

YI GALLERY



Sun Young Kang, *Memories, Veiled VII (detail)*, 2024,
Inkjet print on fine art paper, organza, wood frame 8 x 23 x 1 1/2 in 20.3 x 58.4 x 3.8 cm (SK0021)

Sun Young Kang *Memories, Veiled*

May 18 - June 29, 2024
254 36th Street, B634, Brooklyn, NY 11232

"My hometown is no longer home without my mother residing there. I searched hard but found no traces of her anymore. However, my mother still exists in my dreams, in a world of her own. In my subconscious, I reach out, but reality disrupts the connection."

YI GALLERY is proud to present Sun Young Kang's solo exhibition, featuring new work from the *Memories, Veiled* series and a site-sensitive installation spanning the three rooms in the gallery space. This is the artist's third exhibition with the gallery and first one-person show in New York City.

By using large curtains as partitions throughout the gallery space, the installation creates distinct sections and invites physical and emotional engagement from the viewers. A collection of small photographs, taken during Kang's residency last winter at the mansion of Yaddo in Saratoga Springs, NY, is suspended from the ceiling and hung on the walls. These photographs, some overlaid with fabric, come together to form an immersive spatial experience and also allow viewers intimate interactions with each photograph. Inspired by a picture capturing the artist's late mother almost tied in her bed, all covered by translucent plastic curtains, this project represents Kang's visual exploration of the room within the mother's mind during her final years, when she was isolated due to Alzheimer's and the pandemic. It reflects her sense

YI GALLERY

of isolation, longing, and struggle, as well as the uncertain reality and confusion she likely experienced. Additionally, it serves as a visual contemplation of the artist's own recurring dreams and the feelings of being unable to communicate, access, or understand her mother during that time.

In *Memories, Veiled* (2024), a series of framed photographs are covered and wrapped with semi-translucent fabric. The photograph as a medium, serves as a bridge for visual interactions, originally captured through the artist's eyes, and are now perceived by the audience through their own eyes. The mansion, a recurring motif in every photograph, represents both the private and the public, inviting yet isolating. Laden with a history of grief and loss, it carries the weight of memories and the longing for connection. It serves as a visual anchor, encompassing not only the physical space but also the layers of emotions and narratives intertwined within it. The deliberate gesture of overlaying photos with organza fabric obstructs visual perception, encapsulating the emotional weight that permeates the space. The visualization of the unapproachable realm of time and space creates a sense of distance and mystery.

In the exhibition, viewers are invited to experience the frustration, uncertainty, and inaccessibility depicted in the exhibition. Kang seeks to evoke a shared sense of longing and the desire to find answers. Through the use of curtains, a transparent fabric that adds to the ambiguity, viewers are placed both inside and outside. Together and alone, they become part of the project's scene, experiencing what others have experienced. As viewers navigate the exhibition, they find themselves in a state of isolation, despite their physical presence among others. They encounter visual inaccessibility and the constant search for clarity. The lack of clear vision invites contemplation of themes such as isolation, uncertainty, and the struggle to understand and be understood. Curtains, in their multifaceted nature, symbolize both passage and separation, creating scenes while simultaneously hinting at what lies beyond. They obstruct and suggest, cover and reveal, embodying the complexities of the human experience.

Sun Young Kang (강선영) is a book and installation artist. Originally from South Korea, Kang resided in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, PA for over a decade and currently she is in Western New York. Her work focuses on the duality fundamental to human existence: of different realities or worlds both in space and time and the tension between them; and of the coexistence of antithetical ideas, how death implies life, how the material realm implies the unsubstantial or nonphysical, and how absence implies presence. To explore this, Kang creates both physical and metaphorical spaces ranging from large room-size installations to intimate artist books. Kang received her MFA in Book Arts/Printmaking from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, PA in 2007, and BFA in Korean Painting from Ewha Women's University in Seoul, Korea. Kang was named the 2021 UAH Contemporary Art Fellow funded by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) American Community Grant Program at The University of Alabama in Huntsville. She is a recipient of the West Collection LIFTS Grant and Acquisition Award, 2020; New York Foundation for the Arts (NYSCA/NYFA) Artist Fellowship in Architecture/ Environmental Structures/ Design; Vermont Studio Center Fellowship, 2019; Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant Award, 2017-2018; the PRIX WHANKI 2017 from Whanki Museum/ Foundation in Seoul, Korea and the Center for the Emerging Visual Artists Fellowship in Philadelphia, 2013-2015. Kang's work has been included in numerous solo and group exhibitions nationally and internationally at venues including Whanki Museum, Seoul Korea; Queens Museum, NY; Whatcom Museum, WA; Carnegie Museum of Arts; Pennsylvania State Museum; the Susquehanna Art Museum, PA; Pittsburgh Center for the Arts; Mainline Art Center and Philadelphia Art Alliance, PA. Her work resides in the West Collection, Pennsylvania State Museum, Bainbridge Island Museum of Art, Museum of Modern Art Franklin Furnace Artist book collection, and numerous libraries' special collections.

Based in Sunset Park, Brooklyn, **YI GALLERY** produces five exhibitions annually. Guided by the commitment to provide an open and well-informed platform for conceptually rigorous and formally inventive projects, the poetic and critical program prioritizes context and discovery. Informed by the founder's international experience and interest in interdisciplinary inquiry, YI GALLERY aims to present a true reflection of the vitality and diversity of contemporary practices today. Through building a nurturing support structure for a focused roster of emerging artists, the aesthetically-oriented program fosters ongoing dialogue between local and international artists. Prior to launching a year-round exhibition program in October 2021, YI ran an itinerant curatorial project in New York City for three years.

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