

Barbara Wien**gallery & art bookshop**

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Haegue Yang***Mesmerizing Mesh – Paper Leap and Sonic Guard***

Exhibition: April 29 – August 20, 2022

Galerie Barbara Wien is honored to present a solo exhibition of new works by Haegue Yang. The artist's sixth solo presentation at the gallery introduces the series *Mesmerizing Mesh* (since 2021) in Europe. For this occasion, Wiens Verlag publishes the booklet *Mesmerizing Mesh – Paper Leap*.

The exhibition title *Mesmerizing Mesh – Paper Leap and Sonic Guard* underscores the two main elements of the show – paper works and Sonic Sculptures. Twenty-six collages from *Mesmerizing Mesh* form the exhibition's focus; alongside of this, two Sonic Sculptures are presented. Additionally, three wall-mounted Appliance Sculptures and a suspended Lantern Sculpture are on view.

Mesmerizing Mesh is a series of *hanji* (traditional Korean paper) collages. *Hanji* is made from the inner bark of the mulberry trees native to Korean mountainsides. The scarce yet distinctive use of paper in some regional shamanistic traditions in Korea inspired the artist to initiate this series. Across civilizations, individuals and collectives have used paper in various rituals to convey their wishes. These paper props are also used for purification or cleansing rites and often burned at the end. The diversity of these practices have informed the development of *Mesmerizing Mesh*. Among the myriad of compositions, some types appear repeatedly, such as "formation." This composition displays an array of geometric and abstract patterns referencing *sumun*, an ornamented paper sheet, which is hung from the ceiling in ritual sites to battle against evil spirits. In another compositional sample, figurative motifs dominate, referencing *nukjeon*, which shamans blow a spirit into.

In the north room of the gallery, sixteen *Mesmerizing Mesh* are presented, featuring geometric and figurative compositions with monochromatic backgrounds of black, red, and blue. Partially shown on a specially custom-made wooden structure, the motif of *gohei* from Shinto rituals in Japan is evident in the composition of some pieces. The south room presents ten *Mesmerizing Mesh*, revealing the similar use of paper objects in Korean as well as Japanese rituals. Some of them depict an assortment of figurative motifs, while others make reference to paper props, such as *nukjeon*, *Shinjang stick/ōnusa*, *geumjeull/shimenawa* and *Sungju flower*. The comparative observation is also disclosed in the accompanying booklet *Mesmerizing Mesh – Paper Leap*. Next to them, *Mesmerizing Lantern – Four Guardians in Crimson Mesh* (2022), a Lantern Sculpture made of *hanji*, is suspended from the ceiling. Four sides of the lantern are ornamented with motifs of four guardian deities symbolizing the cardinal directions – the Azure Dragon of the East, the Vermilion Bird of the South, the White Tiger of the West, and the Black Tortoise of the North – all made into red.

Two large Sonic Sculptures, woven out of bells and metal rings, are on view in both exhibition spaces. Appearing like transparent woven fabrics, two *Sonic Guards* (2022) are spread directly on the floor, covering optional objects. Table settings from ceremonies in Korea are arranged under *Sonic Guard over Ceremonial Formation – Blue*. Under *Sonic Guard over Domestic Formation – Crimson*, various common, yet old-fashioned food containers found in ordinary households in Korea are positioned.

In the south room as well as in the foyer of the gallery, three wall-mounted Appliance Sculptures are displayed. *Twelve Pyeongchang-gil Moisture* (2022) and *Seven Dircksenstraße Moisture* (2022) both bear street names in their titles and are made from kitchen sinks, covered with venetian blinds, and lit from within. The editions make reference to the homes of Yang in two different cities, Seoul and Berlin, addressing the idea of "double life" as well as the subject of "domesticity."

In the foyer, an info table with rare books provides further insight into various paper cutting traditions. These resources also shed light on Yang's reflection on how shamans and artists share a methodology of taking "mystic leaps" out of earthly materiality. The mystic leaps appear to reach language, aesthetics, communication, value, and all that lie outside the material. Just as shamanistic paper props bridge the dimensions of the living world and beyond, Yang activates *hanji* by layering, folding, carving, and attaching, to take the leap from material to the dematerialized.

Wiens Verlag is pleased to announce the release of *Mesmerizing Mesh – Paper Leap* on the occasion of this exhibition. Published in English, this booklet provides concise yet informative descriptions and illustrations of shamanistic rituals and paper cutting traditions, with a focus on Korea and Japan. The booklet outlines Yang's subjective reading of these various traditions, which led to the development of the *hanji* collages. It contains a richly illustrated chapter on the focal references and a full index of the 95 pieces of *Mesmerizing Mesh* made since 2021.

In the garage, a supplementary exhibition space in the courtyard, *Sonic Intermediates – Three Differential Equations* (2020) is on view. This three-part sculptural ensemble premiered in Yang's solo show *Strange Attractors* at Tate St Ives and was later shown at M HKA, Antwerp. Aside from the *Sonic Intermediates*, the wall-mounted rotating Sonic Sculpture *Sonic Rotating Whatever Openings on Hemisphere #4* (2021) and a selection of wall objects of the edition *Blank Rotating Notes* (2012) are exhibited.

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New publication: *Haegue Yang: Mesmerizing Mesh – Paper Leap*
Booklet with two separately bound sections in jacket, 72 pages together, 133 color images,
21 x 14.8 cm, Wiens Verlag, Berlin 2022, 15 Euro

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Haegue Yang (* 1971) currently lives and works in Berlin and Seoul.
Her main solo exhibitions were held at the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto (2020–21); Tate St Ives, Cornwall (2020–21); National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul (2020–21); The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2019–21); The Bass Museum of Art, Miami Beach, Florida (2019–20); Museum Ludwig, Cologne (2018); Centre Pompidou, Paris (2016); Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing (2015); Leeum Museum of Art, Seoul (2015); Haus der Kunst, Munich (2012–13); Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, Colorado (2011); Kunsthaus Bregenz, Bregenz (2011); New Museum, New York (2010–11); and the Korean Pavilion, 53rd Venice Biennale, Venice (2009), among others.

Her large survey exhibition presenting a focused selection of works at SMK National Gallery of Denmark, Copenhagen is on view until July 31, 2022.