

Kiaf SEOUL

A Conversation with Artist Myoung Ho Lee

Myoung Ho Lee: Artist

Tcheon-Nahm Park: Curator

2020



PARK: Hello, Mr.Lee

LEE: How are you, it's been a long time.

PARK: It's been 4-5 months since we met in spring. How have you been?

LEE: Recently non-face-to-face Changwon Sculpture Biennale has officially launched that I am part of. Currently, I am also working on my solo show at Goeun Museum of Photography in Busan next month and several projects.

PARK: You seem always busy. I am curious about Changwon Sculpture Biennale. Which work are you showing?

Lee: I am presenting 'Tree and Color_Changwon #1.' It is an extension of 'Photography- Act Project.'



Tree & Color_Changwon #1, Installation View

PARK: Could you tell me more about 'extension'?

LEE: It has been created in that area Changwon. You may think of it as an extension of my canvas work.

PARK: Since I haven't seen it yet, I am so curious.

LEE: Nothing big changes. Every process is the same as before, except there is a hologram panel instead of a white canvas. It is also different that it means as a site-specific installation work, rather than the result of a printed photograph. I have chosen the tree in the park in the downtown of Changwon.

PARK: There was so much rain and wind in the summer. Were there any issues regarding the installation?

LEE: Yes... there were some issues, I believe other artists as well. But thanks to our director Kim Seong Ho and the organizers' consideration and help, we could finish the job smoothly. Our staff worked so hard.

PARK: I don't know how big the tree is. I guess there is a structure behind the tree and the hologram panel is attached to the structure, then it seems that is needed different physical strength and technical reinforcement different from the structure supporting your other canvas works?

LEE: That's right. We placed on a solid base with concrete since it had to stay there during the exhibition and after the exhibition. The tree was almost 5 meters tall, so we made it very firm as putting H beams on the base and attached iron plates. The structure is about 3tons. It should be okay with heavy wind.

PARK: That doesn't sound easy to attach the hologram panels on iron panels.

LEE: Well, I meant we painted the iron panel with hologram paint, not using actual hologram panels. It is similar to painters using gesso on canvas as a base. Then, finished it with urethane coating on the paint.



Tree... #4, Ink on Paper, Type A(104 x 134cm), Ed 6 of 6 + 3 Aps, 2013

PARK: Very elaborate as I expected. Is there any reason why you used hologram?

LEE: As you know, what I keep emphasizing with 'Photography-Act Project' is the concept of 're-presence.' Of course, this work is an extension of it. Considering the character of the biennale, I wanted to bring a little variation to the way of 're-presence.' Also, I wanted to give the idea of an unfixed way of 're-presence', such as my work changes through viewers' walk path and movement. I believe hologram is the right mechanism, which reflects my idea properly.

PARK: You mean 're-presence' is something moving not fixed?

LEE: That is not wrong. I believe it is fascinating elements, possibilities or limits of photography and photography system. It is called depth in photography, I wanted to highlight the sense of realism as living lives that create various tensions by continuously interacting with visitors, rather than a fixed object and background are frozen on a flat surface, so-called printout paper. This is the reason why I keep working on 'Photography-Act Project.'

PARK: That's a very interesting concept. We can say an artist is a very first creator, appreciator, and critic. Do you think your 'Photography-Act Project' has somehow accomplished in a way of interacting with viewers?

LEE: It is not easy, but I believe appreciating artwork is different depending on the viewers' personal experiences and emotions. Contemporary art pursues recipients as viewers.

Can we say it is the era of 'Reception Theory'? Roland Barthes explained it as 'Reader Response Theory.' I always try to keep my mind open because viewers as appreciators interpret my way of object 're-presence' differently depending on individual experience and understanding, although I explain the concept of 're-presence' in my way through my own photography.



Tree... #6, Ink on Paper, Type B (93 x 78cm), Ed 4 of 6 + 3Aps, 2014

PARK: We should open our mind as opening a lens. Recently you've working on installation simultaneously, are you also going to show another installation work in your solo show at Goeun Museum of Photography?

LEE: Yes. When I work, I start with my eyes and finish with lenses. My viewers take it through eyes of mind called 'eye', so I think the sympathy about my way of 're-presence' keeps changing and moving. That means, the way of appreciating artwork and the way of re-presence are not fixed for an artist and viewers, but every time they change by the world surround and all energy around. One of the effective ways of deliver it is my installation work now, which allows comparing and experiencing physical process of operating photograph, and recipients or appreciators. I hope my work functions as productive opportunity by continually verifying and extending the possibilities of each other, instead of separating lens and eye, provider and recipient, and reserving each other's decision and consensus.

PARK: Lastly, if you have anything you want to say to your viewers, please be short.

LEE: I guess many viewers might be the same. When I 're-presence' an object, as it called 'representation', I also go through extremely difficult process by closely overlapping my personal or social experience and thought, and exploring an object, and time and space where it places, and a long meditation. I hope my viewer to have more opportunities to experience extended meaning of photography, rather than just understating classic meaning of photography. Thanks so much.

PARK: Thank for your words.

LEE: Thank you.

