway>Cheongju Art Studio, Cheongju, KR

EDUCATION

2007 MASTER, Université Paris1(Panthéon-Sorbonne), Arts Plastiques. Paris, FR

2004 POST DIPLOMA, Kunstuniversität Linz, Experimentelle Gestaltung. Linz, AT

2003 DNSEP, Ecole supérieure des arts décoratifs de Strasbourg, Art. Strasbourg, FR

2001 DNAP, Ecole supérieure des arts décoratifs de Strasbourg, Art. Strasbourg, FR

RESIDENCIES

2021 Incheon Art Platform, Incheon Foundation For Arts and Culture, Incheon, KR

2020 Incheon Art Platform, Incheon Foundation For Arts and Culture, Incheon, KR

2016 Cheongju Art Studio, CMOA Cheongju Museum of Art, Choengju, KR

GRANTS and SELECTIONS

2020 - 2021 Promising Artists, Incheon Foundation For Arts and Culture, Incheon, KR

2019 SeMA Emerging Artists and Curators, Seoul Museum of Art, Seoul, KR

2018 Grant for exhibition 2018 CMOA Daecheongho Museum of Art, Cheongju, KR