

Susan Hobbs

Soo Kim

Biography

- 1969 Born in Seoul, Korea
1995 MFA, California Institute of the Arts, Valencia
1991 BA, Art University of California at Riverside, Riverside

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2023 *Aria*, Anat Ebgi Gallery, Los Angeles
2018 *Homesick for a Better World*, Denk Gallery, Los Angeles
2015 *Soo Kim: (Returning)*, Archer School, Los Angeles
2012 *Middy Moon*, Angles Gallery, Los Angeles
2011 *Black Sun*, Angles Gallery, Los Angeles
2010 *The Corners of the Sea*, Julie Saul Gallery, New York
Faraway, Seaver Gallery, Marlborough School, Los Angeles
2008 *Superheroes*, Sandroni Rey Gallery, Los Angeles
2006 *(They Stop Looking at the Sky)*, Pasadena Museum of California Art, Pasadena
2005 *A Week Inside Two Days*, Sandroni Rey Gallery, Los Angeles
The Future's Owned by You and Me, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Agency, Photo Light
Box Project, Los Angeles
2002 *Soo Kim*, Sandroni Rey Gallery, Venice
1999 *Soo Kim*, Pomona College Museum of Art, Montgomery Gallery, Pomona
1995 *Stonewashing*, Bandits-mages, Bourges
1993 *(Carry) A Big Stick*, selected by Daniel J. Martinez, Tropical Installations, Los Angeles

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2024 *Kim, Akpojotor, Nitegeka*, Rele gallery, Los Angeles
2023 *Standing Still*, Gana Art, Los Angeles
2022 *A Small Remembrance of Something Less Solid*, Council St, Los Angeles
2021 Contemporary Voices in Asian American Photography, curated by the Getty Center for Google
Arts and Culture, launched May 2021
2019 *Urban Ecologies: Flon*, Phoenix Athens gallery, Athens
2018 *Asia/LA – LA/Asia*, Ara Art Center, Seoul
2016 *Seeing is Believing*, Museum of Photographic Arts, San Diego
2015 *Paperworks*, curated by Howard Fox, the Craft and Folk Art Museum, Los Angeles
Paths and Edges, Guggenheim Gallery, Chapman University, Orange
2014 *Material Object*, curated by Justin Cole, Charlie James Gallery, Los Angeles
2013 *Not in Arcadia Ego*, Angles Gallery, Los Angeles
2012 *After Image: The Photographic Process(ed)*, Cerritos College Art Gallery, Cerritos
2011 *Taking Time*, Nou Gallery, Taipei, Taiwan
2010 *Cut Ups*, Islip Art Museum, East Islip, New York
2009 *New Beginnings*, Susan Hobbs Gallery, Toronto
2008 *The World is All That is the Case*, curated by Arthur Ou, Hudson Franklin Gallery, New York
2007 *Utopian Mirage: Social Metaphors in Contemporary Photography and Film**, Frances Lehman Loeb Art
Center at Vassar College, Poughkeepsie

- 2006 *Pieces of Angels: Contemporary Art from Los Angeles*, University Art Museum, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park
- 2005 *Seoul Triennale II**, Seoul Museum of Art, Seoul, Korea
- 2004 *2004 California Biennial*, Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach
- 2003 *Defying Gravity: Contemporary Art and Flight**, North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh
- 2002 *Majestic Sprawl: Los Angeles Photography*, Pasadena Museum of California Art, Pasadena
- 2000 *KoreAmericaKorea*, Art Sonje, Seoul, Korea, traveling to Art Sonje Museum, Kyongju
- 1999 *Parallax: New Photographs*, Sandroni Rey Gallery, Venice
- 1998 *Other Related Areas*, UC Irvine Art Gallery, Irvine
- 1997 *Hotel California*, Arlington Museum of Art, Arlington
- 1996 *1996 Annuale*, Los Angeles Center for Photographic Studies, Los Angeles
- 1994 *Korean American Arts*, Oakland Museum of Art, Oakland
- 1993 International Audio Visual Experimental Festival, Arnhem
- 1992 *Caught Between the Sheets*, Los Angeles Photography Center, Los Angeles
- 1991 *Video Explorations*, The California Museum of Photography, Riverside

Collections

J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Museum of Photographic Arts, San Diego; North Carolina Museum of Art; The Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo; The Broad Foundation; The Escalette Collection, Chapman University; The Strauss Collection; The Nimoy Collection; The Ovitz Collection; The California Museum of Photography; University of California, Irvine; University of California, Santa Barbara.

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Ollman, Leah. *Cut, Folded, Pasted: Photography takes a twist and turn in the Getty's 'Paper Play'*. The Los Angeles Times, 24 April 2018;

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Oster, Laura. *I Read the News Today, Oh Boy: A Day in the Life of Photography*. Second Sight: New Representations in Photography, Torrance Art Museum, March – May exhibition catalogue;

Paik, Alex. *An Artist's Gift of Care, Hyperallergic*. 3 April 2023;

Paschal, Huston, Linda Johnson, Dougherty, Robert Wohl, Anne Collins Goodyear, and Laura M. André. *Defying Gravity: Contemporary Art and Flight*. North Carolina Museum of Art / Prestel Verlag press, exhibition catalogue, pgs VII, 136-139, 209;

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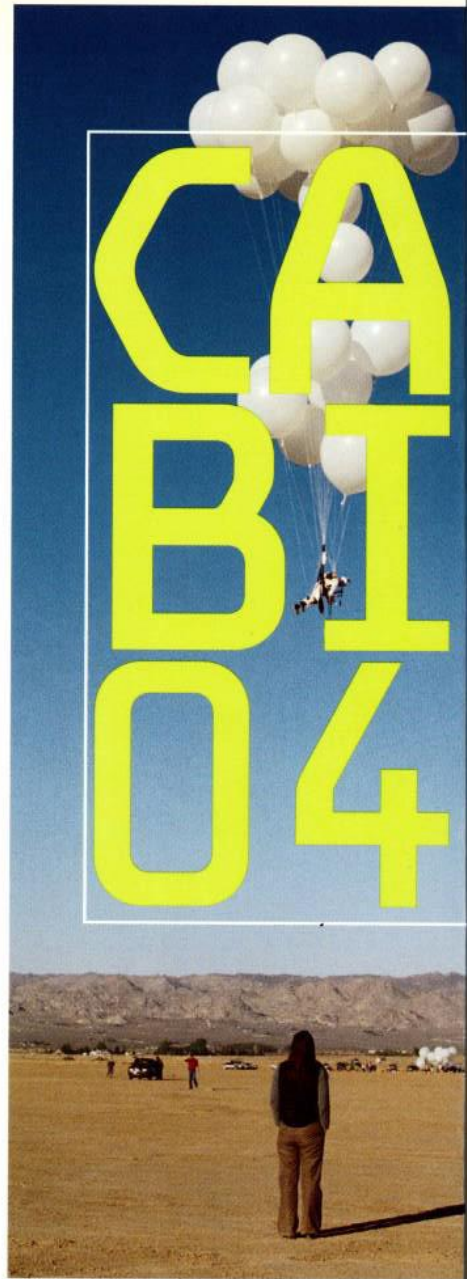


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2004 CALIFORNIA BIENNIAL



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Untitled, 2004
Cat. 76

13 Soo Kim

Travel—the movement from one place to another—affects every human being. Some are invigorated by flying to a new city and finding their way through an unfamiliar network of roads, trains, and buses. Others find the turmoil of travel centers, such as airports and train stations, disconcerting and repellent. Los Angeles-based photographer Soo Kim has taken on the universal experience of discovering the unfamiliar as the subject of her art.

When Kim travels, she takes her camera with her and photographs the people and places around her. One series of photographs from 2001 captured the undersides of planes during takeoff, showing us an image of flight that we seldom witness. We realize that planes are tarnished and rusted in some places but huge and impressive overall. Moreover, the images allow us to study a moment that would otherwise be fleeting, giving us multiple chances to consider a moving object and to remember our emotions when witnessing such movement.

In the body of work that followed this one, she continued her focus on the photograph's ability to freeze a passing moment. By drawing on and cutting into the photographs to create fantastical figures, she made each print unique, prolonging the instant when the shutter clicks and representing the myriad of visions that the mind and the camera can see.

The writings of Gilles Deleuze have influenced Kim's thinking and her photography. In one of his famous texts about film, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* (1983), Deleuze discusses "any-place whatever," sites and situations that are simultaneously one place and also another. His theory posits a mental location that does not possess the characteristics of a single place, but has multiple and conflicting

aspects. During periods of dislocation or relocation, one can easily observe experiences such as this. And for Kim—who was born in Korea, relocated to California when she was six, and moved frequently as a child—these multilayered perceptions reflect her understanding of the world.

Perhaps because of that understanding, Kim's pictures often reveal focused and concentrated images: a few strands of hair next to a plane window, the reflection of a tartan shirt on a train window. She subtly captures the ins and outs, the visceral and the visual, of travel and transition. Further exploring the emotional experiences inherent in travel, in 2001 Kim produced a series in which she photographed individuals at airports. In a loose reference to Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, each of her subjects holds a card with a name of a person he or she chose. The names chosen—including Yoko Ono, Raymond Carver, and Paul Thek—suggest anticipation, admiration, complacency, and boredom with the inertia of quotidian life. Whereas the signs function as synecdoches of philosophical beliefs, Kim's photographs picture a host of human emotions—general and personal, universal and intimate.

Jane Simon



Air (Copenhagen I), 2000

North East, 2001



Atlan11c, 2001

| *Mich,101 WorthIngtDnIR,1ymond Carver, 2001*

Soo Kim at Sandroni Rey

Art in America,

Dec, 2005

by Jori Finkel

Soo Kim's new series, "A Week Inside Two Days," might make you think of painting and sculpture more than other photographs. The series features pictures of trees in the winter stripped of their leaves by the elements. On top of that, Kim has done some stripping of her own, carving shapes into the C-prints with a scalpel. The resulting works, which are mounted between sheets of Plexiglas, are lacy and sometimes layered and shadowy, with just enough dimensionality to evoke Brice Marden's calligraphic paintings or Eva Hesse's knotty sculptures instead of today's super-slick and often supersized photographs.

The branching imagery in Kim's prints (all 2005) varies in complexity. In one of the simplest works, (*In a Panting Whisper*), she has cut out the bark of one tree, turning the tree into negative space defined only by its absence and by some piles of snow that linger on its missing branches. In one of the more complicated pieces, (*They Suddenly Show Themselves*), she has layered two prints, each incised with different branching patterns, to create a delicate, seemingly woven net- or nestlike effect. In another work, the underlying print is pink, lending a shock of color to the ghostly trees in the foreground. Trees were a smart choice. They are familiar enough to be deconstructed without losing recognisability. Plus, by deciding to "carve" out a tree, which itself so often carves a shape into the sky and which itself--in the form of wood---is so often carved, Kim has hit upon a subject rich with material and perceptual associations.

This is not true of the three portraits included in her show. In one print, a man in a white sweater lies on a white rug, looking off to one side, where a pattern of starbursts has been cut into his field of vision. While not quite as explicit as a comic-book thought balloon, the notion that he is seeing fireworks in his mind's eye is obvious. And instead of adding depth to the work, the pattern appears merely decorative, like wallpaper.

One of Kim's previous series featured straight photography (no cutouts) of airplanes from odd angles, and my guess is she included the portraits in this

show to make it clear she's not a nature photographer, as well as to express a sense of dreamy interiority. She also gets a bit of personal drama into the pictures through parenthetical titles lifted from Jean Genet's stage directions in *The Balcony*, such as *(She Looks at Her Languidly)* and *(After Reflection, Shrugging His Shoulders)*. But these titles--like the three portraits--are not really necessary: the pictures of trees themselves speak volumes about the tangled and intimate relationships between light and dark, presence and absence, and yes, paper and air.

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Los Angeles Times

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Thursday, May 1, 2008

DESIGNATED AREAS HIGHER 50¢

UNTITLED

PAUL YOUNG

There are dozens of photography shows worth visiting at the moment, including New Orleans-based David Halliday at Stephen Cohen and "Three From Britain" at Rose Gallery. Both are excellent, but I'd also like to recommend the young L.A.-based artist **Soo Kim**.

I first came into contact with Kim's work in early 2007



at **Sandroni Rey Gallery**, and then again earlier this year at the same gallery. In both cases,

she presented large images of dense cityscapes, first Istanbul and then Reykjavik. What made the work so memorable is that she carefully cut into her photographs and removed panels and sections from facades. She then added backgrounds to create a semi-transparent city that was as complex as it was dreamy.

Now she's back with an equally beautiful body of work

(at Sandroni Rey; sandrontrey.com; ends June 14), which applies a similar idea to a different subject. Most of her images depict a young Asian girl lost in thought and draped across a table with a reflective surface. The rest show details of the Wayfarers Chapel in Rancho Palos Verdes, where glass planes reflect tree branches and blue skies.

In the former, she cuts into

the image with hundreds of carefully composed patterns, which suggest branches, birds, flowers, Islamic designs and traditional screens. In the latter, she simply leaves the image alone. Yet both "speak the same language," as Kim says. "They both oscillate between real and imagined spaces."

— THEGUIDE
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THE GUIDE
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Soo Kim

Julie Saul

Soo Kim's work sits at the boundary between photography and collage. She takes and prints photographs, and then cuts them into intricate patterns, which she sometimes layers one over another.



Soo Kim, *Lavish*, 2009, hand-cut C-print, 30" x 30". Julie Saul.

She frames the resulting images in such a way that they hover between sheets of Plexiglas, and must therefore be literally looked through rather than looked at.

This show, "The Corners of the Sea," included photographs that Kim manipulated to striking effect. *Untitled*

(*Gold woods*), 2008, is a blurry image of a tree in which the branches have been cut out, painted gold, and lifted up from the surface of the print. The contrast between the peaceful tone of the background and the jagged metallic strands that seem to reach out generates a sense of unease.

In two sets of portraits—one of a young man, the other of a young woman—patterns taken from comics are cut from the prints. In the three shots of the woman (all 2009), these patterns add a second level of narrative content. *Driftless* shows her turned toward the viewer, apparently submerged beneath a cutout of water. In *Lavish*, the woman seems to gaze dreamily into a wind-swept sky, and in *Fall*, she looks as if she is peacefully sleeping while floating on a wave.

Even more complex here was a series of highly detailed multilayered cityscapes featuring rows of buildings, conveying the impression that we are looking into windows and through doorways behind which other worlds might be hidden.

Kim's work exhibits a high degree of skill and control. The artist subtly handles a technique that is often used to far blunter, more obvious effect. Her pieces seem to whisper to us, and they are all the stronger for it.

—Steve Barnes

SOO KIM



photo: © Grant Mudford

[Essay](#)[C.O.L.A. images](#)[PAST images](#)[BIO](#)

Camouflage, 2009
Hand-cut chromogenic print
61 x 60 inches (approx)



(Clear as winter ice), 2011
 Hand-cut chromogenic print
 60 x 60 inches (approx)

About	Visual Artists	Performing Artists	Gallery Schedule	Performances	C.O.L.A. History	Exhibition Checklist
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SOO KIM

There is an undeniable aspiration toward the tangibility of images in Soo Kim's photographic works. While trafficking in the banality of everyday life, Kim's labor-intensive process seeks to upend the conventional uses of photography and excise from it a scrim through which a desirous longing can pass. Whether the focus is on the natural settings of such non-descript locations as Elysian Park in Los Angeles or the built environment of Reykjavik, Iceland, Kim activates her images by cutting away photographic material and revealing the surfaces beyond their immediate picture plane. For Kim, the process of excision provides an antidote that is both hostile and sympathetic toward the type of reverie the images -- left to themselves -- might believe.

At the heart of Kim's approach is the cultural assumption that photographic images possess an internal logic and structure that mimes the visual representations they appear to offer. The urban environment has provided a particularly fertile test ground for staging this inquiry. In 2009, for instance, Kim set out on a project in the context of Dubrovnik, Croatia, where she produced a panoramic picture of the historical coastal town by systematically documenting its topography from the perspective of the elevated walkway that runs throughout. The photographs that result from this pedestrian activity were then laboriously whittled away in great enough detail to leave the prints in a skeletal state. For each individual work, two images were then overlaid and synthesized into one in order to create a new image that is both densely interwoven and porous enough to reveal its material backing.

Kim's Dubrovnik project attempts to capture a total image of the city while questioning the validity of the photographic medium in performing this task. Photography's relationship to architecture and the natural landscape has been fraught since the technology was invented -- a condition inherited from painting and its struggle with the conventions of representation throughout centuries prior -- but Kim's process results in a photographic object that is neither objective nor allegorical. In this, like many of Kim's other projects, the absence of the picture's material becomes the focal point.

The conundrum that results in the translation of one spatial order into a two-dimensional plane is a problem that precedes Kim by a considerable margin, but the renewed interest her practice exemplifies appears to be part of a larger conversation around the materiality of images -- both photographic and otherwise -- and their structural relationship to the world of which they are a part. Unlike many of her contemporaries, however, who often deal in the ruination and degradation of photographic materials and processes, Kim asserts a quality that remains lyrically intact. Lyricism is maybe just one way of describing this tendency in Kim's work, but it is a revealing frame of reference in so far as the term exemplifies a cultural impulse that is often overlooked and left unspoken.

—Aram Moshayedi

Aram Moshayedi lives in Los Angeles where he is assistant curator of the Gallery at REDCAT and a doctoral candidate in the department of art history at the University of Southern California.

Essay	C.O.L.A. images	PAST images	BIO
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Art review: Soo Kim at Angles Gallery

JANUARY 27, 2011 | 7:15 PM

At Angles Gallery, Soo Kim literally carves a line between two and three dimensions, partially cutting out sections of her photographs and layering or folding them to create lacy, semi-sculptural wall pieces. In one series, she has carefully excised wintry tree branches, bending and twisting the strips of paper into tangles that droop from the surface of the photograph. Coated in gold and silver metallic paint, they become shiny, decidedly unnatural appendages. There's something wistful about the way these works play with absence and presence — in a way, the tree has become both a lacuna and a new object — but unfortunately, these hybrid constructions never achieve more than a poetic prettiness.



By contrast, photographs Kim shot of Dubrovnik, a dense, medieval-era town in Croatia, yield more intriguing results. Instead of slicing the images along the boundary between figure and ground, the artist has removed the substance of the buildings — bricks, tiles, entire walls — leaving basic outlines that resemble a construction site. She then layers one filigreed image atop another, creating an even more complex network in which the cutouts reveal parts of the image below as well as their own faint shadows.

Although nonsensical from an architectural point of view — it's nearly impossible to discern the outline of one building from the next — the images suggest an underlying visual logic to the city. And oddly, with its close-packed, tiled roofs, it somewhat resembles the repetitive Spanish colonial masses that make up many a Southern California suburb. In this sense, Kim's seemingly arbitrary layering of different views and moments evokes the subjective ways in which we experience time and place, but also the geometric order that quietly underlies built environments everywhere.

-- Sharon Mizota

Angles Gallery, 2754 S. La Cienega Blvd., L.A., (310) 396-5019, through Feb. 12. Closed Sundays and Mondays. www.anglesgallery.com

Photo: Soo Kim, "(Trying to pull her away)," 2010. Credit: Courtesy of Angles Gallery.

An Artist's Gift of Care

Artist Soo Kim's latest series is about the act of arranging, about the impulse to create something with our hands for ourselves and for others.

Alex Paik April 3, 2023



Soo Kim, *"The grainy sound of water"* (2023), hand-cut archival pigment print, 65 x 49 x 2.5 inches (all images courtesy the artist and Anat Ebgi, Los Angeles, photos by Matthew Kroening)

LOS ANGELES — An aria is a solo piece in an opera or other large-scale vocal work. It is generally a more personal and reflective moment for the soloist that acts as an inward pause in the larger story. In a similar way, although less by choice than by circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic, Soo Kim's new show at Anat Ebgi Gallery, *Aria*, finds the artist moving away from her usual location- and researched-based practice, and instead presenting a stripped-down and deeply personal body of work.

Aria consists of five photographs of the artist arranging and rearranging primary-colored flowers, a process based off of Bas Jan Ader's experimental film *Primary Time*. Kim then cuts out portions of the photograph following the organic lines of the petals until only one of the primary colors remains. There is a sweet, elegiac quality to this work, informed by the artist's personal experience, specifically the memory of watching *Primary Time* with a friend who is now in the final stages of a terminal illness. The flowers are not only a reference to Ader's film, but also to the giving of flowers as an act of care. A text by Sarah Shun-lien Bynum is included in vinyl on the gallery wall, part of which reads:

When flowers are offered—in love, or celebration, or condolence—the power of the gift derives from its splendid impracticality: an outsized beauty that succumbs instantly to the passing of time.

The stark black backgrounds, dramatic lighting, and larger-than-life scale of the photographs enhance the work's sense of intimacy and isolation. Kim uses both real and artificial flowers in these photographs, drawing attention to the fact that the real flowers will wilt, while the artificial ones will remain in their static state. Tiny fragments of the artificial flowers can be seen in the photos, a record of the process of arranging and rearranging them. These photographs cannot be reprinted — they are one of a kind and bear slight scars from where their surfaces were pressed upon or turned as Kim cut into the image. The artist's hands are literally present in each photograph and figuratively present through the arabesque-like cut elements that accentuate the images.

All of these details work together to make this series about the act of arranging, about the impulse to create something with our hands for ourselves and for others. Making art, although a solitary exercise, is a way of acknowledging, celebrating, and caring for the personal, professional, and historical relationships that we've created for ourselves as artists. *Aria* is Soo Kim's splendidly impractical gift (to borrow from Bynum's beautiful text) to herself, to her friend, and to the viewer. It celebrates and mourns the impermanence of these relationships, a bittersweet song that lingers in the memories of others long after it has been sung.



Soo Kim, "A figure, clothed in yellow, appears and repeats the spiralling dance. Suddenly, the figure disappears" (2023), hand-cut archival pigment print, 65 x 49 x 2.5 inches



Soo Kim, "(Torches flare at various points around the space)" (2023), hand-cut archival pigment print, 65 x 49 x 2.5



Soo Kim, "(The light again grows from darkness, but now runs from right to left, shuts off)" (2023), archival pigment print, 65 x 49 x 2.5 inches



Soo Kim, “(The figure in blue breaks right to sing into the distance)” (2023), hand-cut archival pigment print, 65 x 49 x 2.5 inches

Soo Kim: Aria continues at Anat Ebqi Gallery (6150 Wilshire Blvd, Miracle Mile, Los Angeles) through April 22. The exhibition was organized by the gallery.

PHOTOGRAPHY INTO SCULPTURE: SOO KIM

By Elizabeth Stone

June 14, 2023



©Soo Kim, *Homesick for a Better World*, 2018 Installation View

I discovered Soo Kim's work while researching contemporary artists who work with photography. The meticulous craftsmanship of her unique artworks and the underlying concept immediately grabbed my attention.

Photography is a subtractive medium; what we leave out of the frame is as important as what we include. Soo takes this idea even further. With the precision of a surgeon, she physically cuts and layers photographs. The subjects of her practice are primarily architecture and cities. These busy complex scenes tend to feel a bit more vulnerable with the cut openings. The resulting objects address presence and absence and investigate the validity of the whole image. The materiality of the medium becomes significant as we look deeply at what is revealed and what has been removed in the final forms. Her works are site sensitive as the surrounding environment converses with the parts of the photograph that have been cut away. These artworks ask that we slow down and pause, and look, and keep looking.

I asked Soo Kim a few questions via email. Read below for her thoughtful responses.



©Soo Kim, *The City Beautiful* (*She pauses, thinking, sitting quite still. Her feet are bare and her shoes are placed neatly to one side. He is painting her portrait*), 2021, Three hand-cut archival pigment prints



©Soo Kim, (*The sound of panting*), 2012, Two hand-cut pigment prints



©Soo Kim (*He turns on him suddenly, reaches out a hand*), 2014 Hand-cut pigment print, acrylic lacquer



©Soo Kim, (*She keeps them in her hand*), 2010 Hand-cut chromogenic print, acrylic lacquer



©Soo Kim, (*In a natural tone*), 2011 Hand-cut chromogenic print, acrylic lacquer

Elizabeth Stone: What makes you laugh?

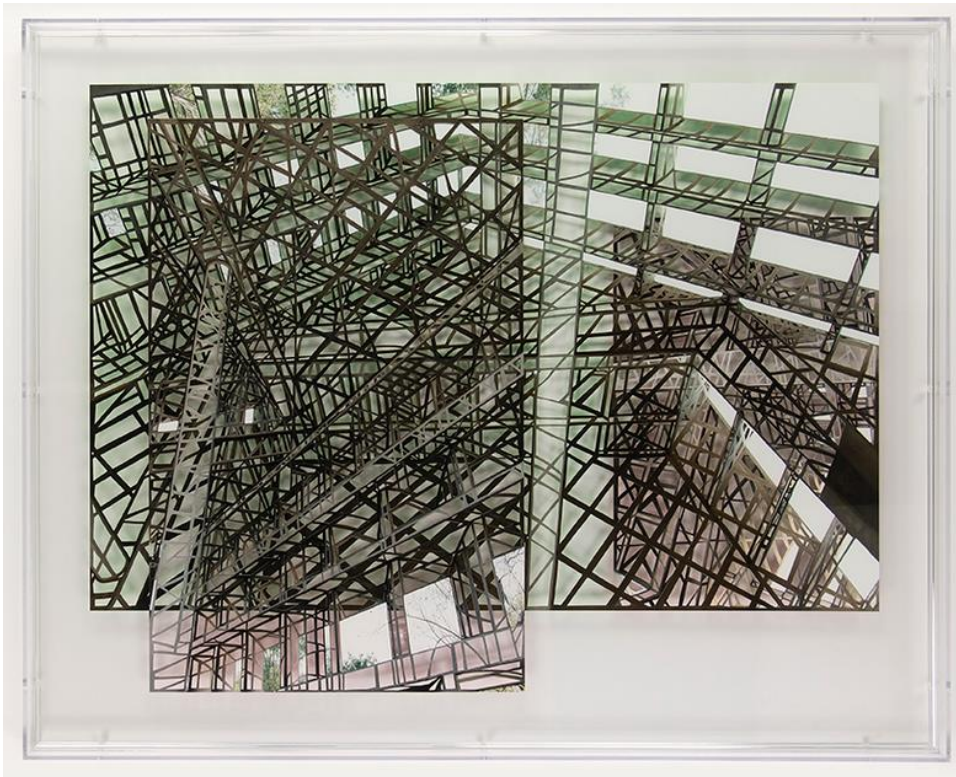
Soo Kim: The absurdity of life.

Elizabeth Stone: What is one beautiful thing today that you didn't notice yesterday?

Soo Kim: I thought as I grew older, life would become increasingly uncomplicated and straightforward and my feelings would get blunted. Today I was stroking my kid's hair and noticing the details of their latest tattoo, and felt overwhelmed by the delicacy and tenderness of them. I remember a similar feeling when they were a baby and I was a new parent. I thought my days of feeling overcome had subsided, but it hadn't at all. Perhaps I'm immature, but I'm glad that I haven't outgrown these feelings that I thought would surely be softened by the passing of time.

Elizabeth Stone: When did you grab a scalpel or Exacto knife and start cutting your prints? Was there a catalyst?

Soo Kim: I started cutting out parts of the photographic picture plane in my work around 2000. In studio visits, I often received comments about the quietness of my work, that it felt restrained. I didn't think of my work like that at all, perhaps it was a projection of my personal qualities onto the work or of certain stereotypes. I am fairly quiet and self-contained, but qualifying my work as such seemed like an assumption of an Asian female stereotype. So rather than argue against that, I wanted to address it directly and amplify the quiet restraint using a vocabulary of absence, removal, voids, silence, and subtraction in my work. I cut out parts of the picture plane in my photographs so that you would have to think about what I'd removed, what is absent, what is gone, what is silent. I was interested in how the cut-out voids operate in the picture; how they sit with and affect what remains depicted in the photograph. What is subtracted and invisible is as important as what remains. Both absence and presence have to be considered.



©Soo Kim, *The City Beautiful (She has unconsciously crossed her legs, which brings his work to a halt. He waits, patiently. She notices that he has stopped)*, 2021 Three hand-cut archival pigment prints



©Soo Kim, *The City Beautiful (She puts her letter into an envelope and seals it)*, 2020 Three hand-cut archival pigment prints of varying dimensions

Elizabeth Stone: What keeps you working?

Soo Kim: It is a great privilege to be an artist. To have found a way to think and speak through making work, and to have my work shown and seen is especially meaningful to me. The use of absences and removals in my pictures furthers the understanding and reading of the photographic image. A lot of my interests and ideas take me to places where I can think through questions of national sovereignty and the ways in which architecture shape and form communities through photographs. I feel engaged with those ideas and have much investigating to do. Over the last six years, I've produced some public art projects that have let me work with new techniques and scales, audiences, materials and site-specific spaces. That new context for my work has been really interesting.

Elizabeth Stone: Do you decide before you start cutting your photograph which areas will disappear or do you work intuitively or a little of both?

Soo Kim: The idea varies from one body of work to another. I do have a structure in mind for what information/parts of the picture gets removed but that could change over the course of the making of the works. I don't adhere to a system that is absolute. I learn while the work is in process, and in many ways my practice is mistake- driven. Those mistakes often lead me to a new direction I hadn't envisioned.

Elizabeth Stone: What do you fear?

Soo Kim: Losing the people I loved. My sister and I were my mom's caregiver for a few years. In those heartbreaking and beautiful days, my mom quietly and gently taught me that love never dies. With COVID-19, we experienced death and loss in unbelievable ways, we couldn't touch or gather, and the losses were enormous.

My last solo show, *Aria*, was comprised of photographs of a bouquet of primary colored flowers being arranged and rearranged against a black ground. Referencing Bas Jan Ader's 1974 film, *Primary Time*, the bouquet's arrangement changes from image to image, from a multicolored to monochrome bouquet. The flowers I chose were a mix of real and artificial flowers, with tiny frayed pieces of fabric from the artificial flowers remaining on the tabletop from the handling of the bouquet. Flowers are powerful; we use them for celebrations, births, and deaths, but in real life they do not last. These flowers offer their beauty while reminding us of the impermanence of life.

Elizabeth Stone: What other profession intrigues you? Why?

Soo Kim: I wish I could write poetry. I wish I could compose music. I gravitate to poetry and music because they're not visually based works. Of course, I'm most drawn to the visual.

Elizabeth Stone: Do you listen to music when you work or do you prefer the quiet?

Soo Kim: I listen to a mix of several things, and it changes all the time. I used to listen to music at times, the news at other times, shuttling between the two. Lately I find that I've been working in silence more often than not. Unfortunately, making my work requires too much focus for me listen to audio books!

Elizabeth Stone: How do you see your work evolving in the next five years?

Soo Kim: I've increasingly been thinking about how to make my practice less specific in terms of distinct bodies of work; to have those containers/divisions of works be more porous. I'd like to bring works from different bodies of work in conversation with each other together in an exhibition. Not necessarily a retrospective that spans my practice, but an exhibition where I can organize works to form specific connections and conversations, arguments and discontinuities, between work outside the specific boundaries of the time in which the works were made.



©Soo Kim, *Me and my brother*, 2009 Layered, hand-cut chromogenic prints



©Soo Kim, *(Pushes her forward, lost in thought)*, 2011, Two hand-cut pigment prints.



©Soo Kim, (*The grainy sound of water*), 2023 Hand-cut archival pigment print



©Soo Kim, *Aria*, 2023 Installation view



©Soo Kim, *In Light of the Moment*, 2012/25, hand-cut photographs, hand-bound with silkscreen cover. Text by Joshua Clover
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