TEXTE //
KYOUNGJAE CHO

BIOGRAPHIE GÉNÉRALE KYOUNGJAE CHO

Né en 1979, après avoir obtenu son diplôme de Design à la Suwon University et du département de photographie de l'Université Sangmyung, Kyoungjae Cho a suivi le Meisterschuler à l'Académie des Beaux-Arts de Münster. Après avoir été sélectionné comme artiste vedette en 2016 du Project Space Sarubia, il a organisé une exposition personnelle en 2017 intitulée *Broken Edges*. De plus, il a participé au projet *Babel II* du Project Space Babel en 2017 à Berlin, en Allemagne, lors de la deuxième partie et a dirigé une autre exposition personnelle utilisant simplement celle de la lumière et du son. À l'heure actuelle, il travaille à élargir la portée de la photographie qui est son travail principal.
Plutôt que l'extensibilité de chaque projet, sa perspective est fondée sur le processus consistant à rendre cette extensibilité visible dans les lieux d'exposition réels. Les images jouent le rôle de médium crucial pour exprimer cette extensibilité. L'exposition personnelle qui ouvra ses portes au Amado Art Space/Lab en novembre 2018 est une extension de ce processus.

TRAVAIL GÉNÉRAL KYOUNGJAE CHO

Ma pratique photographique en 2024 a évolué dans une différente direction de celle mon travail précédent. Je me suis davantage intéressé à intervenir directement dans les objets et les conditions temporelles qui existent entre l'espace et l'appareil photo. Alors que mes œuvres précédentes se concentraient sur la composition de scènes à travers l'agencement d'objets et leur capture sous un point de vue spécifique, les plus récentes intègrent activement mon corps en tant qu'agent essentiel dans le processus.

À travers le rupture du mouvement, l'écrasement et le pliage des objets — je cherche à révéler le flux du temps et la transformation qui se produisent entre l'espace et la caméra au sein de l'image photographique. Il ne s'agit plus simplement de construire une scène, mais d'exposer le processus par lequel la scène elle-même prend forme. La photographie, dans ce contexte, cesse de fonctionner simplement comme un outil pour produire des images fixes. Au lieu de cela, il devient un médium qui capture honnêtement les traces du mouvement corporel, les réponses des objets et les émotions et sensations qui émergent entre eux.

Ce changement a également nécessité une transformation dans ma façon d'interagir avec les objets. Par le passé, je collectionnais et arrangeais principalement des matériaux existants. Aujourd'hui, je construis et manipule de plus en plus moi-même des objets, permettant leur déformation, détérioration et transformation afin de devenir partie intégrante du processus photographique. Mon intervention n'est pas seulement physique mais aussi émotionnelle, et cela est directement ancré dans la texture, l'atmosphère et la condition de l'œuvre.

À travers ce corpus, j'explore comment les traces corporelles, la densité temporelle et l'immédiateté de la sensation peuvent être traduites en images. La caméra n'est plus seulement un dispositif d'observation, elle devient une présence collaborative qui enregistre des moments de tension, de transformation et d'échange entre moi-même et l'espace. J'espère que les images qui en résultent ne fonctionnent pas comme des formes complètes ou fixes, mais plutôt comme des images rémanentes — traces résiduelles d'un événement qui a eu lieu.

Kyoungjae Cho

CHO KYOUNGJAE'S PERFORMANCE-MEDIATED PHOTOGRAPHS
TEXTE DE TIFFANY YEON CHAE

It was a summer day in 2022 when I first came across Cho Kyoungjae's installation *A Narrow Corridor*[1]. The expansive plein-air framework functioning as the entryway to the museum consisted of several elongated, painted wooden forms reminiscent of passageways. With an exposed ceiling, it was composed only of connective architectural elements such as corridors, steps, and doors, which allowed for the heightened awareness of my movement and perforating gaze. Walking down the long, narrow space, I found myself unusually fixated on the sound of my footsteps and the sensation of my swinging arms. Meanwhile, small and large pots of plants placed around the structure seamlessly unified the installation's interior and exterior. I arrived at the museum entrance at the end of several layers of corridors, at the center of which I was confronted with a columnar installation collaged with the artist's photographs.

Performance as process behind photography

Cho has often presented spacious installations as part of various exhibitions, but fundamental to his artistic identity and practice is the photographic medium. His 2017 solo exhibition *Broken Edges* at Project Space Sarubia and 2018 solo exhibition *The Reveal of Tooth Pulp*, celebrating his reception of the *Amado Photography Award*, marked the merging of his parallel engagements in photography and installation. Presented alongside site-specific installations, photographs reminiscent of abstract paintings reveal themselves, upon careful examination, to be close-ups of the objects comprising the installations taken from various angles. As such, his installations and photography evince intimate connections.

Early in his career, Cho mostly took photographs of ready-made objects specifically arranged to convey their inherent significance. However, he eventually turned to ordinary materials —industrial components such as bricks and rebars and organic matter like grass and trees—to construct spaces, moving toward a method of juxtaposing photographs of materials with spatial installations and away from his previous symbol-laden work. Today, he actively engages with his materials—bending wires and painting on surfaces as he pleases—to produce the objects of his desires, which he assembles into organic forms before photographing. Much of his time and energy are invested into the physical act of collecting and installing materials that follows photographing. On his production style, Cho once remarked, "I'm a materialistic artist, who simultaneously dreams of becoming an animalistic one."[2] The expression "animalistic artist" may be interpreted as encompassing the artist's instinctive bodily senses involved in rearranging various materials to form and structuralize objects and fix them onto a single frame through the medium of photography.

Performance as a testament to the hidden temporality of photography

The resulting frames capture the time and place of the photo shoot in a frozen state. Kim Nam-see, professor of Cultural Theory and Aesthetics at Ewha Womans University, notes how Cho's photographs tend to aim for the interruption of time and the erasure of meaning, while his photo installations, in which photographs are presented in a deconstructed state, reveal the passage of time beyond the artist's control.[3] The properties of time condensed in his photo works seem to be reflected in his installations, such temporality being powerfully revealed particularly in his artist-directed performances. Cho performed a pantomime at an open presentation participated by artists-in-residence at MMCA Residency Goyang in 2024.[4] Briefly introducing himself by typing into a laptop connected to the screen, he went on to stack and repeatedly rearrange the objects on site, including a ladder, chairs, and the podium. During this physically strenuous performance, he would occasionally stop and observe the landscape he had created. After examining the objects from all directions, he nodded and sat down on the edge of the stage as if pleased. After typing the name of his choreographic collaborator Park Yura, he concluded his first one- man play.

By presenting an unexpected stage performance originally intended for introducing the work, Cho succeeded in effectively achieving his objective of "avoiding verbal explanation of the works." The performance, which gave audiences a firsthand experience of the painstaking process taken to achieve the resulting photographs, revealed the temporality behind the final cuts that would have otherwise been difficult to detect. Inviting audiences to indulge in the moment in real-time also expanded the performance into the realm of subjective memory.

How do we perceive monsters?

Cho occasionally carries out various collaborative projects inside and outside the boundaries of photography as a performance director or scenographer. The artist, who regularly led a yoga class with a resident choreographer during his time at MMCA Residency Goyang, collaborated with fellow artist Future Grandpa's Secret Recipe to present the installation *The Red Game Hypothesis* on the residency's rooftop during its open studios. This unstable structure composed of waste objects found around the residency offered viewers a novel visual experience in contrast with the surrounding natural landscape. Both the installation inside his studio and the photo series *Each Corner*, comprising individually produced images, feature scenes marked by the clash of distinct elements such as steel plates, wires, and pieces of painted wood.

Cho's interest in the tension between clashing subjects can also be perceived in the artist-curated group exhibition *Attachment and Territorial Struggle* (2024). Here, works by five participating artists were indiscriminately arranged to obscure which work belonged to whom. Cho explains how he and the artists Kim Taeyeon, Park Yura, Seo Dongsin and Hwang Kyumin "designated the work territory through communication and interference based on mutual attachment and used elements such as husks, bone fragments, and artificial skin to stage a virtual fantasy."[5] *How Do We Percieve Monsters* ?, an accompanying performance presented on the 8th and 9th of November 2024, in which Cho partook as a scenographer, also featured five actors, whose distinct roles contended as they filled the room with a tense energy. Before entering the theatre to see this performance, audiences were instructed to converse with one of the performers and contribute a sentence, and each actor would learn and repeatedly recite the sentence using their voice and sign language on stage. The show begins on a calm note and gradually escalates in political messages and emotional intensity. The lights illuminate the stage and the audience alike, while the performers make active use of the stage equipment to bring the audience and stage together. The various objects that make up the stage stimulate the audience to encourage subjective interpretation. As the show progresses, the actors' body language and voices heighten to drive one another to react as if to a "monster."

Cho also operates an alternative space called Project Space Kosmos in Incheon. The performance *Bravado* staged in this venue on the 23rd and 24th of March 2024 is worth noting. An actor performs a monologue navigating a painful personal history, while simultaneously, a choreographer prepares a dish in real-time as a circus artist walks a tightrope. The three performers each assert bravado in an exaggerated manner, throwing or devouring ingredients such as onions and tomatoes, while steaming pots and dramatically shifting lighting heighten the viewers' senses and keep them on edge. A consistent factor found in the series of collaboration projects Cho participated in is his loyalty to his main working medium, that is, photography. To him, photography comes with performative intuition. His works, which freely navigate the realms of photography, installation, and performance in an exploration of the relationship between time and space, open up new possibilities by actively clashing with different materials, artists, curators, and audiences.

Tiffany Yeon Chae

1) Cho's work A Narrow Corridor was commissioned for Museum Access: Through the Eco-Corridor, a collaboration exhibition by the Gyeonggi Museum of Modern Art and the MMCA held in 2022.

2) An interview with the artist conducted on May 4, 2024, at the artist's studio in MMCA Residency Goyang.

3) Kim Nam-See, *Deconstructed Photographs, Emerging Temporality, Cho Kyoungjae's Black Eye*, Wildflowers Blooming on the Province, exhibition catalog (Suwon: Gyeonggi Cultural Foundation, 2022).

4) The open presentation, MMCA Residency Day: Meet Up!, commemorated the 20th anniversary of MMCA Residency (Multi- Project Hall, MMCA Seoul, June 28, 2024).

5) An e-mail conversation with the artist, January 17, 2025. The exhibition took place at the Shinchon Arts Space from December 17, 2024, to January 28, 2025.

CHO KYOUNGJAE'SBLACK SNOW – DISMANTLEMENT OF PHOTOGRAPHY AND THE FLOW OF TIME, TEXTE DE KIM NAMSEE

In the *Ladder* exhibition held in Germany in 2015, Cho Kyoungjae stacked, placed, laid, and coveredeveryday objects such as old chairs, bicycle accessories, lakes, wrapping paper, wires, plywoods, etc. to form structures, and took pictures of them. Their photos in the exhibition hall look like abstract paintings, but they are not paintings but photos. In other words, Cho did not draw the concept on a two-dimensional plane through paint, but rather took and printed objects arranged in various ways in a three-dimensional space at a certain point in time. Cho explains, "After making a structure by focusing on the unique material, texture, color, and weight of the object or materials, I took a close-up shot to make it look like an abstract painting or a sculptural structure to make the whole look visible."[1] This work, which transforms the three- dimensional "spatial collage" through objects into a two-dimensional photo that looks like an abstract painting, presents several interesting points. For example, modernist abstract painting was the product of an attempt not to bring in any elements of the outside world beyond the painting itself. However, the photos created by Cho, which appear to be abstract paintings, are already indicators of objects outside the image, such as tin sheets, lakes, and plywood. Cho's photography, which looks like an abstract painting, adheres to the essence of a photographic medium, that is, the representation of objects in the world, and ironically preaches the ideology of modernist abstract painting through it.

However, after that, a transition took place in his work. Previously, he built structures to take pictures, but now structural installations have begun to emerge rather than photographs. Here, photography is attached like furniture or a window between the structures installed in the space. When asked if this is "extension from photography to installation," Cho replies, "dismantlement rather than expansion." "It's more like dismantling than expanding because I tried to cut and reveal the layers of a photo and reveal invisible elements,"[2] he said. He surely is an artist that can express what he is doing so clearly like this. True, the two- dimensional image of photography hides many things invisible other than what is revealed on the surface of the image, even if it is a photograph of three-dimensional objects. Photographs hide situations that took place before photographs were taken, hide things outside the camera frame, and hide objects behind them that are covered by objects appearing on the front. Feeling "frustrated" by such work, Cho now tried to dismantle a photo by cutting off its layer and spreading elements that were not seen in the picture into a three-dimensional space. In this respect, Cho's installation work should not be understood in the same aspect as general installation works. It is an installation as dismantlement of photography, starting from photography and with photography in mind. Thus, many things that made the plane of the photography invisible unfold in a three- dimensional space.

However, more important and fundamental things happen together in the "dismantlement of photos."

First, the dismantlement not only makes what was not visible in the plane of the photography appear in space, but also pluralizes a single point of view which photography had no choice but to have. For objects in a three- dimensional space, photography is essentially accessible from one point of view. However, the audience does not choose a fixed point of view for the spatial installation structure created as a result of "dismantlement." The audience looks aroundthe structure, which reveals different aspects each time. The only point of view chosen by Cho is replaced by the democratic gaze of the audience moving around.

Second, this inevitably accompanies new temporality. Photographs of three-dimensional objects are the results of choosing where to take them, namely, point of sight as well as when to take them, that is, timing. In the ever-changing light of nature, the light or shadow cast on an object in space is bound to continue to change, and Cho who uses photography as the final work completes the open temporality of the object. This is because if you "select" a specific timing to take a picture, the change in time of the object is "stopped." On the contrary, in installations created by dismantling photographs, time is revived as a substance that he cannot control. Not only does the audience choose the point of sight for the structure, but the shape, texture, and feeling created by the installation structure vary depending on when, or at what timing, the audience experiences it.

In this way, for Cho, who started with photos, "dismantlement of photos" is not a simple investigation, but a fundamental transition to taking huge risks, and in his words, it is also linked to "give up on what he could have done well", that is, "dismantlement of the artist himself." In my view, Cho and his works are still in the wavelength caused by this double-layered dismantlement. It evokes strange tension and contradictions in his work. One of them is the matter

of temporality. As far as I know, it was Roland Bartheswho most clearly recognized the relationship photography has with time. In his “Camera Lucida,” he talks about the temporality of photography as follows: In photography, the interruption of time (Stilllegung) appears in an extreme, cruel way. Time is blocked. ... No matter how “modern” a photo is and is mixed with our daily lives, there is nevertheless a mysterious point of non-actualization(Inaktualittt), a rare identity, and a total of stops...Photography is by no means a recollection in nature. (The grammatical expression of recollection is complete, while the tense of a photograph is the indefinite past/imperfect tense.) Rather, photography blocks recollection and acts against the memory (Gegen- Erinnerung) very quickly.”[3]

Cho’s photography is faithful to the anti-imaginary nature of what Bart said in that it blocks the recall or recollection of the past that a photograph may invoke. Cho’s photography, which looks like a modernist abstract painting, has structures of everyday objects, but there are thoroughly excluded forms and shapes which might be reminiscent of something we know. It is carefully intended not to indueany “meaning” other than the texture, material, color, and weight of objects. Such aneliminationalist attitude to remove all kinds of “meaning” from the work is also found in his installation work. When asked about the “meaning” of his installation work, he said, “It means subtracting the meaning. So, it means subtracting what happens when an object meets an object. My current work is the result of my effort to take it out,” he replied.

“Meanings” are based on “memory.” Memory is a source of all the “meanings” which can arise in humans. For example, the signification of all symbols we use is based on a personal or collective memory that links a notation to the signified (meaning). Some objects, people, and events generate meanings through my conscious or subconscious memories. The image of “surrealism” pursued by surrealists also brings energy from some subconscious and collective memory. As such, memory is the basis and source of all meanings we encounter.

However, after the “dismantlement of photography,” Cho’s works began to feature the theme of memory. At the center of his solo exhibition held in SeMa Warehouse titled Yeojwa Headquarterslies his memory of “his house in Yeojwa-dong, Jinhae City, Korea where the het lived from his birth to elementary school years.” The place with a unique past was filled with objects and structures that recall his memories. There was a wall that recalled the memories of the space where he lived as a child, and a wall clock hung on it, and white pottery was placed on the Gwanmuldae in the warehouse reminiscent of a display stand in the living room of that time. Short stairs, plywoods dividing and cutting the space, and the “objects of the past” placed on floors and shelves - ceramics, gypsum, stones, soil, pots, and plants blooming between stones - are all related to this memory. In April 2021, even at his solo exhibition in a former church building titled This is not a church, memories appear from the exhibition title “This is not a church” that denies and reminds the past of the place. To me, this seems to be an inevitable trace of Cho’s “double dismantlement” project. While his photography work before dismantling was aimed at stopping time and eliminating meanings, it is the time he can do nothing about what is completely expanded from the installation work that emerged as the dismantling of photography. What we can do at best about the time we can’t stop or fix – that is memory and recollection.

Due to various realistic circumstances, Cho’s work isinstalled outdoors on the roof of the Art Center White Block building at see State(between);. As a result, his work is completely exposed to sunlight during the day, cold air and dew in the evening or night, and weather changes such as rain and snow. Due to these conditions that might damage the photos, the number and size of the photos previously attached in the middle of the installation, such as furniture or windows, have also been minimized. Instead, this work stands in the middle of all these ever-changing environments in facing the audience. Both point of view and timing, which have no choice but to be fixed, are as open as possible here. He gave the project the title Black Snow.When I asked the artistabout the title, he said it was a work that was calculated/planned for December, imagining snow piled up on the installed work outside. If white snow covers the grass and decks on the rooftop floor where the work is installed, and wooden benches “placed in the middle of the wall connected to vertical pillars,” the black structure will reveal a completely different appearance from now. Cho who tried to stop and fix time through photography, hugs the work while letting time flow. It is a consequence of the dismantlement of photography that is taking place in Cho Kyoungjae.

Kim Namsee (Professor in Studies of Visual Art, Ewha Womans University, Seoul, South Korea)

1) *The Reveal of Tooth Pulp*, Amado Art Space (2018), p.29.
2) Ibid., p.29.
3) Roland Barthes, *Die helle Kammer*, Shurkamp (1989), pp.101-102.

INVOKING THE EXISTING MEMORIES, - KYOUNGJAE CHO'S COMPOSITIONAL SCENE AND THE REALITY OF PHOTOGRAPHY, TEXTE DE JONGGIL KIM

1. The Body So-called Structure

His eyes have often reached the structure composed of some elements that form the architectural phenomenon. When his eyes went and reached those, they became the camera frame and aperture. The structure was reconstituted in there. It was almost similar to the composition of the non-representational relief, which Larionov, Malevich, Tatlin, Picasso, Gabo, Lissitzky, Kandinsky, etc. experimented. The 'some elements' of the phenomenon do not look different from how Russian constructivists boldly utilized "metal, glass, and other modern industrial new materials" into pictorial or design images. It looked as if his reference of the reinterpretation of photography is the constructivist concept of "rejecting Realism and taking the creative attitude to create a new form of beauty based on the rational and reasonable composition of the mechanical and geometrical form." In his portfolio sent to me, the photography works in 2012 and 2016 at the forefront shows this constructivist inclination strongly. However, there is a trap this is nothing but a 'similar' impression. It is because, in his portfolio that shows his work until 2019, all of the works in-between, for 5-6 years, reverses the mission of the constructivist concept of "rejecting all elements of descriptive representation and aiming for the composition of pure form, therefore, taking a geometrical abstract direction in painting or sculpture, and forming a space or environment rather than art as self-expression," or crosses it relentlessly by flattening it. The problem is, while constructivism is born with a 2-dimensional geometrical image called painting, his photos directly embody/shoot the actual 3-dimensional space. The 'composition-space' in the photos exists as the body called 'structure' and is a phenomenon. Therefore, his photos deserve to be called the (existing) body of structures, not the abstract of structures.

2. The Depth of Here and There

As if frozen, his photos are pictorial (as I alluded to them as an impression from above). The surprisingly vivid colors, faces, and lines that compose the screen, and the shadows of the objects the three elements arise the reality of the image to the level of hyperrealism. They are read as if the constructivist attitude to reject every descriptive element of representation is reserved, or it was not even considered at all. The photos are full of the substantive surface of the objects that have colors, faces, lines, and shadows, and the pose of those that are attached to each other while pulling and pushing together is very realistic. When you walk a few steps closer to the works and look at them in detail (or deeply), you get surprised by the facts that the objects inside are composed of ridiculously raw, rough, and less sophisticated compositional things, and that the photos are actually the result of putting the compositional elements in some space into the camera frame which has nothing to do with geometrical abstract. They are the results of the captured thing by a camera lens which is of the mixture of the unintended nature of the redundant objects themselves and the intended artificiality of the artist who had put a small bit of compositional element. Interestingly, the power of the constructivist aesthetics spurted as an impression is mighty. However, because of the visual distraction that is raised when "the pictorial impression – the reality inside the photo - the depth of the objects" operate simultaneously, the constructivism that denied 'the art of self-expression' loses its position. I think that very spot of the loss is where Kyoungjae Cho's art world has been conceived again. It is because his photos present a wholly different aesthetic notion by gaining the 'depth of objects' in reality, which was not conceived in constructivism.

3. The Works that Erase 'and' in 'Photography and Reality'

In 2012, he showed "ㅁ ㄱ 002 ". Photo and installation are displayed at the same time, and the grid of 'ㅁ' and the line of 'ㄱ' connect the photos on a white wall. It makes us consider the 'double structure' of gaze in the way the photos are glued on the wall and connected to the picture frames. The photo itself is a frame, and by putting another picture frame, there is a hidden strategy to make us perceive the double structure of the aesthetic reality (the photo) and the realistic reality (the picture frame) as 'one' structure. This intention is directed as a more specific case in Block Block. The photo and the objects appear to be freely composed (of course they are directed and installed meticulously by the artist). This work, in which 'the reality in the photo' and 'the objets in the reality' compose a space, is an experiment that erases 'and' in the elements. In this regard, the keyword 'photography and reality' should be called 'photography

reality' as the title is 'Block Block' instead of 'Block and Block.' Thus, his art world is to integrate the double structure of [the work of photography-the scene of reality] to one. But, is the aesthetic case of photography becoming reality and reality becoming photography possible? As a matter of fact, Block Block, shown in 2014 is only an installation of the photo as an artwork and the directing method of the objects, which make the photo possible. The two look like a mixture or integration, but they are clearly different. However, his attempt continues from then on, and he unfolds his unique world of photography, while creating the 'conceptual surface of the well.'

4. The Surface of the Well

The serene and transparent surface of the well makes the scenery of the two layers becoming one perfect existence. In the tradition of the Far East, it is 'jeonshinsajo' (**傳神寫照**: the concept of conveying the spirit by reproducing the appearance when drawing portraits) that is the aesthetic origin of the myth structure of the well. In other words, the existence is the time when the outside view [appearance] that is reflected on the surface of the well and the abyss (innate world) under the surface are represented at the same time and become 'one.' Kyoungjae Cho begins his experiment of not dividing the installation of objets and photography from 2016. When on-site installation and his photography are not divided semantically, the audience may become confused. It is because their eyes are not like the camera's eyes, so there is no certain quadrangle frame. "What and how should I see to read the artist's intentions?" This question comes up to their mind and runs around the exhibition space making them confused. Depending on the site and exhibition space itself, it is another characteristic to show the compositional installation and the artwork through the space directing. It gets confusing whether his work is questioning the way of seeing or you are experiencing what he intended impliedly. However, one thing clear is that there is a certain point, sight, and scene, and they are continuously connected and able to sense. Because the surface and the depths are directed in one space, even the photo work operates as an objet inside it. The composition and imagination of the dependent origination, "if this exists, that exists; if this ceases to exist, that also ceases to exist," is vivid with the reality the objets show. "Giving birth to and turning to new things," the system of the composition and the truth that are born and become rises the memories (temporality) of the objets and makes them encounter with the strange memory of the reality.

5. Here/There, This Life/Afterlife, This World Is, Nirvana Is,

The exhibition Live Rooftop: Yeojwa Headquarters II held at Incheon Art Platform in 2020 is connected to the exhibition at Project Space Sarubia in 2017, Broken Edges. It is because you can see "the pursuit of variable and improvisational sensation" also in Live Rooftop. However, I wonder if the artist has completely blown away a part of his topics derived from the photography in Live Rooftop. The recent exhibition is unconcerned about the compositional installation, directed composition, scene of the frame, spots and gaze, and is open to the audience to allow them to 'intervene' the inside of the space. The biggest change was that the concept of the transitive verb has turned into the concept of an intransitive verb, furthermore, the part that GG Ludens' performance and video cut in to operate the installation space to make it become 'alive.' It was the moments when the existence of the memory that could not be captured with photos to be called out and stacked momentarily. It is a paradox! It must be photography that is the stacked moments as the existence of memories, but photography is nowhere and only the memories are left to be printed in mind with the memories of experiences. The thing that the boundary of photography and reality is collapsed or vanished means the aesthetic reality and the existential reality are stuck together and reveal the aura called 'myth' in raw condition. It is not different as the state of 'here and there' or 'this life and afterlife' is nowhere, because the imagination is not imagination, but the reality. Maybe he is nihilating the notion and concept of aesthetics by shaking them or weaving the reticulation of the imaginative collective, which induces the audience to multiply their imagination inside the artist's realization of his own imagination.

Jonggil Kim

HEAVY LIGHTNESS, TEXTE DE JIHEE JEON

The Trap of Sensations

I sometimes feel as if the works of art displayed in exhibition rooms are living organisms lying in wait with their feelers tensed. It's like they lay a trap and whisper to me: "Show me your delicate feelings." As expressed by one critic: "Every "form" is a face looking at us." Works of art lay a sensual trap to capture our attention and request a dialogue with us.[1] At times, however, we are unsure of how to continue the dialogue because neither the artist nor the work answers the question of why they created such a work and why we perceive it as sensual. Not only do they not provide any answers, they ask us for the reasons. Kyoung-jae Cho, an artist who asks us for reasons and requests a dialogue with us, wants his audience to submit themselves willingly to his sensual trap and desires this type of art.

A Persistent Exploration of Gaze

We live in an era with more visual stimulation than ever before. Naturally, we should sense and respond to the gaze of the various forms in the world, but unfortunately, in most cases we become numb to sensations or simply accept incoming sensations unthinkingly. However, the raison d'être of the visual stimulus known as 'art' is not complete unless a returning gaze is present. Visual culture functions and exists only in spaces where mutual gazes are exchanged and where encounters and dialogues are possible. Kyoung-jae Cho raises this sensitive issue. He has pointed out that the fundamental reason for our desensitization toward what we see lies in result-driven modern art education and visual culture, and he considers it his duty as an artist to set new trends by creating small but steady changes. At the heart of his work, there is always a persistent interest in the 'gaze' and a reflection on the role of visual art. Based on his childhood when he naturally learned how to appreciate things visually and his experiences of studying abroad in Germany where he recaptured this forgotten sensation, he sees it as his role to provide opportunities for people to feel joy and express themselves freely within a visual environment through his exhibits and artwork. Yeojwa Headquarters gladly takes up the challenge of becoming such an environment, Yeojwa Headquarters recalls memories of the home in Yeojwa-dong, Jinhae where the artist lived from the time he was born until elementary school. Although the work was inspired by an intensely personal motif, there would be no point in physically recreating the house in the exhibition room. The purpose of the work is to reproduce the childhood environment and conditions which laid the foundation for the artist's current aesthetic sensibilities, as well as sharing the visual experiences of the environment. The structure of the artist's old home inspired joy through its exploratory gaze and imagination, while the layers of the multi-layer space ultimately evoked the flow of gazes which are split, overlapped, and intersected in his work.[2] In the four spaces of Yeojwa Headquarters, viewers each look around in their own way as they move through the roughly finished plywood structure.

<Past Objects> I Memories of a garden come to mind beneath the creaky boards. The stones, dirt, and fragments placed along the traces of the floor bring to mind traces of a dried up pond or swimming pool. <The Wall> I As you bend over to pass through the low door, you hear the faint sound of a piano playing on the other side of a wall permeated by light. <Sh!!> I In the dark, empty space encountered at the bottom of the stairs, you hear the quiet voices of children who seem to be making a game of exploring the basement. "Shh! Be quiet. Hey! Get up here." <Yeojwa Headquarters> I A variety of exotic objects, disparate and yet suited to the space, gaze at you from every direction — a patchwork of overlapping steel bars and rods protruding through the plywood boards, a light that rotates 360° like a lighthouse, a cuckoo clock and cheap pottery like the kind found in every house back then.

Interestingly, the various elements which make up the exhibit departed from neatly ordered lines to make use of inconspicuous aspects of ordinary spaces, such as diagonal lines, crossing lines, high and low, far and near, edges and depth. In addition, viewers could not enter the space itself — they had to watch or look down from a certain distance. This creates variations in the space, and viewers depart from a unidirectional perspective to observe their surroundings as they look around. Regarding this, the artist has said that his intention was to create various devices which would break down the one-on-one relationship between work and viewer to draw the viewer's gaze in different directions. However, he has not provided any answers as to how we are to understand Yeojwa Headquarters. He simply encourages us to express the thoughts that come to mind as we look around and freely take in the unfamiliar spatial structure. As I explored the exhibit, it occurred to me that perhaps the reason that we become desensitized is because our eyes and body want to remain comfortably within predictable boundaries. As intended by Yeojwa Headquarters, once we depart from the conveniently planned route, space, and passive gaze, we naturally begin to sense, react, and think. Kyoung-jae Cho himself continuously strives to escape from a fixed gaze and see things

differently. In 2019, upon sensing that the appearance and attitude of his work were becoming uniform, he turned to nature. In a natural environment where variety dominates, soil fluidly changes its appearance, color, and character depending on whether it is wet or dry. Whereas in his previous photographic work the individual features of subject matter were implied and passed over for the sake of producing images, seeing the natural characteristics of subject matter in nature gave him a new source of visual stimulation and taught him to react differently. Furthermore, not only does he actively collaborate with other artists, but he is open to dialogues with artists in other fields, non-artists, and children and strives to react to a variety of visual stimuli and inspiration, as evinced by 'Torque Talk' — an online program related to Yeojwa Headquarters.

Light Yet Not Lightweight

" Works without the goal of capturing 'Truth' and profound significance avoid these shortcomings. In other words, they create 'magical' works with artistic value through the exclusion of significance, playing with visual feelings, the unpredictable, quivering and vibrating. Aesthetic work on lightness is one of the ways of 'rescuing' modern art, making it compatible with beauty, and attracting a wider audience."[3] - Gilles Lipovetsky

Kyoung-jae Cho has referred to himself as a 'light' artist. I thought about the reason that he would present himself as a light artist. It is probably because his essential message of 'seeing and enjoying' is viewed as a more or less unessential sensation or type of amusement in our lives. Unlike work which treats fundamental issues in our society — such as discrimination, immigration, and violence — with a penetrating gaze or work full of aesthetic rhetoric, he simply wants viewers to respond autonomously to visual stimuli, experience joy, and communicate freely.
This type of art may be criticized as not being serious or lacking depth. Some may say it is merely a temporary hedonistic experience which has no impact on our lives. But is light art really no more than a form of temporary entertainment? If anything, it is more of a paradoxical lightness. In fact, 'lightness' is a property which provides one of the best explanations of our current feelings, as well as a principle organizing and driving our weighty, profound society by anthropological demand. And in modern art, as seen earlier in the quote from Gilles Lipovetsky, 'lightness' is a clever way of stimulating the joy of perceiving and sensing, as well as attracting a wider audience. In seeking the essence of 'the joy of seeing,' Kyoung-jae Cho's work is by no means light. At the heart of the work is a serious reflection on visual culture, art education, and, ultimately, the role of art. His intention is to use 'lightness' as a way of achieving a greater purpose. Reacting to various perspectives and spatial structures, light, the shape and color of objects, and movement as part of this intentional lightness, viewers have a qualitative experience as they converse freely and exchange glances with the work. Perhaps 'lightness' is ultimately what makes fundamental and weighty subjects such as 'visual culture' and 'art education' possible.

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1) *"Every "form" is a face looking at us"*. A statement made by film critic Serge Daney and quoted by Nicolas Bourriaud to refer to art in which intersubjective relations, i.e. 'continuous encounters' and 'coexistence' are created. Nicolas Bourriaud, Relational Aesthetics, Mijinsa Co., Ltd. (2011), pp. 37-40.

2) This was expanded into a type of experiment where the relationship between objects and space is studied carefully and the objects are arranged to fit in the frame of a photograph; then, the photograph itself forms its own relationship with the space as a kind of object, thereby creating an entire space. This type of work may be referred to as 'photographic installation' in the sense that a form in a two-dimensional photograph extends and overlaps into three-dimensional space.

3) Gilles Lipovetsky, *De la légèreté*, trans. Jae-hyeong Lee, Moonye Publishing Company (2018), pp. 235-236.