

1 18.87m², 2002/2020 Red chalk

Site-specific dimensions

2 21.33m³, 2000/2020 Red cotton thread Site-specific dimensions

The Randing Intermediates -Inception Quartet, 2020 Stainless steel frame, casters, wicker, nylon, cord. stainless steel rings, artificial plants Dimensions variable

3A The Randing Intermediate -Lotus Fountain Queen Ant, 2020 188 x 145 cm

3B The Randing Intermediate -Crested Duck King, 2020 189 5 x 135 5 cm

3CThe Randing Intermediate -Open-Armed Long-Eared Monarch, 2020

214.5 x 99 cm

3D The Randing Intermediate -Open-Hearted Royal Shoulder, 2020 198 x 97 cm

4 The Fantastic Warp and Weft of a Tropical Depression, 2020 Lenticular prints Dimensions variable

The Randing Intermediates -Underbelly Alienage Duo, 2020 Stainless steel frame, casters, wicker, nylon cord, stainless steel rings, stainless steel handles, powder coating, artificial plants, chair cane, ropes Dimensions variable

5A The Randing Intermediate – Earth Alienage Rising Sporing, 2020 222 x 103 cm

5B The Randing Intermediate - Sea Alienage Fanned-Out Bang, 2020 265 x 125 cm

6 Sonic Rotating Identical Circular Twins - Brass and Nickel Plated #2. 2020

Powder-coated stainless steel frame, powder-coated mesh, ball bearings, brass and nickel plated bells, metal rings 55 x 96 x 15.5 cm

7 Sonic Rotating Identical Circular Twins - Brass and Nickel Plated #1. 2020

Powder-coated stainless steel frame. powder-coated mesh, ball bearings, brass and nickel plated bells, metal rings 55 x 96 x 15.5 cm

Totem Robots, 2010

Clothing rack, casters, light bulbs, cable, zip ties, terminal strips, grill grid, paint grid, sink strainer, metal rings, metal chains, spectacle frame, fringe, knitting yarn, hairpieces, hair roller, bells, pine cone, seashells, tea strainer, metal hangers, plastic funnels, elastic net, fishing float, aluminum reflector, darklight louver, paper clips, rubber toy animal, stainless steel hanging garment dryer, dustpan, sierra cup, tin can, price sign, felt, mirror, plexiglass, plexiglass stick, metal rack grid, clamp, mini globe, stethoscope, socket shells Dimensions variable

8A Totem Robot - Askew. 2010 188 x 107 x 102 cm

8B Totem Robot - Forward, 2010 190 x 130 x 75 cm

8C Totem Robot - Sidewise, 2010 199 x 130 x 80 cm

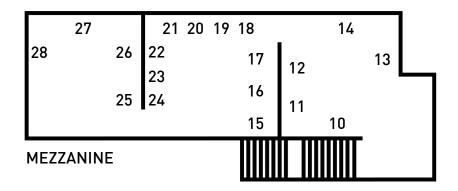
9 Genuine Cloning, 2020 Digital sound file, artificial intelligence (Typecast), voice of Haeque Yang, speakers 53:20 min., loop Dimensions variable Technical support: Neosapience, Inc. A live broadcast recording made at the Inter-Korean Summit in the Korean Demilitarized Zone on April 27, 2018 included by permission of the Presidential Office of the Republic of Korea.

a Whirlwind Structure MDF, lumber, wood glue, paint, screws, 4 parts, dimensions variable

b Refracted Canopy Fabrics (organza), aluminum hanging structures, eyelets, stainless steel rings 6 parts, dimensions variable

c Indifferent Flows 3 parts, dimensions variable

All works courtesy of the artist, unless otherwise indicated.



10 Traces of Anonymous Pupil Authors, 2001 16 b&w offset prints Fach 41.7 x 29.5 cm

11 Certificate #1, 2010 Laser print, framed 35.5 x 27 cm

12 Cutting Board Print – Yellow Ginger #1, 2012

Natural dye, 100% cotton paper, turmeric, framed $39 \times 42 \text{ cm}$

13 Social Conditions of the Sitting Table, 2001

9 color photographs, 1 text on paper (laser print), framed Each 43.7 x 55.5 cm

14 Carsick Drawings, 2006 Ink on tracing paper, framed 10 parts, each 65 x 47.6 cm

15 Hardware Store Collage – Bauhaus Levels #1, 2013 Clippings from hardware store catalogues on chromolux paper, mounted on alu-dibond, framed

16 Hardware Store Collage – Bauhaus Mirrors #1, 2013

Clippings from hardware store catalogues on French marbled paper, mounted on alu-dibond, framed

51.2 x 66.2 cm

51.2 x 51.2 cm

17 Hardware Store Collage – Bauhaus Fire Places #1, 2013

Clippings from hardware store catalogues on French marbled paper, mounted on alu-dibond, framed 51.2 x 66.2 cm

18 Non-Folding – Geometric Tipping #15, 2013

Spray paint, paper, framed 142.6 x 102.6 cm

19 Non-Folding – Geometric Tipping #7, 2013 Spray paint on paper, framed 100 x 72 cm

20 Non-Folding – Geometric Tipping #5, 2013 Spray paint on paper, framed 100 x 72 cm

21 Double Struggle Kicks – Trustworthy #229, 2013

Various security envelopes, graph paper, and sandpaper on cardboard, framed 2 parts, 72.2 x 72.2 cm; 102.2 x 102.2 cm

22 Hardware Store Collage – Bauhaus Pipes #1, 2013

Clippings from hardware store catalogues on chromolux paper, mounted on alu-dibond, framed

51.2 x 36.2 cm

23 Hardware Store Collage – Bauhaus Hand Showers and Paint Brushes #1, 2013

Clippings from hardware store catalogues on chromolux paper, mounted on alu-dibond, framed 51.2 x 71.2 cm

24 Hardware Store Collage – Bauhaus Kitchen Sinks #1, 2013

Clippings from hardware store catalogues on chromolux paper, mounted on alu-dibond, framed

51.2 x 36.2 cm

25 Hardware Store Collage – Bauhaus Paint Containers and Varnish Cans #1, 2013

Clippings from hardware store catalogues on chromolux paper, mounted on alu-dibond, framed $71.2 \times 51.2 \text{ cm}$

26 Triptych Moon – Coffee, Tea and Cacao, 2013

Screen prints, sandpaper, coffee, tea, cacao, framed 41 x 88 cm
Produced at STPI – Creative Workshop & Gallery, Singapore

27 Pepper Sheets Composition, 2019 STPI handmade mulberry paper, ground black peppers, framed 5 parts, each 78.5 x 78.5 cm Produced at STPI – Creative Workshop & Gallery, Singapore

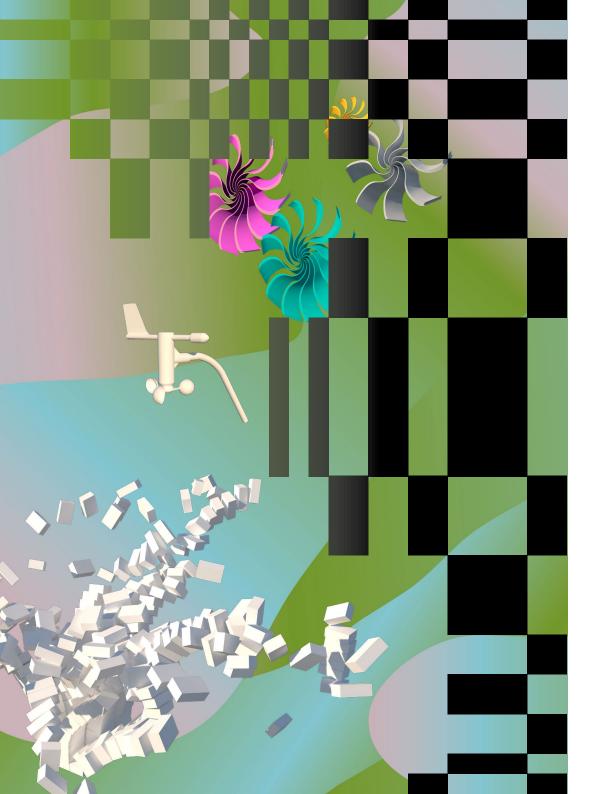
From left to right:

- A Pepper Sheets Composition in Four Gradations Linear Divisions
- B Pepper Sheets Composition in Four Gradations Diagonal Divisions
- C Pepper Sheets Composition in Four Gradations – Triangular Square Divisions
- D Pepper Sheets Composition in Four Gradations – Circular Square Divisions
- E Pepper Sheets Composition in Four Gradations – Tangential Division

28 Seasoning Papers, 2013

Screen print, STPI handmade seasoning paper, 5 powder seasonings, framed 5 parts, each 45 x 45 cm
* Ingredients: chicken curry flavor, Korean

kimchi flavor, tom yum flavor, prawn noodle flavor, char mee flavor Produced at STPI – Creative Workshop & Gallery, Singapore



The Wind that Becomes Form

Esther Lu

Haegue Yang: The Cone of Concern, Haegue Yang's first solo presentation in the Philippines, continues Yang's long-term inquiry into identity politics and diaspora, while sharing a profound sensibility, compassion and curiosity with local audiences. Instead of a resolved sense of belonging anchored between the East and the West, Yang has been investigating interconnecting agencies by using narrative and exhibition-making to build an expanding terrain, allowing for varying negotiations of border. The works featured in Haegue Yang: The Cone of Concern unfold Yang's conception of the world as informed by a manifold understanding of different cultures and art histories in a global context. Corresponding to diverse cultural elements from various origins, the exhibition reveals Yang's consistent efforts to engage and build relationships beyond differences, grounded in her sensitivity to cultural production across geography and time.

As the title suggests, *The Cone of Concern* at MCAD, assumes a humble stance in order to capture a local contextual sensibility commonly shared by coastal regions bordering the extended motion of waves. A meteorological term, the "cone of concern" indicates the forecasted route of cyclones or typhoons (specifically in the northeastern Pacific) that impact lives and livelihoods in the Philippines. Considering atmospheric phenomena as the connecting form and pattern of people's lives, the exhibition expresses empathy for a whirlwind of uncertainty. Yang interweaves cross-cultural concepts, knowledge and tradition with witty and playful language, via a large body of new sculptural production in collaboration with local artisans.

A vivid greeting to Yang's presentation finds form in the indigenous weaving pattern, binakol. Yang has translated this Filipino motif to shape wall structures across the main gallery space and to produce movement and punctuation among the displays. A neighboring installation sits to the right of the entrance: Yang's ongoing series of thread and chalk installations (21.33m³, 2000/2020 and 18.87m², 2002/2020). These works fill and measure the often-overlooked fragmentary corner space with fine horizontally stretched threads and delicate traces of precise chalk lines. Despite this unique approach to the use of space, the installation takes its conceptual and minimalistic roots from Western artistic tradition. Therefore, opening the exhibition with a surprising dialogue between two geometric forms from contrasting establishments, thoughtfully articulating and bridging a personal and cultural encounter

As a divergent view on art history, the binakol pattern from Northern Luzon, which is traditionally woven onto a blanket as a protection against malevolent spirits, has a much earlier history of creating astonishing optical illusion, through its positive and negative colored threads, than the European development of Op Art in the 1960s. Introducing this regional practice to a contemporary art exhibition—especially one that manifests a discursive trajectory by tracing geometry through art movements and personal encounters—holds up a new cultural lens in order to amend an art historical gap. Yang's gesture echoes her deep interest in figures or histories whose representation in cross-cultural contexts is often forgotten, displaced or misunderstood. At the same time, adapting this particular local textile pattern also responds to the artist's ongoing research into shamanism. The precision of these comparative readings and complex references is materialized in eloquent sculptural forms,

charging the presentation's prelude with a powerful political gesture that orients our imagination in preparation for the central artworks: a new series titled *The Randing Intermediates* (2020).

The Intermediates (2015- ongoing) was first developed towards Yang's solo exhibition Shooting the Elephant 象 Thinking the Elephant (2015) in Seoul at the Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art, and has since played a major role in her recent productions. Shaped as various imaginary creatures, the movable sculptures are intentionally made with artificial straw and synthetic materials.



Installation view of Shooting the Elephant 象 Thinking the Elephant, Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art, Seoul, South Korea, 2015. Photo: © Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art

In this way, they pay tribute to folk arts by exploring traditional straw-weaving craft from different cultures, while maintaining a distinct distance through their synthetic interpretation of materiality (insistently/obstinately denying/ declining the use of the organic). The Intermediates often assume daring shapes and funky postures, resembling the fluid and joyful sense of an alien imitation of elements. Each work blurs the divisions between lifeform, inanimate object, ancient architecture, fantasy and abstraction.

This series can perhaps be considered the successor to Yang's earlier project *Boxing Ballet* (2013-2015), which took cues from Oskar Schlemmer's *Triadisches Ballett* of the Bauhaus movement.



Installation view of Follies, manifold: Gabriel Lester - Haegue Yang, Bonner Kunstverein, Bonn, Germany, 2014. Photo: Simon Vogel

Yang further transforms and explores the relationship between body and movement through her three-dimensional language of abstraction in sculpture. The evolution of *The Intermediates* has followed Yang's exhibition itinerary, absorbing diverse cultural references while constructing a hybrid civilization on its own terms. They are not made to correspond to geographic specificities, but to roam over a new territory that leaves out differences and similarities so as to share sentiment and imagination without bias. Each sculptural figure comes with a solicitous and suggestive title, as if this narrative births an imaginary ecology.

The newly commissioned rattan sculptures, however, are not just an extended reiteration but a new generation of the series, further querying the idea of co-habitation. Alluding to the form of a storm, The Randing Intermediates (2020) are situated in the built habitat that is sensual, seasonal and imbued with a generosity of spirit. The air wings above these sculptures, flowing through the binakol-themed walls that play with illusion and visibility. It spins

out from The Fantastic Warp and Weft of a Tropical Depression (2020), a lenticular wallpaper incorporating open source 3D-rendered graphics of windmills and meteorological instruments to shine along with the audience's movement through the space. Together, these semi-works provide a tuned breeze for the new creatures that are conceived through an elaborated collaboration with a local rattan workshop over a year's production time. In this case, Yang adopted natural materials "not to be colonized by her own rules,"1 exploring its potentials and limits together with craftsmen in Manila. The dazzling outcomes of this intensive process are two sculptural groups resembling special marine and terrestrial creatures: The Randing Intermediates – Inception Quartet (2020) and The Randing Intermediates – Underbelly Alienage Duo (2020). Not sharing a homogenous character, some of their names are powerfully royal, while others are guirky and alien. They are joined by three of Yang's earlier light sculptures, Totem Robots (2010). Made of industrial goods and found objects, they compose layers of material and narrative tension on the ground. Two pairs of Sonic Rotating Identical Circular Twins (2020) are to be engaged with and activated by audiences, their bells generating a frequent sound element in Yang's work that seeks to replicate devices of transcendence used in the shamanic rituals of different cultures.

The art of Yang's narratives are concerned with much more than the spatial arrangement of art objects. Many semi-work elements are created site-specifically (such as the highly stylized walls, the layered two-tone textiles hanging at slanted angles, and the oscillating fans) to provide a habitat in which the sculptural works can be animated. Therefore, the audience's presence is carefully considered in this immersive and interactive gallery space that feels rhythmic and generative to a free flow of imagination. With all

the subtle hints on-site, audiences are invited to project stories and associations in this other world. Considering the differences between Yang's hybrid creatures and feminist theorist Donna Haraway's speculative composite animal Camille (who has a linear evolution history and struggles to survive in the future), we can appreciate the freedom underlining *The Randing Intermediates*. There is no dimension of time in this world as every generation of this species is a revolutionary self from their parents and children. They outgrow the givens to redefine banality, tradition and relation.² The artist does not provide a storyboard. The ethos of her triphibian species is to accommodate rendezvous between variations and exchanges among us. In this way, kinship-making becomes our challenge in the present tense.

Supporting further reading into Yang's artistic expression and development, the exhibition continues to the mezzanine, featuring a selection of existing two-dimensional artworks. Geometric form studies such as Non-Folding – Geometric Tippings (2012-2015) and Pepper Sheets Composition (2019), are presented with collage pieces and experimental prints including Seasoning Papers (2013) and Triptych Moon – Coffee, Tea and Cacao (2012). We can also see her conceptual exercises, such as Certificate #1 (2010-2011) and Carsick Drawings (2006). They reveal delicate and precise choices of material—the materialization of intuition in idea and approach—and the process by which Yang cultivates her vocabulary into a complex production of display.

"For me, this power of amplification is abstraction. Abstraction is not a reductionist or simplified way of thinking: it's a leap, a leap into a dimension that cannot otherwise be understood," ³ the artist once observed. Haegue Yang: The Cone of Concern presents a comprehensive introduction to navigating the world that Yang

builds via her formally powerful and conceptually complex languages. These inform the attitudes she maintains; from her appropriation of everyday objects, to the way she seeks resonance and sympathy with unfamiliar and distant places. Yang's vibrant proposal to acknowledge natural phenomena and cultural fabrics as channels of reconstructing, understanding contests the limits of our imagination and the borders of our minds with a genuine confrontation. As a much-needed leap, the embrace of *Haegue Yang: The Cone of Concern* enacts generosity by transcending cross-species barriers and national communities. By delineating the form of wind and reformulating the shape of care, Yang's manifested magical contact with art can be understood and celebrated as a form of healing.

Lu was the director of Taipei Contemporary Art Center from 2015 to 2017, and the curator of *This is not a Taiwan Pavilion* — collateral event in the 55th Venice Biennale in 2013. She has curated a number of international exhibitions and workshops in Asia and Europe. Her recent curatorial practice involves creating co-learning and innovative mediation strategies for professional workshops and audience experience. She curated *The Extra Extra Ordinary* at MCAD in 2018.

¹ From an interview with Haegue Yang, conducted by the author on 6 September 2020.

² In chapter eight ("The Camille Stories: Children of Compost") there are five generations of future symbiont Camilles that survive on earth by making kin through unexpected collaborations and combinations. Donna Haraway, Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene. [Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016], 134-168.

^{3 &}quot;Influences: Haegue Yang", in: Frieze, no. 192, Jan/Feb 2018, p. 136, also accessible online: https://www.frieze.com/article/influences-haegue-yang.



To Whom It May Concern: a response to Haegue Yang's exhibition *The Cone of Concern* in Manila, Philippines Daisy Nam

I. Concerning entanglements of empire

I begin with a story that involves a boat, a plane, a military general, an exiled politician, some bad weather, some good weather, two empires, one occupied territory, and one country divided in two. In 1942, United States Army General Douglas MacArthur failed to defend the Bataan province in the Philippines, then a U.S. territory, from the encroaching Japanese army. On March 11, MacArthur and his family boarded a boat, the PT-41, and fled. He abandoned his troops, both Filipino and American, but vowed to return to the Philippines. MacArthur recounted the escape: "The weather deteriorated steadily, and towering waves buffeted our tiny, war-weary, blacked-out vessels The boat would toss crazily back and forth . . . like [taking] a trip in a concrete mixer," perhaps an apt metaphor for the turmoil he left behind. MacArthur and his family arrived safely in Australia three days later; meanwhile, the Philippines was lost to the Japanese. A month later, the Bataan Death March began where seventy-six thousand Filipino and American soldiers were forced at gunpoint to walk over sixty-six miles as prisoners of war. MacArthur returned to the Philippines two years later in 1944.

During this time, MacArthur was a busy man meddling in international affairs, a customary activity of empire building. In August 1945, the Japanese surrendered after the U.S. dropped nuclear bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Shortly thereafter, MacArthur was appointed the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers to supervise the U.S. occupation of Japan. By then, the thirty-five-year Japanese colonial occupation ended in Korea.

In October 1945, MacArthur and Rhee Syngman, an exiled Korean politician, had a secret meeting. MacArthur smuggled Rhee back into Korea on his personal plane, named *The Bataan*. At this point, *The Bataan* serves as a symbol of ill-fated exits and arrivals. Before reentering Korea, they first arrived in a Japanese airfield greeted by American soldiers. It was a clear day. In images, the two men are seen walking arm in arm, smiling.



Rhee Syngman and General MacArthur Photo: NARA (U.S. National Archives and Archives)

Rhee took the seat as the first president of the newly formed Republic of Korea (South Korea), backed by the United States. Even though he was known to be "a dangerous mischief-maker" by the U.S. State Department and was exiled by his own countrymen, it was decided that Rhee was "their man." His fluent English and ability to speak with authority to American officers about American subjects made him a known quantity. In reality, the U.S. had effectively brought into power a dictator. Rhee ruled with authoritarianism, corruption, and violence. It has been reported that over two hundred thousand people were murdered under the claim of supposed communist allegiance during his reign from 1948 to 1960.

What are the invisible knots that tie these stories and nations—United States, South Korea, the Philippines—together? What are the aftermaths from the entanglements of empire? There are still over twenty-eight thousand U.S. troops stationed in South Korea. The Cold War hasn't ended, and North and South Korea are still divided. There were operational U.S. Naval and Army bases in the

Philippines. English is the second official language in the Philippines. There is a growing number of South Koreans living, working, and studying in the Philippines. How did we get to where we are? How do people, goods, ideas, and money circulate in these contexts? What conditions are needed for our society to operate and thrive?

I put these seemingly disparate stories side by side in order to look at history, again. These historical events are not a chain reaction, with one event naturally leading to another. Rather, they comprise a set of simultaneous conditions that create varying causes and effects, perhaps like weather systems.

II. Concerning the artist and the exhibition

The actual lead character in this story is artist Haegue Yang. The main event of interest is Yang's solo exhibition Haegue Yang: The Cone of Concern, presented by the Museum of Contemporary Art and Design (MCAD) in Manila, capital city of the Philippines. Haegue Yang, born in South Korea in 1971, never met the aforementioned cast of historical characters. But the consequences of their actions have altered the geopolitical landscape, and the effects are felt on a daily basis. In her work, Yang has followed social, cultural, artistic, political, and physical movements. Her research has been translated through her own particular aesthetic and visual language. Her formal approach builds systems and relationships between materials, shapes, forms, and everyday objects (she has been known to use and integrate household items such as window blinds, baskets, fans, or wheeled clothing racks in her sculptures and installations) that provoke emotions, generate unfamiliar associations, and stimulate thought. Yang has extensively researched cultural figures.

particularly those who embody a complex history of displacement and migration vis-à-vis colonialism, such as writer Marguerite Duras born in French Indochina or, Korean writer Suh Kyung-sik born in Japan, (who was influenced by the Jewish Italian writer and Holocaust survivor Primo Levi , and Palestinian refugee and writer Ghassan Kanafani). In works that span several series, installations, and projects, she draws together divergent materials, time frames, ideas, and narratives not as didactic history lessons but as open-ended questions. In this way, I am reminded of the approach of "talking nearby" that filmmaker and post-colonial theorist Trinh T. Minh-ha practices. She writes of "speaking that does not objectify, does not point to an object... a speaking that reflects on itself and can come close to a subject without seizing or claiming it. A speaking...whose closures are only moments of transition opening up to the other possible moments of transition." ³

For Haegue Yang: The Cone of Concern, as well as the 2019 exhibition In the Cone of Uncertainty at the Bass Museum of Art in Miami Beach, both conceived in tandem, the inspiration for these exhibitions was not a singular historical figure or event but, rather, the dynamics that interplay in a larger system. Her ongoing investigations of the complexities of imperialism, colonialism, and modern nation-states are seen through the more amorphous schema of weather. Yang has said that her "interest [is] in how colonial history affects and transforms us. Even if colonization takes shape differently now than in the past, it's quite present in the stream of power around us, like the air we breathe." And yet the air that surrounds us in our atmosphere, is not visible—we cannot see these particles, even if they sustain our every breath. So, then, how does one represent the unrepresentable? How do we come to know and believe the things we cannot see?

In Haegue Yang: The Cone of Concern, there are several

commissions and site-responsive works that feature an installation, lenticular wall piece, and rattan sculptures. The exhibition is the staging ground for interrelated dynamics, much like a weather system in formation. Each of the works is discrete, but they speak to and affect one another. As installation, the works operate in multiple registers—visually, phenomenologically, and conceptually. There are older works also included in the exhibition that complement the "weather works," such as Yang's series of prints. While these appear as geometric abstractions, they employ food as material to examine taste as an international system of goods, spices, and flavors. In Seasoning Papers (2013), the artist uses powdered seasonings with flavors like chicken curry, Korean kimchi, tom yum, prawn noodle, and char mee; or Triptych Moon: Coffee, Tea and Cacao (2013), which is made with the titular ingredients; or Pepper Sheets Composition (2019), made with ground black pepper. Throughout the exhibition, Yang pulls together seemingly different objects and systems to create "moments of concern" that spark curiosity, intrigue, and even worry.

III. Concerning a Cone

The word *concern* has a number of definitions: it can mean a worry or interest, usually involving a personal tie or relationship; a commercial enterprise; a state of blended interest and uncertainty; or the state of being involved. In terms of weather, a "cone of concern" is a forecasting model that tracks the path of a tropical storm's center. The width of the cone is determined by collecting two-thirds of historical forecast errors over a five-year sample. The data is translated into a visual rendering that is placed onto a map, then broadcast to the public. People can then prepare for an impending storm, depending on where they are located according to this cone and the map. The cone, however, does not

show the size of the storm nor does it measure the storm's impacts. Destruction from wind, rainfall, and flooding can happen outside the cone, and mostly does. The conditions of damage result in the wake of these tropical storms. Perhaps, therefore, the consideration should be not whether we are inside or outside the cone but what the effects and repercussions of the storm are. If this information were told differently or represented in a different format, would people be more concerned? Would we worry more about our neighbors, or neighboring towns, cities, and countries? Would we care more?

IV. Concerning movement and craft

A slight breeze circulates through MCAD's main exhibition hall activating a multi-work installation by Haegue Yang. Air flows from overhead fans in a sensorial element⁵ titled *Indifferent Flows* (2020) that rustle the textiles in another element titled *Refracted Canopy* (2020). Purple and magenta organza drape from the ceiling at slanted intervals as if the artist was writing an "X" in the air. The recurring form and concept of Yang's blinds series, in which the venetian blinds' slats produce oblique views, is articulated here through the slanted transparent layers of fabric. There is a perceptual shift with the movement of the fabric, much like when a passing cloud changes the light in the sky. With the moving air, ideas also float through the space; we breathe them in, and we feel them with our bodies. We feel while seeing.

The works on display in the hall play with flatness, dimensionality, and movement. Four large wooden wall partitions titled Whirlwind Structures (2020) break up the voluminous exhibition space to create three bays. The semi-open grid pattern of squares and rectangles allows viewers to partially see through the partitions. Their construction, with its scaffolding and supporting

legs, is left exposed as if it were a stage set. Or perhaps there is a reference to the crescendo of a wave with its triangular shape. The geometric grid pattern may seem familiar. Known as binakol, this distinctive pattern from the Ilocos region in northern Philippines, consists entirely of straight lines that create optical illusions of curves and volumes. Binakol translates as "to do a sphere," but the lines do much more than that. The pattern emanates a dynamic sense of movement—the sphere radiates, pulsates, and expands. It has been said that the pattern represents the wind (alipugpog), waves, or whirlpools (kusikus). Among indigenous people, textiles like binakol are protective, their dizzying designs meant to trap or ward off evil spirits.



The Fantastic Warp and Weft of a Tropical Depression (2020)

The binakol patterning of Whirlwind Structures continues as a two-dimensional graphic rendering merging with the wall piece The Fantastic Warp and Weft of a Tropical Depression (2020). The wall piece is a lenticular print divided into three sections and individually installed in each of the bays. With lenticular technology, the image changes and moves when viewed from different angles. The Fantastic Warp and Weft of a Tropical Depression contains an amalgam of graphic illustrations with no apparent narrative or storyline. We see various renderings of objects that appear to float through the background as if in zero gravity. These stock images were found using the key word "energy" with open-source repositories on 3D applications.

Purposefully abstracted and depicted in varying scales, the print's comic-book quality is augmented by the colorful palette that elicits whimsy. In the second bay, we spot swirls, a cyclone, the aerial view of the eye of a storm, a compass, or paper airplanes. In the third bay, the illustrations turn darker, depicting perhaps the mushroom cloud of an atomic bomb or particles after an explosion. The binakol pattern whirls through the entirety of the wall piece. Drawing from the graphic renderings of the cone of concern used in meteorological forecasting, they compel us to imagine or to be concerned. Tropical depressions, as mentioned in the work's title, become tropical storms when winds and air movement become stronger. At what point do tropical depressions enter our psyches? What if, instead of reacting to things with fear, we used our imagination and sense of curiosity? Could we ward off these threats with binakol patterns?

With Whirlwind Structures and The Fantastic Warp and Weft of a Tropical Depression, Yang creates moments of concern through the use of binakol, a familiar pattern employed for the associative qualities that Filipino audiences would recognize. Binakol-patterned textiles were made for the home and used as blankets for ceremonial occasions in northern Philippines. Art historian David Joselit, in his recent book Heritage and Debt: Art in Globalization, writes that "the reactivation of heritage [is] a resource for inventing alternate genealogies of modernism and diverse experiences of contemporaneity." Along these lines, Yang reshuffles the hierarchy and the canon of what we know as the pinnacle of modernism. In art history, the elevated space of modernism is reserved mostly for paintings by men in the West, such as Kazimir Malevich, Piet Mondrian, and later Josef Albers. Slowly, women have entered the canon with Bridget Riley, Anni Albers, and others. Yang foregrounds the geometric patterns made by women weavers with their complex and mathematical

patterning of binakol, all done on a pedal loom dating back to the 1400s in Asia, hundreds of years before what we know in the West as geometric modernism or abstraction. The hierarchy of "advanced" technologies is also challenged. Yang's wall piece uses lenticular lenses, while the other pattern is made by the age-old weaver's loom. Both create visuals that depict movement and convey the sensation of motion; when installed together these elements wrap the viewer in an immersive environment. The power of the materials exceeds their original forms of textiles, and is interpreted through Yang. Through her integration into her own visual language, she offers a new reading and interpretation. Our sense of modernism widens. Our sense of what art can be widens. The cone of concern widens.

V. Concerning creatures of curves

Near the wall piece and partitions, totem-like sculptures are gathered around like a band of fellow travelers. Two sets of sculptures commissioned for the exhibition, The Randing Intermediates-Inception Quartet (2020) and The Randing Intermediates-Underbelly Alienage Duo (2020), are made of rattan. Neighboring these are Yang's Totem Robots from 2010. Rattan can be bent and shaped through a process that makes it pliable enough to be woven. Randing is a technique of utilizing a single reed to weave alternately under and then over the stake, or skeleton structure, which here is a metal frame. Whereas the binakol patterns consist of straight lines to create an illusion of curves, rattan creates physical dimensionality. Yang's fantastical rattan creatures take full advantage of the possibilities of the material, with multiple spheres, curves, and loops. For these sculptures, Yang worked with Filipino artisans, relying on their expertise with these techniques, subverting the role of artist as expert into artist

as learner.7

Rattan is a familiar material used in furniture and other household items. It is also a popular export item, and even nicknamed "manila" after the Philippine capital, reiterating the dynamics of exchange and global circulation. European colonists since the 1600s brought back rattan goods to their home countries. Rattan furniture was especially popular in the late 1800s and early 1900s, and was ubiquitous in Victorian parlors that typically also included palm trees to add to the exotic mise-en-scène. In the 1960s, the Manila chair—or Peacock chair, as it was also referred to due to the rounded backrest resembling the bird's feathers—became iconic in the United States. One report traces the



Huey P. Newton Photo: National Archives

Peacock chair to the Bilibid Prison in Manila, where the incarcerated population was tasked with weaving home furnishings from weeds and rattan. Later, it became a symbol of countercultural resistance. The best-known image is from 1967 featuring Black Panther Party cofounder Huey P. Newton wearing a beret and seated in a Peacock chair that resembles a throne flanked by traditional African shields, while he holds a rifle and a spear. Newton in this chair evoked a sense of power, one with deep histories and legacies of another land and time. Material, even rattan, can hold and communicate meaning.

If an exotic bird like a peacock can be fashioned into a rattan chair that is then internationally circulated as an icon, can a duck, or an ant, or a sea cucumber do the same? In Yang's *The Randing Intermediate* series, sculptures resemble animals. The sculptures are

made of familiar material, and resemble animals that we feel we have seen before, yet we do not know exactly what they are or what they do. The titles of the works offer some hints: Lotus Fountain Queen Ant, Crested Duck King, Open-Armed Long-Eared Monarch, Open-Hearted Royal Shoulder, Earth Alienage Rising Sporing, and Sea Alienage Fanned-Out Bang. They have wheels, but are they meant to be spun? What are they trying to communicate? In this space of ambiguity, Yang creates another moment of concern. The Randing Intermediates evoke semi-recognition, slight apprehension, much curiosity, and endless possibilities. The duck test—that is, if it walks like a duck and quacks like a duck, it's a duck—which is used in logic exercises for abductive reasoning, implies that an unknown subject can be identified by observing the subject's habitual characteristics. That logic does not hold here. The sculptures are part animal, part human, part plant, part alien, or even related to robots, like the nearby Totem Robots. These hybrid sculptures spark the imagination. They ask for new rituals to be made, new forms to be generated, new behaviors to be enacted

VI. Concerning a birdsong and a voice

I end with a song and a voice. In the exhibition space, we hear Yang's sound work, *Genuine Cloning* (2020). The artist's own voice is replicated through artificial intelligence technology, in which audio data is used to train the system to create an artificial voice that copies the speaking style and tone. The artificial and genuine voice is nearly indiscernible. We hear the voice, but we do not know who it belongs to. It could be the artist, or the AI, or her unconscious, or even our unconscious. The disembodied voice whispers a series of philosophical musings and monologues. The voice questions its own ontology throughout sonic work perhaps as a way to challenge authenticity. The voice rhetorically asks, "am I

an infinite life force?" and "what language did I learn, and how did I learn it?," and later questions, "am I an identity that never grows old? An immutable identity?." As we attempt to identify who or what the voice is, she is one step ahead by examining the process and purposes of nomenclature, which is perhaps similar to the need to authenticate as well. "Name play," she warns us, "appears also to be a kind of power. Through 'name play' or 'name job,' the human world not only circulates meanings, but also authorizes the beings that it recognizes." As an example, she uses the naming of typhoons, continuing her interest in weather as a schema, incisively saying, "you give a typhoon a name, and then treat it like a monster."

In between each soliloguy are birdsongs. The voice as verbal speech and avian song as non-verbal are purposefully placed side by side to question the hierarchies of communication and language. The audio is taken from a live broadcast recording of the 2018 Inter-Korean Summit at the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) as the North and South Korean leaders Kim Jong-un and Moon Jae-in privately conversed on a footbridge. During the thirty-minute conversation, only the chirping of birds and the faint clicking of cameras were recorded. The historic Summit took place over seventy years after the DMZ was formed in 1945 under the governance of Rhee Syngman, when the United States and the Soviet Union decided to divide Korea "for administrative purposes" at the 38th parallel. The presence of the voice in Genuine Cloning resonating throughout the space is juxtaposed with deliberate silence of the leaders' conversation that we cannot hear, almost like the secret meeting with General MacArthur and Rhee. Silence and the withholding of communication- one that disappears into the ether- is a source of power. We will never know what these leaders are saying in secret, nor do we know what the birds are

singing. We do not know what will happen, like we don't know which way the wind will blow. Are we bound by the decisions of these two men, or any governmental officials or entities? The voice of *Genuine Cloning* provides one possible answer for us, "I don't want to live like something that is fixed. I will evolve." If covert communication is used as power, we, too, can push the thresholds of language and communication. Like the birds and their songs that freely travel between North and South Korea, or typhoons that traverse national borders, or air that circulates in the atmosphere, we can aspire to be boundless, by perpetual shifting and moving with song, voice and thought.

Daisy Nam is the curator at Ballroom Marfa, a contemporary art space located at the borderlands of West Texas. From 2015–19 she was Assistant Director at the Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, Harvard University; from 2008–2015, for seven seasons, curated and produced public programming as Assistant Director of Public Programs at the School of the Arts, Columbia University. She holds an MA in Curatorial and Critical Studies from Columbia University, and a BA in Art History and Cinema Studies, New York University. She has taught at RISD, and lectured at Lesley University, Northeastern, SMFA/Tufts as visiting critic. She is currently co-curating a programming series 2020 Talks, as well as co-editing a forthcoming publication with Paper Monument in Fall 2020.

¹ Max Hastings, The Korean War, (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, c.1987), 33.

² ibid

³ Nancy N. Chen, "'Speaking Nearby': A conversation with Trinh T. Minh-ha," Visual Anthropology Review, 8 No.1 (Spring 1992):87

⁴ T.K. Demos, Interview with Haegue Yang, in Accommodating the Epic Dispersion. (Munich: Walther Koenig in association with Haus der Kunst, 2013), 229.

⁵ The artist uses the term "element" to describe factors that affect the environment of the installation, but are not considered stand-alone works of art.

⁶ David Joselit, Heritage and Debt: Art in Globalization (OCTOBER Books). (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2020), xvii. 7 Expert and learner roles have been an interest of the artist. In 2009-2010, Yang was the artist-in-residence at the Walker Art Center, and organized a series of workshops called Shared Discovery of What We Have and Know Already. In one particular workshop, she questions the idea of the "whole expert" and has a series of learner-to-learner exchanges.



The Cone of Concern

One of the most widely shown artists of her generation in the world today, Haegue Yang has been producing a form of conceptual language and aesthetic vocabulary throughout her career, one that continues to evolve through wide-reaching relationships and continuous dialogue. Her engagement is thus decidedly non-binary, tending towards the unsettling of ideas, concepts and forms she previously sought to establish. These complex turns of cogitation are evinced through her deft handling of materials which can be understood within the modernist language of 'found objects, 'the 'ready-made' and everyday object. Yang has further widened the vocabulary of form and scale from within the parameters of traditional craft production. Her interest in phenomena also foregrounds the exhibition, placing a complex layer of objects— woven anthropomorphic sculptures, light sculptures, rotating sound bells, whirlwind-derived structures, textile canopies and sound elements—against a lenticular print backdrop of a digitally altered meteorological image.

The title of the exhibition, Haegue Yang: The Cone of Concern, for its part, refers to a graphic tool for weather forecasting which especially traces the path of an oncoming storm or tropical depression By overlaying circles on areas that could possibly be in the range of effect or path of a hurricane, cyclone or typhoon, resulting in a graphic image of a cone, one can try to anticipate which geographical mass will be affected in the coming days. What we learn from this forecasting modeling graphic is that the further we travel towards the future, the more our ability to predict it becomes uncertain. This fundamental view found in chaos theory proposes that the degree of uncertainty increases exponentially within the parameters that dictate our future against our civilizational will. This system built to predict the path of a typhoon presents how the human will attempts to confront the character of natural phenomena. The artistic proposal in the midst of this constellation is to draw out the metaphoric towards the notion of

solidarity amongst those of us facing difficult circumstances, and with human imagination, understand our very own condition in the universe.

Yang often pairs exhibitions in secret, and in some cases, allows the seepage of concepts by having certain elements flow seamlessly from one exhibition to another despite the geo-political differences and seemingly irrelevant or remote circumstances. Similar to the idea of chaos theory, this method draws attention to how things are connected through commonly shared uncertainties and concerns. In this case, Yang has paired Haegue Yang: The Cone of Concern at MCAD with The Cone of Uncertainty at The Bass, Miami Beach, Florida. The two exhibitions allude to weather-specific phenomena that hugely concern the regions and their populations where both institutions are located. As an outsider, Yang sees the possibility of collaboration and a sense of community being built around difficulties faced together.

Occupying the longest wall space of the main gallery is the lenticular wall piece *The Fantastic Warp and Weft of a Tropical Depression* (2020), a large panoramic mural in three parts. Populated with motifs in 3D graphic quality, the work has images floating in an undefined expanse, swirling in an extraordinary color scheme that depicts a projected imaginary of a post-human space through the digital manipulation, and illustration of colors and symbols like wind speed, directionals, temperature, weather fronts, atmospheric pressure, isotherms taken from meteorological maps. By employing the technique of lenticular printing as the carrier for the image, there is an attempt to create a low-tech slapstick-like animation, generating the illusion of depth and movement. This effect is, however, only activated when the viewers walk alongside the mural, changing their perspective of the piece.

The new commissions are inspired by encountering things, as well as through observation and various conversations during the

artist's multiple visits to Manila. Haegue Yang: The Cone of Concern also demonstrates influences from weaving patterns of traditional Philippine textiles, especially the whirlwind pattern of the binakol from Ilocos, which are present in structures that formally delineate the space of the museum. Yang was initially struck by the similarity of the whirlwind pattern with motifs found in many 60s Op Art pieces. This unexpected overlap of ornamental/ optical abstraction both in Western art history as well as in local ethnic craft tradition captured Yang's attention: how some things can exist as seemingly unrelated doppelgangers across histories and cultures. The artist, however, continues to be critical of her aesthetic orientation as one still tainted by a largely dominant Western perspective, and this in large part feeds her fascination with the pattern. Her obsession with the whirlwind composition that appears in the binakol weave is reflected in her decision to utilize the same wall design as those found here, but in different structures at her solo exhibition at Tate St Ives (Strange Attractors, Tate St Ives: 24 October 2020 - 03 May 2021), UK. This approach is typical for Yang's practice, as she collapses distance in place and time through imaginary and/or conceptual leaps through the simultaneous presence of things across distances.

The language of weaving continues in the six free-standing handwoven rattan sculptures developed between the studio in Seoul and the workshop in Manila. The ensemble is made up of two groups, the first set titled Randing Intermediates – Inception Quartet; and the other, – Underbelly Alienage Duo. These two groups of anthropomorphic-sized sculptures present hybrid creatures, with the first set of Intermediates characterised by being upright with animalesque and arthropod-like features, while the Alienage Duo references sea creatures. Resembling a duck, or an ant, some incorporated with artificial plants, others adorned with capiz shells, the sculptures bring to mind fairytales, mythology, Korean animism, Cuban Santeria, Haitian voodoo. While the artist has used weaving as critical inquiry into the notion of folk as a conventional term to define identity and belonging as being

something fixed and given, the *Randing Intermediates* describes a new sculptural category, which is more authentic in the sense that it hews closest to the traditional practice of weaving. Randing is derived from the most basic weaving technique which uses a single rod as the main stake around which the rest of the material is woven around. The weaving terminology found amid the exhibition brings out, through the artist's complex intertwining of ideas, materials and traditions under the phenomena of weather, a temperamental and all-encompassing natural phenomenon that speaks a language understood across countries and populations. As Yang sees it, "phenomena are autonomous beings with their own logic of existence ... imbued with powers of association." 1

Also present in the exhibition are her *Totem Robots* from 2011 when her works, informally referred to as light sculptures, reached their climax. The three works presented here, *Totem Robot - Askew, - Forward,* and *- Sidewise,* are part of a larger body of 33 sculptures collectively titled *Warrior Believer Lover,* which was presented as a single installation in her *Arrivals* exhibition at Kunsthaus Bregenz, Austria. The robotic quality of this work is simulated with the use of light devices such as reflectors, cheap and trivial objects like hairpieces, a sink strainer, metal rings, metal chains, paper clips, dustpans, a mini globe, stethoscope, among various others.

Alongside the artist's anthropomorphic configurations are works with a parallel investment in geometry and ornamentation. Yang's affinity for these forms are due to her resistance to binary models, and considers geometry and ornamentation in modern and ancient thought as having both rational and spiritual orientations. The artist sees the connections that flow across these two systems as defiant of presumed binarist equations. In the new production of her wall-mounted sculptures, Sonic Rotating Identical Circular Twins – Brass and Nickel Plated #1 (2020), for example, the circle is expressed and activated through its rotation, while the many bells contained within the disc lend the object its

sonic element. The metallic rattle of rolling bells produces a silvery sound that calls to mind a Korean shaman's ritual.

The mezzanine floor presents her graphic works, set against angled wall structures that appear set to tilt, threatening to topple an otherwise formal space into disarray. The space is sectioned by slanted structures that echo the folds of origami, their angles unsettling our navigation through the exhibition, but also our engagement with the work, as the artist says of these structures which she first used in Bregenz, "... (it) enables a different type of hanging...there is an empty space below the work. Seeing this empty space and its effect was a liberating moment for me."

Yang also chose to share prints made in collaboration with the Singapore Tyler Print Institute (STPI), an institution known for their paper production and printmaking workshop, and their residencies that encourage artists to experiment with techniques in printmaking. During her residency, Yang developed prints that incorporated spices and natural plants, as well as various eatables. The prints found in this section reflect both colonial as well as contemporary history around spice, food and eating, with the artist once again blurring the definitions between natural and industrial. Amongst the prints in this section is a monoprint with tiny indentation marks showing through a yellow haze. Cutting Board Print - Yellow Ginger #1 (2012) is done through a printing process of vegetables sliced directly on paper, revealing another of Yang's recurring gestures of having material residue hinting at the process. If her Non-Folding – Geometric Tipping prints offer up a ghost of the process, with Cutting Board Print, the golden glow merely hints at it, if at all.

Surrounding all the works in the exhibition in a seeming embrace is a sound piece transmitted through a polygonal fixture which the artist calls a *Sound Fruit*, the most current and non-material amongst Yang's oeuvre. Working with sound has given Yang the opportunity to add her voice, although one altered and manipulated

using AI technology. Thus the sound is at the same time hers, and not hers, with the disembodied sound taking on a number of different accents, lilts and personalities, it is everyone and no one, an identity scrubbed by the overlay of inorganic voices. These overlapping voices are similar to her use of bird songs recorded from DMZ to pervade the space, nature as a silent observer, but an ever present backdrop to the vicissitudes of the human condition.

- Joselina Cruz

³ Regarding the Non-Folding Geometric prints: "...Yang spray-painted them during different stages of the production process, so that what we see are the negative images of the shapes on paper sheets beneath them. They become 'origami dust', a constellation of shapes that have vanished like deadstars. ...reduced to an image, a two-dimensional projection, so that process becomes inaccessible. The work offers just a ghost of – or nostalgia for – process..." from Falquieres ,Patricia. "A Dance Lesson at the Aubette", ibid., 257.



¹ Doryun Chong, "A Less Small Dictionary (For HY)." in Haegue Yang: Anthology 2006-2018: Tightrope Walking and Its Wordless Shadow, ed. Bruna Roccasalva (Italy: Skira, 2019), 118.

² Yilmaz Dziewor, "Arrived, 2011," in Haegue Yang: Anthology 2006-2018: Tightrope Walking and Its Wordless Shadow, ed. Bruna Roccasalva (Italy: Skira, 2019), 201.



1-2



3A-3D

1 18.87m², 2002/2020

2 21.33m³, 2000/2020

The Randing Intermediates – Inception Quartet, 2020

3A The Randing Intermediate – Lotus Fountain Queen Ant, 2020

3B The Randing Intermediate – Crested Duck King, 2020

3CThe Randing Intermediate – Open-Armed Long-Eared Monarch, 2020

3D The Randing Intermediate – Open-Hearted Royal Shoulder, 2020



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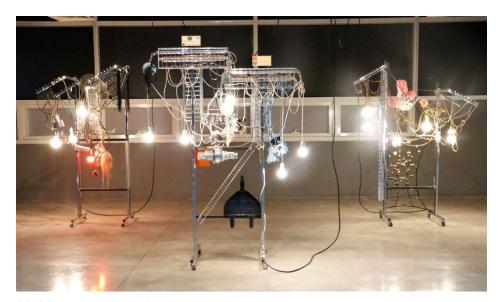


5A-5B

4 The Fantastic Warp and Weft of a Tropical Depression, 2020

The Randing Intermediates – Underbelly Alienage Duo, 2020 **5A** The Randing Intermediate – Earth Alienage Rising Sporing, 2020 **5B** The Randing Intermediate – Sea Alienage Fanned-Out Bang, 2020 **6** Sonic Rotating Identical Circular Twins – Brass and Nickel Plated #2, 2020

7 Sonic Rotating Identical Circular Twins – Brass and Nickel Plated #1, 2020



8A-8C



10

Totem Robots, 2010

8A Totem Robot – Askew, 2010

8B Totem Robot - Forward, 2010

8C Totem Robot - Sidewise, 2010

10 Traces of Anonymous Pupil Authors, 2001

11 Certificate #1, 2010

12 Cutting Board Print – Yellow Ginger *#1*, 2012

13 Social Conditions of the Sitting Table, 2001

14 Carsick Drawings, 2006

15 Hardware Store Collage – Bauhaus Levels #1, 2013







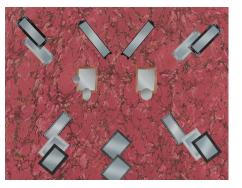
13



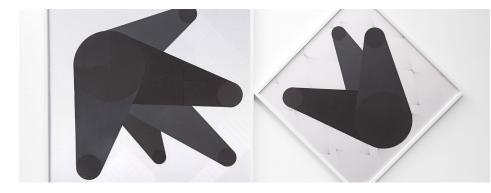


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14







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16 Hardware Store Collage – Bauhaus Mirrors #1, 2013

17 Hardware Store Collage – Bauhaus Fire Places #1, 2013

18 Non-Folding – Geometric Tipping *#15*, 2013

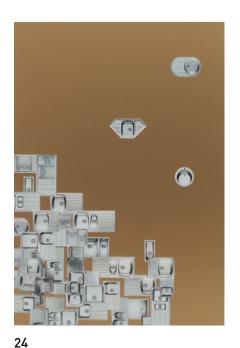
19 Non-Folding – Geometric Tipping *#7*, 2013

20 Non-Folding – Geometric Tipping #5, 2013

21 Double Struggle Kicks – Trustworthy #229, 2013

22 Hardware Store Collage – Bauhaus *Pipes #1*, 2013

23 Hardware Store Collage – Bauhaus Hand Showers and Paint Brushes #1, 2013





27











28



26

24 Hardware Store Collage – Bauhaus Kitchen Sinks #1, 2013

25 Hardware Store Collage – Bauhaus Paint Containers and Varnish Cans #1, 2013

26 Triptych Moon - Coffee, Tea and Cacao, 2013

From left to right:

A Pepper Sheets Composition in Four Gradations – Linear Divisions

B Pepper Sheets Composition in Four Gradations – Diagonal Divisions

C Pepper Sheets Composition in Four Gradations – Triangular Square Divisions
D Pepper Sheets Composition in Four Gradations – Circular Square Divisions

E Pepper Sheets Composition in Four Gradations – Tangential Division

28 Seasoning Papers, 2013

27 Pepper Sheets Composition, 2019



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PUBLIC PROGRAMS (ONLINE)

Talk by Rita Nazareno on the process of collaborating with Haegue Yang 28 Oct, 3PM

Observation Series

- 1) Gabby Lichauco 12 Nov. 3 PM
- 2) Padma Perez 19 Nov. 3 PM
- 3) Rico Entico 26 Nov. 3 PM

Humanizing Climate: A Panel Discussion with PAGASA, Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities, OML Center and Manila Observatory 12 January, 3PM

Artists and Environment: A Conversation with Norberto Roldan and Erwin Romulo 26 January, 3 PM

Upcycling Domestic Objects: A Workshop 20 February, 1PM

Textile Workshop with PTRI 27 February, 2PM

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