

Overcoming the Modern
Dansaekhwa: The Korean Monochrome Movement

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Chung Sang-hwa
Ha Chong-hyun
Hur Hwang
Lee Dong-Youb
Lee Ufan
Park Seo-bo
Yun Hyong-keun

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Alexander Gray Associates

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In the 1967 March issue of *Sato Garo Geppo*, the newsletter of the Sato Gallery in Tokyo, Lee Ufan published the article *The Aesthetics of Self Contradiction*, in which he criticized the conflation of national identity and cultural production.² The article portrayed a candid image of a young Lee grappling with his national background and his profession, “A Korean versus an artist.”³ Approximately ten years earlier, after only a few months spent as an art student at Seoul National University, Lee abruptly left his native Korea for Tokyo, where he studied philosophy at Nihon University. By the time he published the aforementioned article, he had already received acclaim as an artist and critic among Japanese and Korean intellectuals. Lee Ufan’s struggle with notions of belonging, national identity, and artistic innovation is emblematic of the concerns shared by many of his contemporaries at this time. It is this very attempt to generate new paths of artistic expression resulting from a negotiation with local cultural specificity, and a Western notion of modernity that defined what came to be known as *Dansaekhwa*, or Korean Monochrome Painting.

The Republic of Korea (est. 1948), only eight years old when Lee left for Japan, was a result of escalating Cold War antagonism between the Soviet Union and the United States in the aftermath of the Second World War. Since its inception, the country had gone through a major war with its northern half and had suffered through immense economic difficulty. Most of the 1960s and 1970s saw Korea under the authoritarian rule of military strongman Park Chung-hee who, while advancing capitalism and investing in a wealthier but politically suppressed middle class, stifled the voice of the opposition that was discontent with the cost paid by the impoverished classes due to unbridled economic growth. These pressing social and political issues were to underline the conceptual framework of several artistic movements within the young republic such as the Korean Monochrome Painting and would eventually dictate the formal and stylistic characteristics that artists would adopt.

Korea was equally impacted by Japanese Colonial Rule from 1910 until 1945. In the course of nearly four decades, and in an attempt to justify imperial rule, the Japanese authorities tried to destroy all evidence of a distinctly Korean culture. The Japanese sought to eradicate any notion of “Koreanness” by censoring publications, suspending Korean language newspapers, forcing the adoption of Japanese family names, annexing land,

drafting Koreans into the Japanese military and labor camps, collecting and destroying historical materials and archives, and tampering with and inventing archeological evidence. This episode would re-emerge decades later and remain profoundly attached to the discussion around Korean modernism, in particular the school of *Dansaekhwa*.

Such were the times in which Lee Ufan and many of his contemporaries were raised. While only some of them experienced first-hand the harsher years of the last episode of colonial rule, they had all lived through the Korean War and the severe poverty that ensued. In any event, they most certainly felt the grip of Park Chung-hee's totalitarian rule throughout the 1960s and 1970s. Some art historians have ascribed the *Dansaekhwa* artists' adoption of abstraction to a conscious rejection of the figurative styles that were often simplistically coerced by the State into becoming a mouthpiece for political propaganda. Ironically, in the mid-1970s and well into the 1980s, it was exactly the monochrome painters' use of abstraction, seen by many critics and curators as an expression of a contemporary art form that was uniquely Korean, that positioned the group as the State's choice *du jour* when using the art exhibition as a tool for cultural diplomacy. Such exhibitions were almost always primarily constructed around a "tacit will to redefine the idea of a contemporary Korean art, to play author so to speak. The exhibition offers a tempting chance of testing one's powers and asserting one's cultural authority."⁴ That was the case, for instance, with the *Secondes Rencontres Internationales d'Art Contemporain* held in Paris in 1978 where the participating Korean artists, most of whom belonged to the Korean Monochrome Painting Movement, were fully sponsored by the Ministry of Culture and Information. Such favoritism implied a flagrant preference on behalf of the authorities and was heavily criticized by those who were excluded and therefore lacked access to the same opportunities of international exposure. However, not all discontent was driven by a desire for inclusiveness. Some, such as the critic Won Dong-suk, considered *Dansaekhwa* to be completely disconnected from "the realities and the sensibilities of the people."⁵ Other critiques echoed the frustration felt by Lee Ufan in his 1968 article over the framing of cultural and artistic merit within national representation. For instance, when reflecting on the *Secondes Rencontres Internationales d'Art Contemporain*, Paris-based sculptor Chung Bo-won wrote, "Why frame the show, basically a gathering of individual outlooks and tastes, in terms of grand tropes of race or tradition?"⁶

Poignant as it is, the discussion surrounding the Korean Monochrome Movement is not limited to its political alignment and intent. There has been also an ongoing debate about its artistic ascription and authorship. Lee Ufan, Park Seo-bo, Kim Whan-ki, Kwon Young-woo, Lee Dong-Youb, Yun Hyong-keun and many of their peers were operating in a fast-changing world; one that was breaking free from the fetters of the past while trying to appropriate the constraints of a bygone era into materials that could inspire a new art. This back and forth between past and future paralleled a constant oscillation between geographies. Most of these artists spent time in Paris, New York, and Tokyo, and some emigrated permanently, such as Lee Ufan. Whether in their travels or in their homeland, they were fully immersed in a dialogue that began in the mid-1950s and continued onwards, which focused on the convergence between Western abstraction and local artistic tendencies of a similar aesthetic.

The artists mentioned earlier, along with other Korean Monochrome painters—such as Chung Chang-sup, Chung Sang-hwa, Ha Chong-hyun, Park Seo-bo, Choi Byung-so and Hur Hwang—were fully aware of the latest artistic trends of the time, including the 1950s American Abstract Expressionism, the International Art Informel in Paris, the 1960s Color Field Painting or what Clement Greenberg called Post-Painterly Abstraction, the Minimalism of Agnes Martin, Piero Manzoni and Yves Klein, and even Arte Povera in Italy. However, while the image of the artist as espoused by Western modernist thought was primarily based on the notion of self-sacrifice through withdrawal from the social domain in pursuit of an elusive transcendental reality best expressed through free art, Korean modernism of the 1960s and 1970s was significantly burdened by questions of nationalism, continuity and rupture, tradition and innovation. One attempt at resolving such dichotomies was through the inclusion of native materials—such as Korean hanji paper, traditional rice paper, and ink—and utilizing them in the traditional, yet non-Korean, two-dimensional canvas. Through such formal choices, the Korean Monochrome artists' intent was to complicate the interface between what was perceived as "western" philosophical thought and practice, and "the local pursuit of aesthetic perfection as the embodiment of an ideal, capable of restoring links to society and to the natural world."⁷

Most integral to the conceptual paradigm underpinning the practice of the *Dansaekhwa* members was the championing of the physical nature of the artwork. For his series entitled *Ecriture*, Park Seo-bo layered white pigments on the canvas upon which he repeatedly drew pencil lines flowing in one

direction. Sitting on the floor with the canvas laid out in front of him, he repeated the same movement over and over until he and the materials he employed became one unit. Other artists conceived a variety of methods to intensify the encounter with the artwork's materiality. Youn Myeong-ro applied thick pigments of color which he subsequently cracked, Ha Chong-hyun pressed dyes to the back of his canvases until the color soaked through the hemp, and Kwon Young-woo poked holes through traditional Korean paper.⁸ Despite their differences, these artists have a commonality with the artwork's three-dimensionality and a relentless insistence on highlighting and engaging with the physical qualities of the materials used.

The Korean Monochrome painters' emphasis on materiality was intended to intensify the viewer's encounter with the artwork, and consequently, to destroy the traditional hierarchy of power between the artist and the viewer. Art historian Joan Kee explains, "In lieu of a schematic whereby the artwork passively transmits the artist's intention to the equally passive viewer, the artwork is activated only upon the viewer's sustained engagement with the terms of its material and physical presence."⁹ The locus of the artistic process shifted from the act of making as a final step of a journey dictated and initiated by the artist, to the viewer's encounter with the artwork's materiality, which resulted in an aesthetic experience of physical and conceptual dimensions. Lee Ufan described this as a desire to show the world (*sekai*) as it is while subverting the hierarchies of signification embedded in Western modernism as a way to provide an alternative outlook on the experience of the world.¹⁰

In spite of the conceptual differences between the Korean Monochrome Painting Movement and its North American and European ostensibly similar counterparts, the Monochrome Movement has been internally and externally perceived, evaluated, and demarcated by a binary model of criticism. This framework operates along an axis of hierarchy instead of parity, and chronology rather than non-linearity. As early as 1958, in response to the exhibition *Contemporary Korean Paintings* that was held at the World House Galleries in New York, critics framed the rhetoric within a comparative analysis that lavished the notion of "Synthesis" that would neither be Asian or Western.¹¹ In 1963, in an initiative to introduce the movement to the Paris art community during the Third Paris Biennale, Galerie Lambert hosted an exhibition of young Korean artists. A profoundly exoticized announcement was published in the Biennale's catalogue, which reads:

Informel painting happily admits its Far Eastern ancestry, what with its emphasis on Character, Gesture, Sign, Dream Stone, Cloud, the Thrown Sponge, as an instrument for painting with and, of course, more or less imperfectly understood Zen. And what about the Informel of the Far East itself? We have considered it might be interesting to pose this question, by presenting a group of pictures by young Korean painters. They belong to the generation that was marked by the War and received their training in Seoul. Now it up to us to try to detect what part of their work is due to the globalization of an artistic movement and what retains an element of ancestral "Character."¹²

In 1968, upon the opening of *Contemporary Korean Painting* at the National Museum of Modern Art in Tokyo, the critic Ishiko Junzo described the works as simplistic in their emulation of the latest trends in contemporary art.¹³ The then widely circulated *Asahi Journal* decreed the works to be too deeply steeped in the latest artistic fads of Paris and New York.¹⁴ In a harsh critique of the previously mentioned *Secondes Rencontres Internationales d'Art Contemporain*, Sin Yong-suk, the Paris correspondent for the popular and highly regarded newspaper *Chosun Ilbo* wrote, "The works did not seem as if they hailed from a country with over five thousand years of tradition, but rather those from a cultural colony of some Western nation."¹⁵ Such an unsympathetic judgment indirectly echoed the blinding search for a national identity. These kinds of negative responses would soon be countered by a different opinion that accepted incommensurability as a measure of quality, and saw in works of the Monochrome Movement the essence of all that is and can be uniquely Korean art. However, in both arguments the narrative was always bound by what Lee Ufan satirically described as the "willful myopia of misplaced nationalism."¹⁶

It is generally agreed that it was not until 1975 that the Korean Monochrome painters had their first official introduction to the international art world as members of the distinct *Dansaekhwa* movement. The exhibition *Five Korean Artists: Five Kinds of White* at the Tokyo Gallery in the Ginza district would become a historical landmark in the history of the movement. Despite to the group exhibition *Modern Art 73* organized in 1973 at the Myongdong Gallery in Seoul, Five Korean Artists was the Monochrome painters' first exhibition abroad. This was a significant step in the group's history towards gaining international awareness, if not recognition, especially given that Tokyo had been once the capital of the Empire that had relegated Korea into one of its prized possessions. It was, therefore, inevitable to avoid

framing the works, and the movement, as evidence of an autonomous Korean cultural resurgence. From there on, the convergence of formalistic critique with national rhetoric would become so entangled that it becomes almost impossible to discern which came first: the artwork or the agencies associated with it through critique and theory. The same artists who had at one point ascribed their stylistic choices to a sincere search for a sense of “Koreanness” would later deny any such union between artistic expression and national identity. Within the same text, a critic would locate the movement within an international response to an “age of uncertainty”—a term borrowed by the Japanese from the title of a book by economist John Kenneth Galbraith—only to later refute that argument by stressing the overwhelmingly local attributes manifested in the work.¹⁷ While one curator would judge the animated brushwork of Korean Informel, as a way to communicate a feeling of anxiety to viewers who had lived through the horrors of the 1950 North Korean invasion of the South, another critic would simply relegate it to the realm of International Informel that flourished in Paris throughout the 1950s.

Despite its multiple iterations, and regardless of the mechanisms of visual and literary display through which *Dansaekhwa* has been presented and portrayed, the movement continued to hold common traits: the use of white and neutral monochromes, an insistence on the flatness of the canvas as a foundation for further accretions, and an engagement with the physical materiality of the artworks formal components.

In his essay *Landscape of the Mind*, included in the publication that accompanied the exhibition *Dansaekhwa: Korean Monochrome Painting* at the National Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul in 2012, curator Yoon Jin-sup poetically evokes some nineteenth century and early twentieth century portrayals of “Koreanness” whereby Korea is the quiet country of the recluse, the land of morning calm where passers-by on the streets wear white clothes. He proceeds to question such constructed images, “Both ‘white clothes’ and ‘calm’ draw our attention since they came from a foreigner’s viewpoint and impression of Korea. In other words, it was born out of the perspective of the *Other*. It means that one looks as the *Other* perceives him or her to be regardless of one’s will or intention.”¹⁸ With these few words, Yoon summarizes the predicament of the Korean Monochrome painters. Ironically, over the years the color white and the notion of calm and Zen have become a reductionist lens through which this multilayered and complex movement has come to be portrayed. But as Yoon claims, “‘White clothes’ disappeared long ago. In their stead brilliant colors adorn the

Korean fashion, and the Koreans are busy like everyone else in the world in the swirl of contemporary life.”¹⁹ Many members of the Korean Monochrome Movement are amongst these ordinary Koreans. They continue to make art that is as powerful and relevant in its steadfastness and commitment as it was more than a half-century ago. Their relentless investigation of the power of encounter between artwork and viewer continues to underpin their process. For the exhibition *Overcoming the Modern; Dansaekhwa: The Korean Monochrome Movement* the decision to include works from the 1960s through the 1980s is meant to highlight a specific aspect of the artists’ creative journey and to invite further research into an art movement that is worthy of in-depth scholarly investigation. To attempt a more comprehensive presentation was far beyond the scope of this project. For this exhibition, which may provide many with their first encounter of *Dansaekhwa*, it is imperative that the works possess a common affinity. While sharing formal attributes, the artworks share a sense of fragility: an encounter with the viewer that is at once present yet absent, loud yet nuanced. Lee Ufan expressed this best when he recently said, “I use the Japanese word *chutohampa* to describe it, which means unresolved, incomplete or not polished. So you’re neither here nor there; it’s the meeting of the two—oneself and one’s interaction with these materials, both industrial and natural.”²⁰

On a final note, the exhibition seeks to evade discussions about art, nationalism, or search for true “Koreanness,” a narrative with which the movement has been associated since its very inception. Instead, it aims to bring to the fore the conceptual and formal innovations that a group of seminal artists have achieved through their negotiation of modernity and their desire for constant contemporaneity. For the Korean Monochrome artists, being modern was not a matter of identification with a Western model of artistic production. Neither was it a belief in a particular universalism that levels the specificities of distinctly different conceptual and formal approaches to art making. For most of the artists presented here, working and living in Korea during the 1960s and 1970s, overcoming the modern had a specific meaning: one that was associated with an independence from modernization and a criticism of universalism. As Lee Ufan said, “The task of the artist is not to turn the world into a work of art (a colony) through self-expression of one’s inner world but to find a way to reveal the work of art transcendently in a relationship incorporating externality and otherness.”²¹ It is this act of overcoming through encountering the artwork that ultimately defines the crux of what *Dansaekhwa* is all about.

Sam Bardaouil and Till Fellrath, Munich, Germany, September 2013.

Notes

1. The title of this exhibition is taken from a chapter of the same title in Lee Ufan's *The Art of Encounter* (London: Lisson Gallery, 2008).
2. Lee Ufan, "Jika dochaku no bigaku," [The Aesthetics of Self-Contradiction], *Sato Garo Geppo* 128 (March 1967).
3. *Ibid.*, 2.
4. Joan Kee, "History of Contemporary Korean Art Exhibitions," in *Your Bright Future*, ed. Lynn Zelevansky and Christine D. Starkman (Houston: Museum of Fine Arts, 2009), 18-19.
5. Won Dong-suk, "Malsseong gwa byeonmyeong," [Controversy and Excuses], *Bburigi peun namu* (March 1979): 44-52.
6. Chung Bo-won, "Uri tochangseong pyohyeonui eoryeoun gwaje," [The Difficult Task of Expressing Our Uniqueness], *Bburigipeun namu* (March 1979): 30.
7. Henry Meyric Hughes, "The International Art Scene and the Status of Dansaekhwa," *Art in Asia* (November 18, 2012): n.p., accessed May 22, 2013, <http://www.artinasia.kr/content/view/116/31/>.
8. Kim Yong-na, *20th Century Korean Art* (London: Laurence King Publishing, 2005), 256.
9. Joan Kee, "Points, Lines, Encounters: The World According to Lee Ufan," *Oxford Art Journal* 31.3 (2008): 405.
10. Lee Ufan, "Sekai to Kozo," [World and Structure], *Dezain Hihyo*, 9 (1969): 132.
11. Ellen Psaty Conant, *Contemporary Korean Paintings* (New York: World House Galleries, 1958), n.p.
12. From the 3rd Paris Biennale Catalogue as quoted in Hughes, "The International Art Scene and the Status of Dansaekhwa," n.p.
13. Ishiko Junzo, "Kaiga no gendaika o toe: Kankoku gendai kaigaten o mite," [Inquiring About The Contemporization of Painting: On Seeing Contemporary Korean Painting], *Sansai* 235 (September 1968): 65.
14. "Ajiateki seikaku wa kireruka," [Can An Asian Sensibility Arise?], *Asahi Journal*, August 18, 1968, 47.
15. Sin Yong-suk, "Seogu hyungnaeman naen 'hanguk chulpumjak,'" [The 'Korean Entrants' That Only Copy The West], *Chosun Ilbo*, December 28, 1978.
16. Kee, "History of Contemporary Korean Art Exhibitions," 20.
17. Joan Kee, "Points, Lines, Encounters: The World According to Lee Ufan," 406.
18. Yoon Jin-sup, "Landscape of the Mind," in *Dansaekhwa: Korean Monochrome Painting* (Seoul: National Museum of Contemporary Art, 2012), 18.
19. *Ibid.*, 18.
20. Lee Ufan, interview with Melissa Chiu, "On Reflection," *Frieze* 140 (June-August 2011): n.p., accessed December 18, 2012, <http://www.frieze.com/issue/article/on-reflection/>.
21. Ufan, *The Art of Encounter*, 193.

About the Curators

Sam Bardaouil and Till Fellrath are the co-founders of Art Reoriented, a multidisciplinary curatorial platform based in Munich and New York since 2009. Bardaouil and Fellrath have held teaching positions at the London School of Economics and the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University, among other institutions. They contribute regularly to *Flash Art*, *Art Info*, and *The Huffington Post* and have published in *DadaSur: The International Journal on Surrealism*, *Qantara*, and *The International Journal of Humanities*.

Bardaouil and Fellrath's exhibition, research and publication projects include collaborations with numerous museums and cultural institutions, such as the Museum of Modern Art in New York, Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art in Doha, INHA and the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris, IVAM in Valencia, Casa Arabe in Madrid, the Gwangju Museum of Art in South Korea, Tashkeel in Dubai and the Today Art Museum in Beijing. In 2013, Bardaouil and Fellrath curated the Lebanese Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennial, featuring Akram Zaatari. They are the authors of *Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter... and Spring: Conversations with Artists from the Arab World* published by SKIRA (2013). Recent projects include *Tea with Nefertiti* (2012–2014), a traveling exhibition at Egyptian Museum in Munich, IVAM, Institut du Monde Arabe, and Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, *Paul Guiragossian: The Human Condition* at Beirut Exhibition Center in Beirut, and *Mona Hatoum: Turbulence* at Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art.

About the Artists

Chung Sang-hwa (b.1932, Young-Duck, Gyeongsangbuk-Do, Korea); lives and works in Seoul, South Korea. He received his BFA from the College of Fine Arts of Seoul National University in 1956. Over his career he lived in Japan and France. His painting practice revolves around process, and he developed a meticulous painting method in which he rips paint off the canvas and then refills it, resulting in grid-like geometric forms. Chung has exhibited extensively in Korea, Japan, and Europe, including at the Leeum Art Museum, Seoul (2007); Seoul National Art Museum (2004); Busan Museum of Modern Art, Busan, Korea (1998); Sun-Jae Museum of Contemporary Art, Kyung Joo, Korea (1991); Museum of Modern Art, Saitama, Japan (1986); and Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY (1981). In addition, he has participated in many international biennials, most recently the Poznan Biennale, Poznan, Poland (2008) and the Third Gwangju Biennale, Gwangju, Korea (2000).

Ha Chong-hyun (b.1935, Sanoheong, Korea); lives and works in Seoul, South Korea. He received his BFA in 1959 from Hong-Ik University in Seoul, from which he was awarded an honorary PhD in 2000. He is best known for his ongoing *Conjunction* series, which he began in the 1970s. Working with hemp cloth, the artist applies oil paint to the back of the canvas, which he then pushes through to the front with an array of tools including knives, spoons, sticks, and his hands. From 2001–2006, he was the Director of the Seoul Museum of Art, in 1995 he was the director of the first Gwangju Biennale, and from 1990–94 he was the Dean of the Fine Arts College of Hong-Ik University. He has exhibited internationally in venues such as Gana Art Center, Seoul, Korea (2008); Gyeongnam Art Museum, Changwon, Korea (2004); and Mudima Foundation of Contemporary Art, Milan, Italy (2003).

Hur Hwang (b.1943); lives and works in South Korea. He received both his BFA and MFA in painting from Hong-Ik University. His paintings are characterized by his use of the color white, which he believes invokes diverse psychological responses. He creates his own paint out of a thick mix of natural stone powder, which he pours onto the canvas, marking the surfaces without intervention from the artist. His paintings are characterized by the many shades of white he achieves. Hur's work has been exhibited extensively in Korea, Japan, and the United States, including at the Hyundai Arts Center, Ulsan, Korea (2004); Busan Metropolitan Art Museum, Busan, Korea (1998); and the Gwangju Biennale.

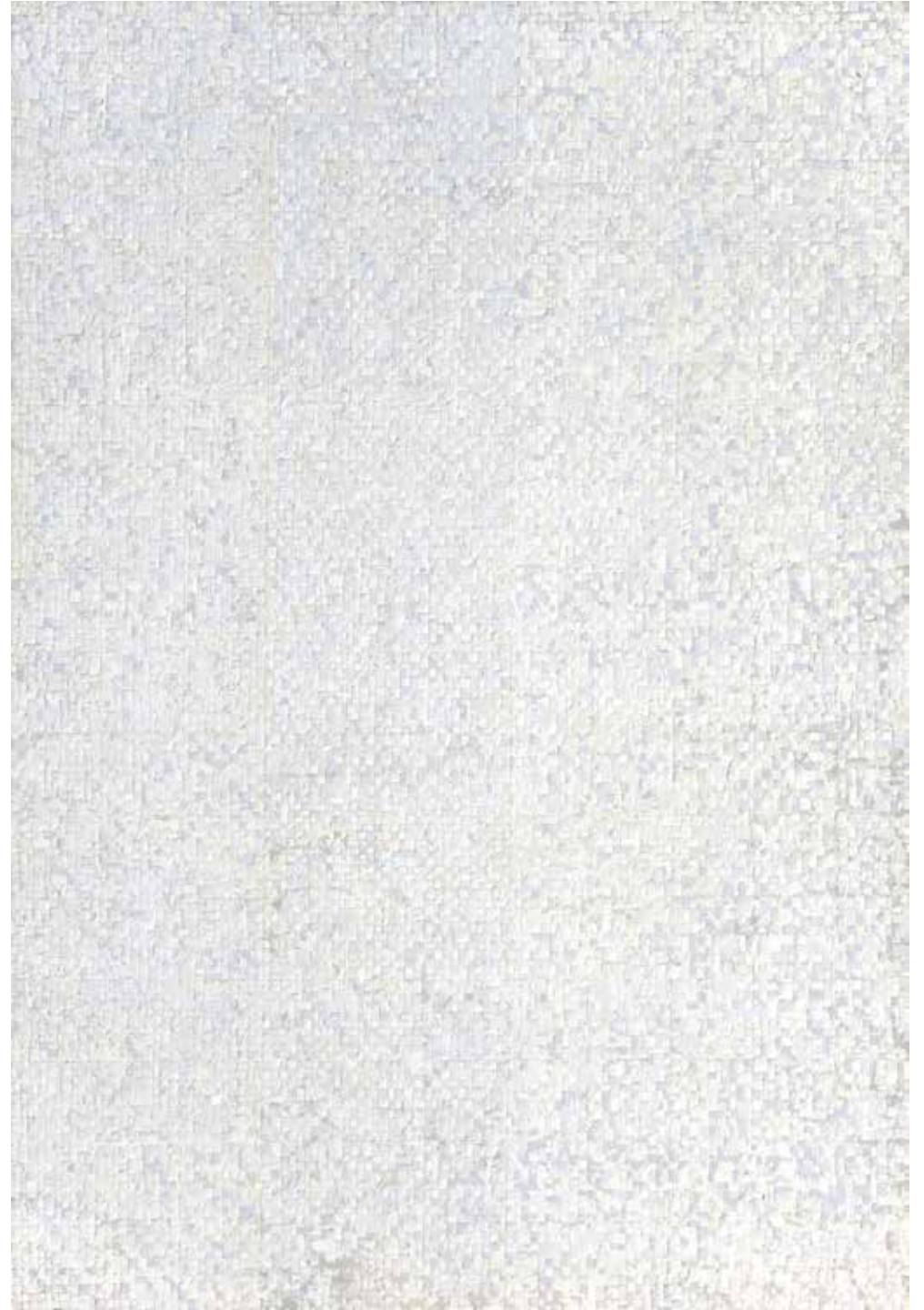
Lee Dong-Youb (b.1946, Hong-Ik, Korea – d. 2013, Seoul, South Korea). He received both his BFA and MFA from the School of Fine Arts, Hong-Ik University. His paintings are intended to activate an awareness of perception, and are characterized by lines composed of subtle gradations of gray that run through the canvas. Often, the lines are confined to particular zones of the canvas, which abruptly stops their movement. Lee's work has been shown extensively in Asia and Europe, and featured in exhibitions at the Seoul Olympic Museum of Art, Korea (2008); National Museum of Contemporary Art, Gwacheon, Korea (2007 and 1997); National de Grand Palais, Paris, France (1986); Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY (1981); Taipei Fine Art Museum, Taipei, Taiwan (1984); and the historic *Five Korean Artists, Five Kinds of White*, Tokyo Gallery, Tokyo, Japan (1975). His work is represented in public collections in Korea and Japan, including the Tokyo National Museum of Modern Art, Japan; National Museum of Contemporary Art, Gwacheon, Korea; and Museum of Hong-Ik University, Seoul, Korea.

Lee Ufan (b.1936, Kyongnam, Korea); lives and works in Kamakura, Japan and Paris, France. He left Korea to study Philosophy at Nihon University in 1956. He currently lives and works in Kamakura, Japan and Paris, France. In the late-1960s, he was one of the leading theorists and artists of Mono-ha, the Japanese art movement focused on materiality, perception, and chance, which arose out of anti-authoritarian and anti-colonial sentiment. By the early 1970s, Lee had embarked on two seminal series that greatly impacted the Korean Monochrome Movement: *From Line and From Point*, in which his marks conveyed friction of the brush upon the canvas and the depletion of pigment. Lee was the recent subject of the 2011 exhibition *Lee Ufan: Marking Infinity* at the Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY. He has exhibited internationally, including recent solo exhibitions at the Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Berlin (2008); Royal Museum of Fine Arts of Belgium, Brussels (2008); and Yokohama Museum of Art, Yokohama, Japan (2005). His work is in the public collections of prominent international institutions, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; Tate Gallery, London, UK; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France; Berlin National Galerie, Berlin, Germany; and Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia.

Park Seo-bo (b.1931, Yecheon, Gyeongbuk, South Korea); lives and works in Seoul, Korea. He received a BFA from Hong-Ik University, from which he later received an honorary PhD, and also studied at the Sorbonne in Paris, France. He is a leading figure in Korean modern abstract art and is credited with establishing the Korean Monochrome Movement in the 1960s. For more than forty years, he has continued his *Ecriture* series, which he situated between the acts of writing and drawing. This ongoing series is defined by the artist's act of drawing lines or lineal patterns into the paintings surface. Park's work was the subject of a retrospective at the National Museum of Contemporary Art, Gwacheon, South Korea (1991), and has been featured in renowned group exhibitions at the Singapore Art Museum (2008); Musée d'Art Moderne, Saint-Etienne, France (2006); Soka Contemporary Space, Beijing, China (2005); Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst, Berlin, Germany (2003); and the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Japan (2002).

Yun Hyong-keun (b.1927, Seoul, Korea – d. 2007). He received a BFA from the School of Fine Arts, Hong-Ik University in 1957. He is known for his *Umber Blue* series, in which he investigated the materiality of paint, time, and perception. Using only ultramarine and umber, he experimented by allowing each pigment to dry at different rates to create subtle layers of paint, diluting the colors as they seep into the fibers of the canvas. Yun's work has been exhibited internationally in institutions including the National Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul, Korea (2002); Busan Museum of Art, Busan, Korea (2000); Stiftung für Konkrete Kunst, Reutlingen, Germany (1997); Chinati Foundation, Marfa, TX (1994); and Tate Liverpool, Liverpool, UK (1992). He also participated in the Venice Biennale (1995) and São Paulo Biennale (1975 and 1969).

Chung Sang-hwa
Untitled, 1976



Chung Sang-hwa
Untitled 005, 1973



Ha Chong-hyun
Conjunction 97-102, 1997



Ha Chong-hyun
Conjunction 97-114, 1997



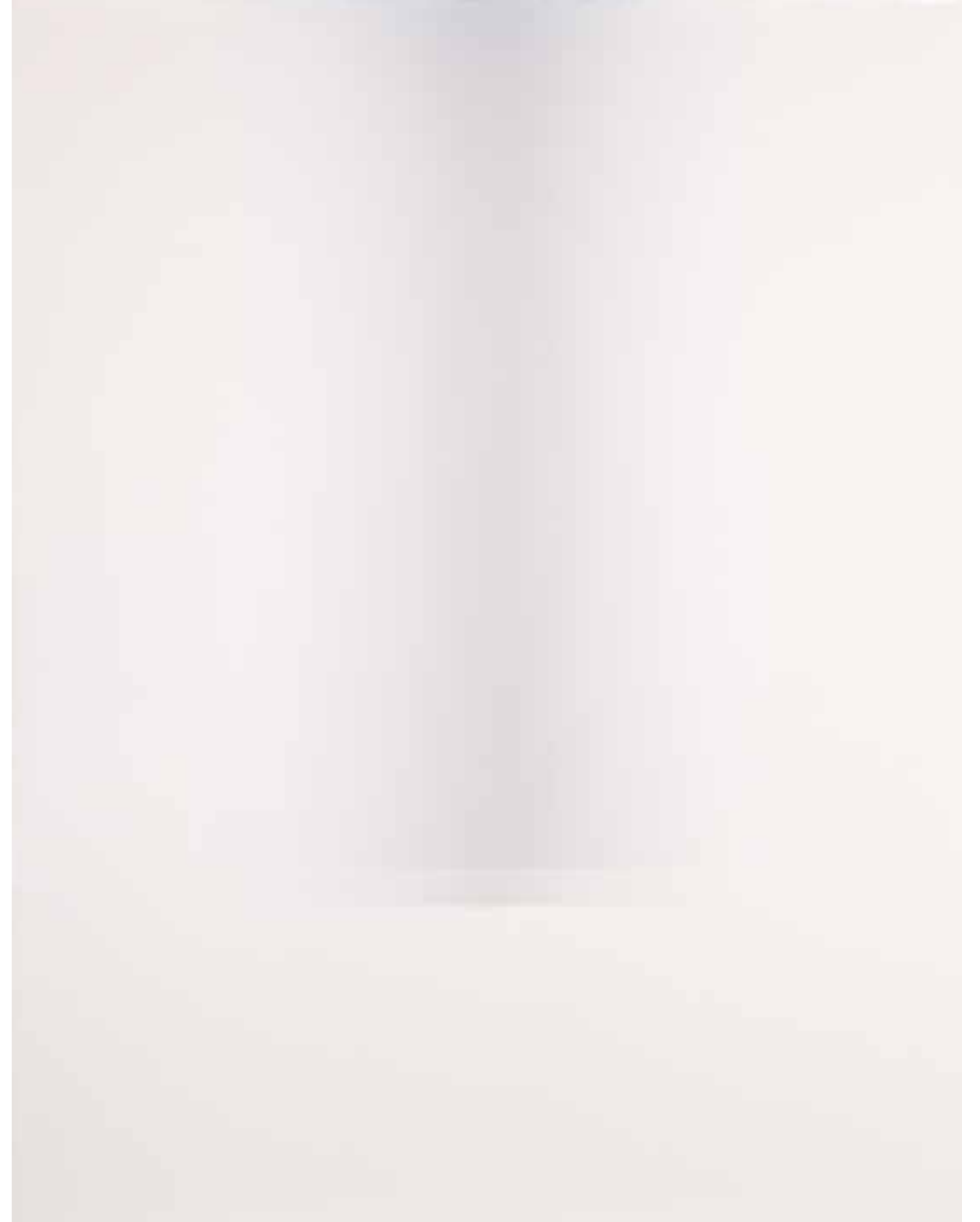
Hur Hwang
Untitled, 1978



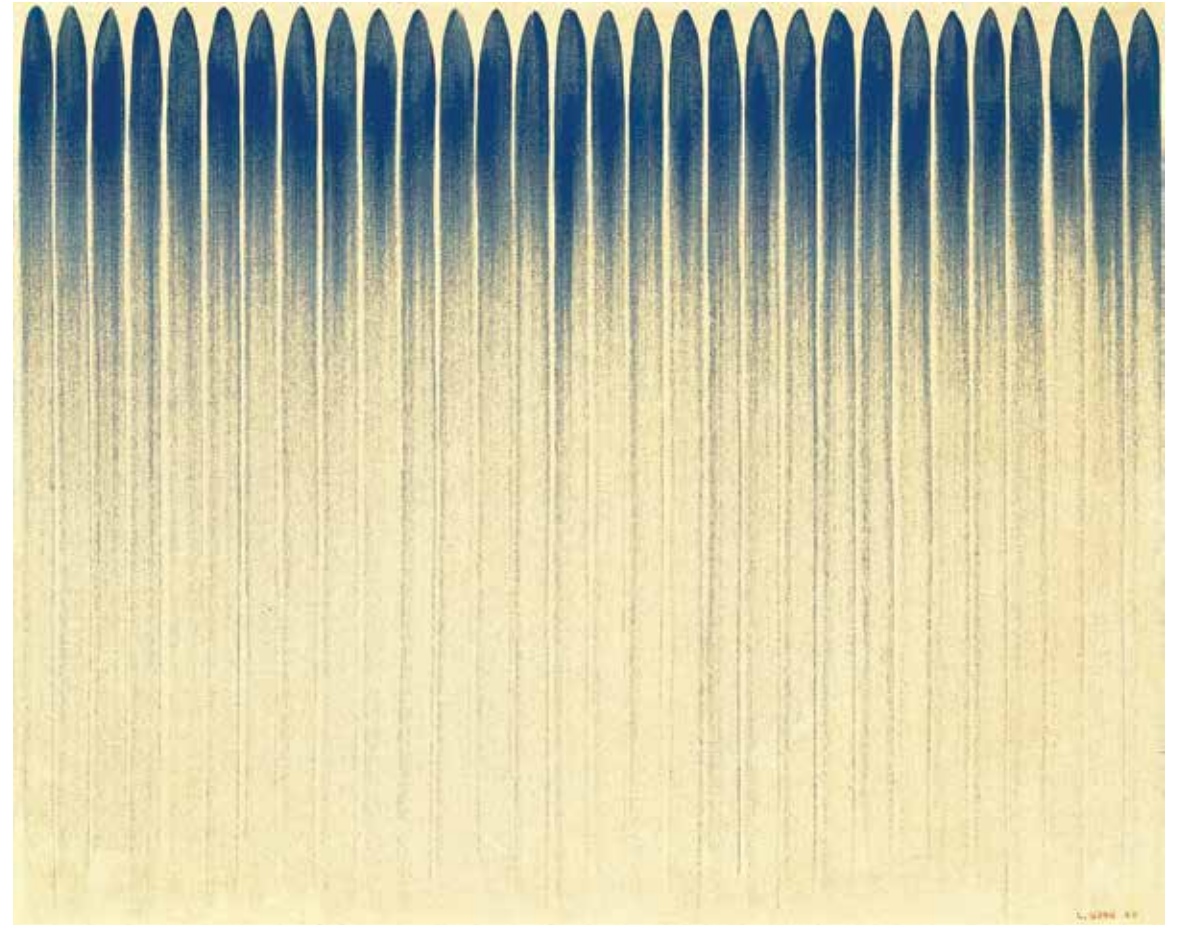
Hur Hwang
Untitled, 1993

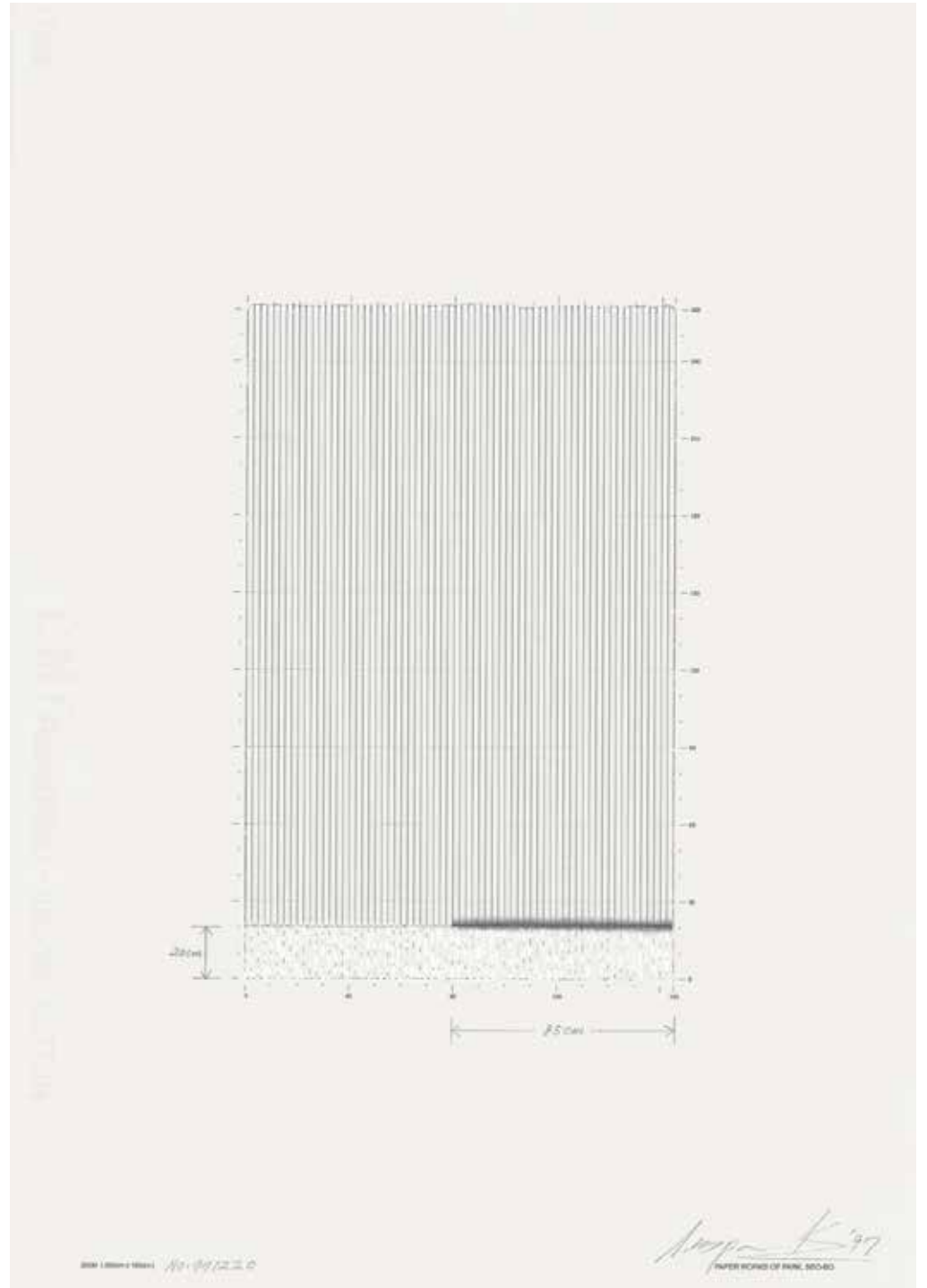


Lee Dong-Youb
Interspace Musing (Cycle), 2000

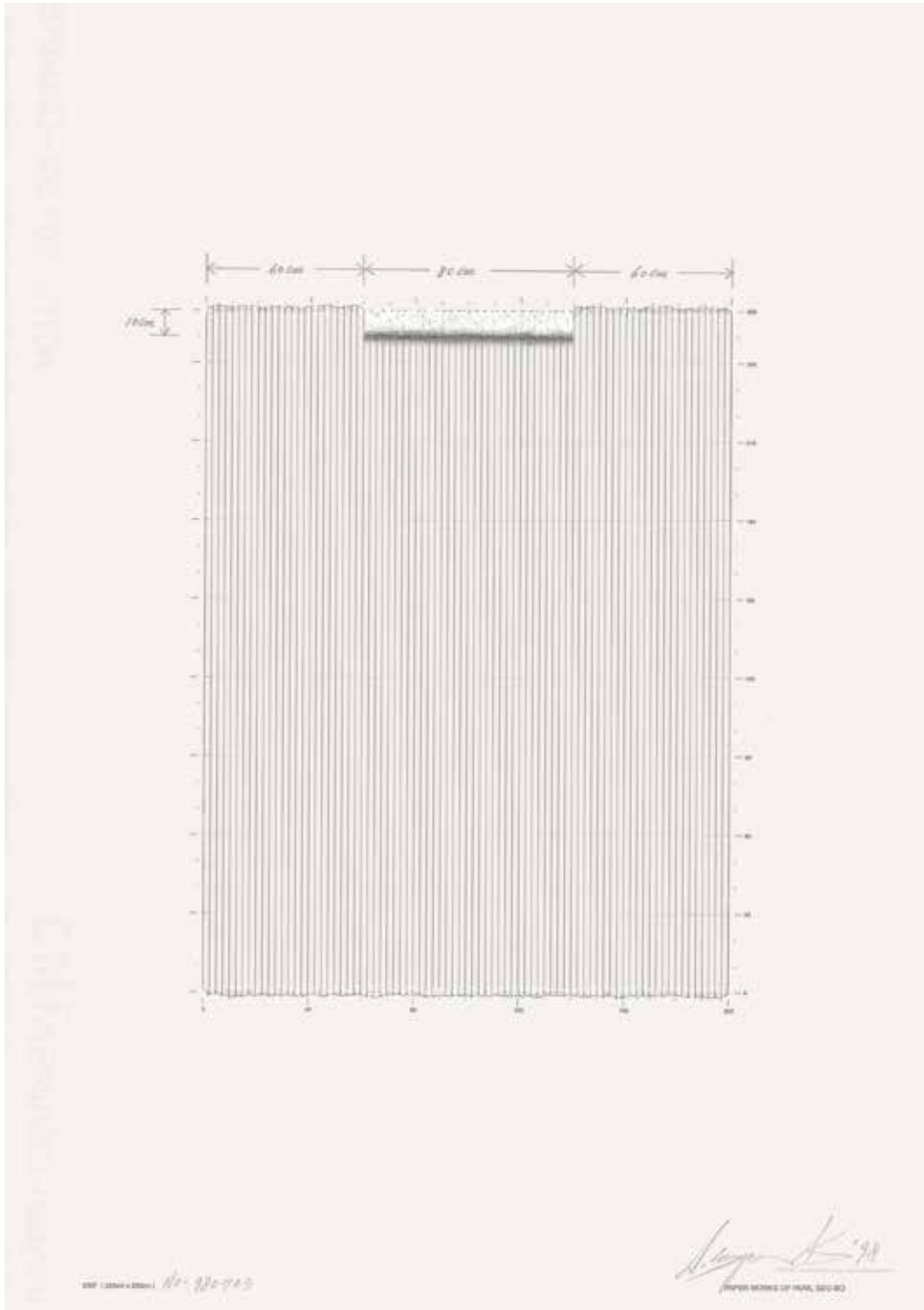


Lee Ufan
From Line No. 12-12, 1982

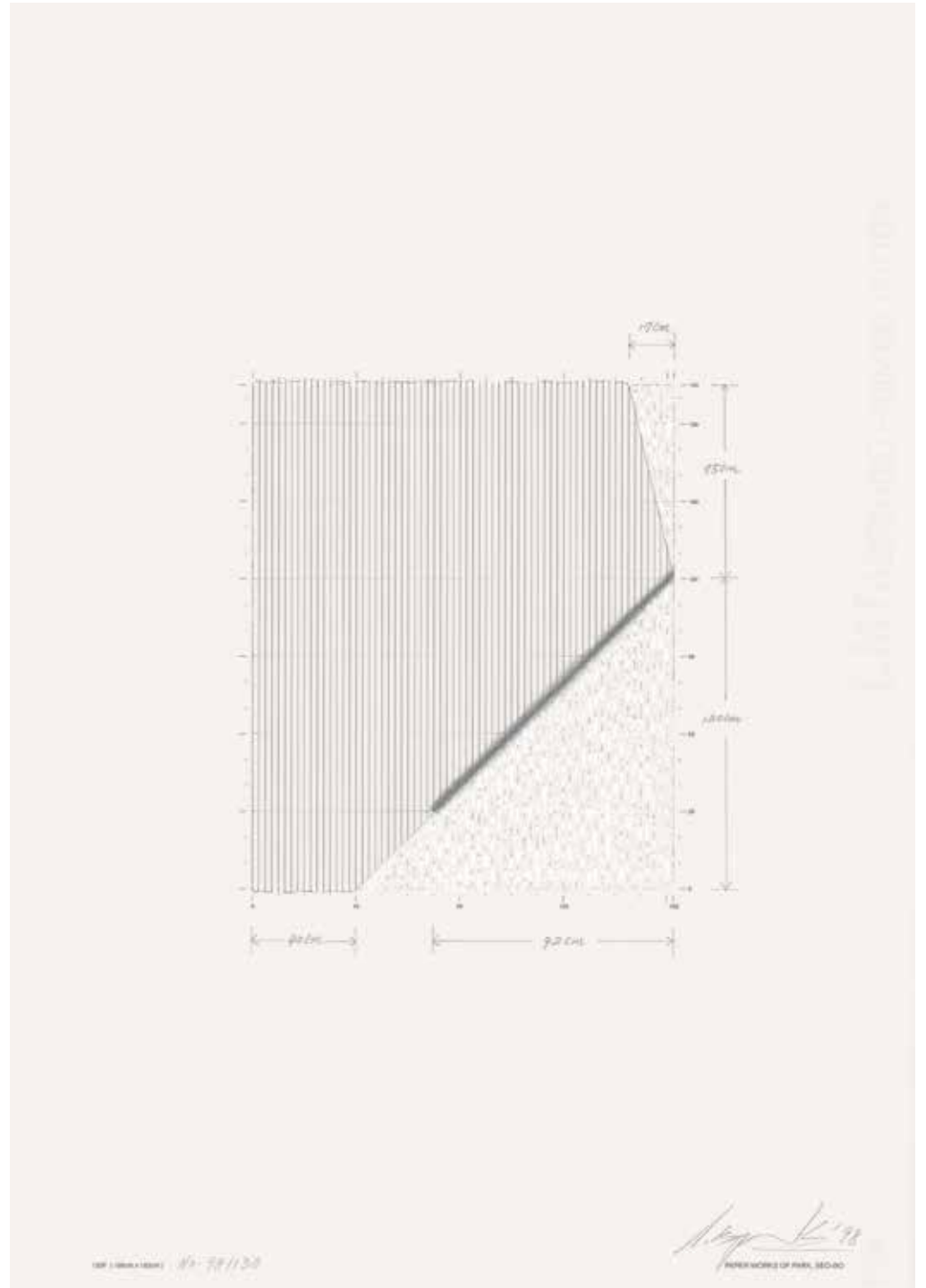




Park Seo-bo
Ecriture No.971220, 1997



Park Seo-bo
 Ecriture No. 980703, 1998



Park Seo-bo
 Ecriture No. 981130, 1998

Yun Hyong-keun
Untitled, 1986



Checklist

Chung Sang-hwa
Untitled, 1976
Frottage and acrylic on canvas
63.8h x 44.1w in (162.1h x 112w cm)

Chung Sang-hwa
Untitled 005, 1973
Acrylic and frottage on hanji paper
and collaged on canvas
63.8h x 51.2w in (162.1h x 130w cm)

Ha Chong-hyun
Conjunction 97-102, 1997
Oil on hemp cloth
28.7h x 24w in (72.9h x 61w cm)

Ha Chong-hyun
Conjunction 97-114, 1997
Oil on hemp cloth
28.7h x 24w in (72.9h x 61w cm)

Hur Hwang
Untitled, 1978
Oil on canvas
39.4h x 51.2w in (100.1h x 130w cm)

Hur Hwang
Untitled, 1993
Oil on canvas
39.4h x 51.2w in (100.1h x 130w cm)

Lee Dong-Youb
Interspace Musing (Cycle), 2000
Acrylic on canvas
70.9h x 59.1w in (180.1h x 150.1w cm)

Lee Ufan
From Line No. 12-12, 1982
Oil and mineral pigment on canvas
31.5h x 39.4w in (80h x 100.1w cm)

Park Seo-bo
Ecriture No. 971220, 1997
Litho crayon, pencil, and
correction fluid pen on paper
19.8h x 14w in (50.3h x 35.6w cm)

Park Seo-bo
Ecriture No. 980703, 1998
Litho crayon, pencil, and
correction fluid pen on paper
19.8h x 14w in (50.3h x 35.6w cm)

Park Seo-bo
Ecriture No. 981130, 1998
Litho crayon, pencil, and
correction fluid pen on paper
19.8h x 14w in (50.3h x 35.6w cm)

Yun Hyong-keun
Untitled, 1986
Oil on canvas
47.2h x 31.5w in (119.9h x 80w cm)

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Cover image: Chung Sang-hwa, *Untitled*, detail, 1976, frottage and acrylic on canvas, 63.8h x 44.1w in (162.1h x 112w cm)

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