

EXHIBITIONS

Kwon Ki-soo, *Are You Waiting for Me.*

PHOTO COURTESY OF METAPHYSICAL ART GALLERY

South Korean contemporary artist Kwon Ki-soo returns to Metaphysical Art Gallery with a new series of floral paintings called *Are You Waiting for Me?* Kwon's canvases blend Korean painting techniques and motifs, with more than a passing resemblance to children's comic books, to symbolically illustrate South Korea's creative tradition of artists relying on their own impressions of nature to express a transcendent image of what is actually seen.

■ Metaphysical Art Gallery (形而上畫廊), 7F, 219, Dunhua S Rd Sec 1, Taipei City (台北市敦化南路一段219號7樓). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 11am to 6:30pm. Tel: (02) 2711-0055
■ Until Feb. 7

In *This Is Hong Kong (這是香港)*, over a dozen artists from the special administrative region ponder the changes that have taken place since its handover to China in 1997. The group show, located in Room 102, Kuandu Museum of Fine Arts (關渡美術館), makes use of video installation to reflect on politics, history, architecture, post-colonial issues and daily life in Hong Kong. Meanwhile, on the museum's fourth floor, celebrated Amis artist Rahic Talif (達立夫) presents *Fali-yos 風風*, his latest meditation on nature, which probes the effects that typhoons have on Taiwan.

■ Kuandu Museum of Fine Arts (關渡美術館), Taipei National University of the Arts (台北藝術大學), 1 Xueyuan Rd, Taipei City (台北市學園路1號). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 10am to 5pm. Tel: (02) 2896-1000 X2432
■ Until March 28

Colors is a new series of paintings by contemporary Japanese artist Mamiko Uematsu. Her solid-color panels, rendered in earthy tones, suggest varying degrees of emotional intensity.

■ IT Park Gallery (伊通公園), 2F-3F, 41 Yitong St, Taipei City (台北市伊通街41號2-3樓). Open Tuesdays to Saturdays from 1pm to 10pm. Tel: (02) 2507-7243
■ Until Feb. 13

The National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts celebrates the upcoming Lunar New Year with *Welcome Happiness in the Year of Tiger (寅春納福 — 虎年畫特展)*, an exhibition of festive prints, which traditionally feature themes of good fortune, longevity and wealth. The display of folk art includes interesting historical anecdotes such as how the development of lithographic technology led to the rapid growth of Lunar New Year prints.

■ National Taiwan Museum of the Arts (國立台灣美術館), 2, Wucyuan W Rd Sec 1, Taichung City (台中市五權西路一段2號). Open Tuesdays to Fridays from 9am to 5pm and Saturdays and Sundays from 9am to 6pm. Tel: (04) 2372-3552
■ Until April 11

The video installation works by this year's winners of the Taipei Arts Awards (台北美術獎) — Chang Hwei-ming (張輝明) for *Watching Dust in the Sunlight (在陽光下觀察灰塵)*, Ni Xiang (倪祥) for *Compensation Soon (很快就能補償)*, Chang Li-ren (張立人) for *Model Community (模型社區)* and Tao Mei-yu (陶美羽) for *Language (語言)* — are currently on display in Galleries D, E and F of the Taipei Fine Arts Museum (TFAM).

■ Taipei Fine Arts Museum (TFAM) — 台北市立美術館, 181, Zhongshan N Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市中山北路三段181號). Open daily from 9:30am to 5:30pm and Saturday from 9:30am to 8:30pm. Tel: (02) 2595-7656
■ Until March 7

Contemporary Taiwanese photographer Wu Shang-lin (吳尚霖) displays his snaps of city streets and the people who inhabit them in his solo show *Portrait of Cities — Space of Remembrance (城市肖像 — 回憶之境)*.

■ The Gallery (畫廊), 71 Jhongjhong 4th Rd, Kaohsiung City (高雄市中正四路71號). Call (07) 281-5025 for a viewing
■ Until Feb. 21

Nirvana (超脫) is a series of oil paintings by Chou Yao-tung (周耀東) of Chinese mountainscapes, but with a twist. Expanding the boundaries of this conventional art form, the peaks take the form of erect penises, reaching up to the sky.

■ Sin Pink Pier — Absolutely Art Space (新浜碼頭), 2F, 64 Dayong Rd, Kaohsiung City (高雄市中正四路64號2F). Open Wednesdays to Sundays from 1pm to 7pm. Tel: (07) 533-2041
■ Until Feb. 7

Kaneuji Tepei, *Sea and Pus.*

PHOTO COURTESY OF PROJECT FULFILL ART SPACE

The school of things

A new exhibit at Project Fulfill Art Space offers a thoughtful introduction to the Japanese Mono-ha art movement

BY HO YI
STAFF REPORTER

Iida Ryuta, *Visible, invisible series.*

PHOTO COURTESY OF PROJECT FULFILL ART SPACE

SHIMURABROS, *Eicon.*

PHOTO COURTESY OF PROJECT FULFILL ART SPACE

In October 1968, Nobuo Sekine dug a hole into the ground, compacted the extracted dirt into a cylinder of exactly the same size as the hole and called the work *Phase — Mother Earth*. This is typically regarded as the founding moment of Mono-ha, one of Japan's most influential post-World War II art movements.

Four decades later, young curator Kaneshima Takahiro has assembled a two-part exhibition which shows that the Mono-ha movement is still very much alive in Japanese contemporary art. The first installment of this exhibition, titled Contemporary Airy Craft, is currently showing at Taipei's Project Fulfill Art Space.

Video installation pieces, plastic toy figures and cut-up books are among the works on display. At first glance, they don't seem to share the slightest affinity with works created by the progenitors of Mono-ha, which literally means "the school of things."

Mono-ha artists in the 1960s and 1970s took natural materials such as earth, stones, and wood and juxtaposed them with man-made objects like glass and paper. Their aim was not to create but to rearrange things into art works with the emphasis on the interdependent relationships between different objects, as well as between objects and the spaces around them.

A well-known example of Mono-ha art is Susumu Koshimizu's *Paper* (1969), which consists of a large stone placed inside a giant envelope made of Japanese paper. Another is *Wall* (1971) by the late Koji Enokura, which shows a concrete wall built between two trees.

In the exhibit now on display at Project Fulfill Art Space, an old copy of Yukio Mishima's classic novel *The Sailor Who Fell From Grace With the Sea* hangs on a wall. The book is open in the middle with fragments from different pages glued to its surface in patterns that resemble tree rings. Across the room, two toy figurines are covered with plastic hair of various colors collected from other toys, which makes the pair look like ornate monsters.

To Kaneshima, the genealogical link between the different generations of artists can be found in their shared interest in the placement and juxtaposition of materials, textures and concepts.

In Kaneuji Tepei's *Sea and Pus* series, for example, the artist cuts out pictures of cosmetics from fashion magazines and pastes them onto photographs of completely unrelated subjects such as bears or abandoned Buddhist statues. Unlike

Kaneuji Tepei, *Teenage Fan Club.*

PHOTO COURTESY OF PROJECT FULFILL ART SPACE

the first-generation of Mono-ha artists, who opted for natural materials, Kaneuji uses everyday objects that appear to lack any significance in and of themselves and arranges them in a seemingly random patterns. This interest in the meaningless and the arbitrary can be seen as a reflection of the times we live in.

"The artists in the 1970s had very different ideas about things than we do. We are living in a world filled with commodities, objects and information. We have too much and no longer know what is important and what is not," the 33-year-old curator said.

SHIMURABROS, a sister-brother team, take images from a video show they made for a Japanese fashion brand last year and incorporate them into the video installation series *Eicon*. Displaying male models jumping, falling or spinning in extreme slow motion, the images are played in loop on monitors embellished with lacquer frames made by a Japanese master craftsman.

"The monitor [represents] technology, the lacquer-ware craftsmanship, and the images fashion," said Kaneshima. "The three things have nothing to do with each other and with art, but put together, they become an item of contemporary art."

Craftsmanship is a key concept in this

EXHIBITION NOTES:

WHAT: Contemporary Airy Craft From Japan (手感的妙)
WHERE: Project Fulfill Art Space (就在藝術中心), 2, Alley 45, Ln 147, Xinyi Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市信義路三段147巷45弄2號)
WHEN: Until Feb. 28. Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 1pm to 6pm
ON THE NET: www.pfarts.com

Kaneuji Tepei, *White Discharge.*

PHOTO COURTESY OF PROJECT FULFILL ART SPACE