



Rimn



# CHAE, RIMM

Artist of Ottchil (Korean traditional lacquer)

RIMM 林

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# Symbolism in Poetry by Lacquer Painting

Lee Yongwoo | Art Academic, Professor at Shanghai University

Chae Rimm continuously worked with lacquer before it became a new form of contemporary art. Creating a new form of contemporary art was a great challenge that required tremendous tenacity and extensive experimentation because it was impossible to achieve by merely changing forms of work or developing new lacquer painting techniques. First of all, the artist should prove that lacquer painting is an art genre that can be elevated to the level of non-functional discussion from functional art through her work, and it should transcend the complex conceptual definition and boundaries of contemporary art. What is more, theories of contemporary art tend to delve into experimentation and the zeitgeist with focus on process as well as the political, social, and cultural independence of the work rather than functional perfection.

Chae Rimm's 'lacquer painting' is firmly rooted in tradition, but it is also evolving into something wholly original and ever more diverse. Her art attracts great attention for her elegant handling of lacquer, traditional craftsmanship underpinned by perfect technique of meticulous jewelry design, and her willingness to bring crafts and contemporary art together as one. If contemporary art is provocative fusion cuisine created by joining experimental, challenging concepts and subversive values of the material and the non-material, behavior, and the avant-garde, Chae Rimm's art is poetic, emotional landscape of savory flavor created by lacquer painting.

To be sure, we must look into Chae Rimm's art more deeply and duly understand that it is contemporary art based on craft tradition and technique. Even so, it is a fresh shock to see lacquer painting as contemporary art. She seems to be advocating strongly against narrowly defining crafts merely as traditional art or products by master craftsmen, which is what those who promote crafts today tend to do. Her tireless ambition and originality show where functionally important traditional art comes into confluence with non-functional contemporary art.

Chae Rimm's 'lacquer painting' conjures up the *matière* effect of oil painting that was prominent in the early 20th century. Referred to as 'aesthetic interpretation' of canvas, *matière* work began when artists found that many changes could occur on the surface of canvas, paper, and the like used as the primary material for 2-dimensional painting, depending on the quality of material. Artists can give oil painting a unique texture by applying paints thickly or thinly depending on the nature of oil paint and by applying the touch of the brush in different ways. Accordingly, *matière* can be seen as the end-result of techniques that can be used for materials in appropriate ways, and the aesthetic effect varies as much as the intentions of each artist. The texture of the 2-dimensional surface of Chae Rimm's lacquer painting projects extremely varied and refined sense of beauty created by adjusting the thickness and depth based on the functional perfection of lacquer painting. This unique effect on surface alone creates a variety of landscapes, and the diverse spectrum of colors reveals lyrical sensibility.



Diverse surfaces created by applying layer upon layer of lacquer over and over again acquire unique color, luster, and shine. Such effect is brighter and more provocative than that created by using a brush on canvas. The effect of *matière* on canvas shows the beauty of incomplete color sense emitted from the liquid ingredients of paints. In contrast, the vague luster produced from lacquer painting has a dreamlike, provocative, painterly quality reminiscent of the *Sfumato* technique used by Leonardo da Vinci. The curved lines seemingly moving upwards riding on green, dark blue, red and black recall the upward strokes of calligraphy in a cursive style.

Chae Rimm confirms the fact that the surface becomes extremely diverse and exudes an uncommon air of mystery when techniques of raw lacquer, refined lacquer, and refined black lacquer—which are used to produce lacquerware inlaid with mother-of-pearl— are applied to create a painterly surface. Chae Rimm’s complex forms can be described as 3-dimensional planes or sculptural painting, and they are a result of perfect technique and should draw the viewers in. Furthermore, the way in which the sleek and refined, detailed craftsmanship appears when brought together beyond functional and lyrical aspects with expanded social and cultural subjects will be a subject of research study.

Chae Rimm challenged 3-dimensional art with confidence in painting she acquired based on the functionality she had perfected as a jewelry designer. Just as she expanded the realm of craftsmanship by lacquer painting, Chae Rimm recreates lyrical and flexible 3-dimensional sensitivity of sculpture in relief or panels of the past, while controlling decorative nature of jewelry design. As she discovers her own texture and aesthetic motivation on her journey, Chae Rimm’s art becomes of class of its own, a colorful genre of contemporary art called ‘hybrid aesthetics.’

The term ‘hybrid’ is frequently mentioned today in discussion of complex combinations of forms of art because it involves the intersection of radical and experimental adventures as well as an aesthetic revolution in the concepts or forms of description. Revolutionary, subversive spirits of the avant-garde have informed contemporary art since the very beginning, and applause for such conceptual art and its tyranny fuel so much discussion today.

As in the case of beautiful lacquer painting by Chae Rimm, the meticulous craftsmanship of a kind that is hardly taught at art colleges today is barely included in discussions on conceptual contemporary art. In contrast, fields that have attracted wide interest, such as performance art by Marina Abramović, who uses her body with remarkable skill, are widely discussed. It is not because the human body is much more social than traditional media but because it has sensitivity and expandability of expression. It is conceptual art that started doubting and inquiring about the tradition of regarding visual art as something composed when artists express their ideas with certain materials and techniques. In other words, it involves criticizing the irony of a flat thing, that is, painting,

assuming historical, aesthetic, and economic meaning as soon as it leaves the hands of the artist. In this regard, Chae Rimm’s art language invites us to see objects again through the lens of lacquer art, lacquer techniques which have been used for centuries, and the end result is uncommonly beautiful.

Chae Rimm poses questions about the situation where materials assume totally different social values as soon as they become functional, as is true of jewelry or personal ornaments. She focuses on finding differences between ‘material’ without functions and the ‘non-material’ to which function is given, and then expresses differences in sensitivities between the things functional and things painterly in detail. Accordingly, function is a label, and she puts symbolic poetry that leads us to discard our prejudices derived from such social label in the container of expanded art called lacquer painting. In other words, Chae Rimm puts on the clothes of pure art once again so that the vital phenomenon of beautiful colors and figures of unique entities can be observed.

# Through the Light of the Forest

Robert C. Morgan

Ms. Chae Rimm’s work as a visual artist has evolved from years of training as a jewelry designer long before she became known for her elegant and original lacquer forms. She eventually went on to develop a complex form of sculptural relief. Her method involves the application of multiple coats of lacquer on wooden panels embedded with mother-of-pearl. As a technique indigenous to Korean art, the resulting surface ultimately reveals a beatific resonance of silent, glimmering beauty. When her art is placed within a living space, it has the potential to transform and thus enhance the quality of living within that space.

Upon discovering Chae Rimm’s background as a jewelry designer, I was reminded of the Bauhaus architect Mies van der Rohe who also trained as a jeweler before decided to work on a monumental scale as an architect. In either case, there is a kind of intimacy associated with the design of jewelry that involves working with precious metals and rare stones. These forms of intimacy are capable of both evoking pleasure and, at the same time, exceeding the limits of the human body. In the work of Chae Rimm, her jewelry would eventually move into forms that possessed a larger-scale, lyrically designed presence. Her transcendent lacquer surfaces continue to indulge those who response to her fastidious attention to craft and her intuitive sense of decorum.

Jewelry is generally understood as a decorative form of art that enhances the appearance of the body, particularly the face of the person wearing it. There is little doubt that this aspect of jewelry is well known to Chae Rimm. Even so, she had aspiration to move her career into another sphere simultaneously whereby her lacquered surfaces on hard wood surfaces often accompanied by mother-of-pearl, along with metal ornaments in various metals, including 22 carat gold. One can speak of numerous works by this artist in which the lacquer and metal techniques are staggering.

Take Song of the Wind in the Forest, for example, a work that constitutes nothing less than a major artistic breakthrough for the artist. She has referred to this work in the following way: “I chose to deviate from traditional lacquer techniques and follow the inspiration and energy coming from within. With my previous projects, I had created my lacquer work through repeatedly applying, drying, and grinding lacquer approximately 40 times. However, in the case of ‘Song of the wind in the forest’, I focused on depicting the texture of bark with a new and different type of lacquer technique. The irregular patterns mimic the lines of nature, giving the viewer a sense of a vast and grand landscape, looking down upon trees or a forest from high above.”

I am further intrigued by a series of work, titled Walking in the Forest(English Title), from the current year. The horizontality of these lacquer reliefs holds an undulating quality. The impact of her floral design constructed with carefully placed silver insets, resembling fresh fallen snowflakes on the ground is brilliantly imaginative. The blue-gray ground built up from the translucence of the various layers of lacquer give the appropriate effect to her narrative theme.

Both “Song of the wind in the forest” and the works that comprise “Walking in the forest” continue the artist’s pursuit of mimicking the lines of natures, each in their own forceful way. The rhythmic aspect of these recent works is given to an over-all rhythmic sensation rather than a linear one. What is impressive about these works is how they hold their own space, creating a kind of spatial identity, which is also a cultural identity, in the sense of being Korean.

Her work enacts the formal essence of an aesthetic approach that allows these fascinating forms to come alive. On another level, they portray a kind of Eastern materialist understatement in the sense that the materials are imbued with a spiritual meaning, which holds the potential for contemplation.

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Professor Emeritus of Art History at the Rochester Institute of Technology, Robert C. Morgan is an artist, art historian, and critic.

In 2005, he was a Fulbright Senior Scholar in the Republic of Korea, and in 2011, was inducted into the European Academy of Sciences and Arts, Salzburg. Author of many books, monographs, and essays (translated into 21 languages) he divides his time between Manhattan (New York) and the Hudson River Valley.



Song of the Wind in the Forest

45 x 90 cm

Ottchil(Korean lacquer), hemp cloth, mother-of-pearl, silver on wood

# The Lyric that Sings Nature

Kim, Bokgi

1.

Contemporary art is now in the era of ‘deconstruction of the genre.’ The distinct boundaries of genre are collapsing to the point that the expression 'form' no longer seems to have any meaning. Artworks that subvert all forms of visual art, for instance, the traditional formative elements such as subject matter, material, substance, figure, color, and composition are steadily being presented in the art world. There are rapid movements that disrupt the matter of the form through drastic cross-genre. The sea of 'hybrids' is spreading out from the well of so-called ‘purebred’ before us.

Chae Rimm’s work may be also considered as ‘hybrid art’ in the context of contemporary art. Chae started her career as a jewelry designer. However, she created a unique oeuvre by consistently expanding on materials and technique, and opening up her expressions. The key factor of her artworks is to combine a base 'cultivated’ through Ottchil (traditional Korean lacquer), and three-dimensional forms of jewelry crafts. In this context, one may understand the word ‘Jewelry Painting,’ coined by a foreign art critic.

2.

Chae Rimm uses Ottchil to create her base. She paid attention to the beauty of traditional crafts such as Najeonchilgi (lacquerware inlaid with mother-of-pearl). Ottchil’s color and brilliance is obtained through dozens of repeated processes of strenuous manual work on wood. The picture screen reveals various expressions depending on the different concentration and saturation of Ottchil. The fluid composition as liquid spreading, rapid brushstrokes like a gale, sleek surface like the face of pure water, dreamy pastel tones like a landscape from a distant memory, sfumato with vague boundaries as if it were foggy... The artist does not stop here. She brings hemp to her picture screen in order to emphasize the effect of matière. The mysterious nuance conjures up the deepest floor of the paleo-sea, tactility of a pitch-dark night, or the surface of an unknown planet. Everything mentioned above is reminiscent of a model of nature (or the universe). In fact, the base alone meets sufficient requirements for painting.

Chae Rimm plants and grows jewelry craft on the field of this cultivated base. She corresponds the base with not only traditional gems including amber, coral, jade, but natural gems such as turquoise, azure stone, aquamarine set on silver as well. The artwork embroidered with traditional mother-of-pearl is full of charm. The surface effect of the delicately glowing shell is the distinct characteristic of mother-of-pearl. Try to bring back memories from your childhood. Remember the cabinet decorated with mother-of-pearl in the main room of your childhood home. The mysterious color mother-of-pearl emits! It reveals different patterns as the viewer shifts. The pattern of 22K gold plated silver is not something you can see every day. The patterns are modern depictions of traditional Symbols of Longevity such as the Sun, mountain, water, pine tree, cloud, elixir plant, deer, turtle, and crane in a modern way. When the jeweled pattern is placed on Chae's picture screen that

is like a miniature version of nature, it shines like a symbol of the birth of life and harmony of space.

The encounter between the Ottchil base and jewels. This rendezvous unfolds into a variety of combinations, such as a butterfly fluttering on the flower field, petals floating on the surface of a pond, grass laying neatly along the road, full leaves in the well-shaded forest, a flock of birds crossing the windy sky, a quietly rising fog at sunrise, echoes that ring to the peaks of the mountain, a twinkling nebula in the night sky....

Chae Rimm writes a lyric poem like a literary girl who is full of emotions. The lyric that sings nature! In front of this world of serene meditation, we slip endlessly and endlessly into the profound internal world. The deep reflection into the mental world eventually leads us to an enigmatic universe and the mystical light of our existence, and finally gives us the joy of tasting the glorious nobility of life.

3.

Chae Rimm’s art is constantly evolving. She now presents works that have developed jewelry craft into a three-dimensional form. She is extending her oeuvre into sculptures and installations, applying the awareness of volume and color of jewelry craft. Her recent work, <Orchard Sky>, made with welded brass, avoided decorative features of jewelry craft and became a refreshing 'space drawing'. At this point, Chae's work will no longer have to be associated with the term craft or design. The world that Chae Rimm, who started from jewelry design, has reached is a truly fascinating outcome of a breakaway.

Chae’s art has an important formative task that must constantly be worked on. It is to apply tradition but go beyond it, and extend this tradition in the present by striking into the modern world of today. In order to take a step closer, her work must go overcome the physical combination of ‘jewelry+painting.’ Her works contain not only the issue of genre, that is, between craft and painting, but truly invaluable critical discourses on contemporary art as well. Tradition/modernity, way of the East/skill of the West, flatness/solidness, illusion/objet, nature/civilization, past/present, fine/practical... It always will be interesting to see how the artist, Chae Rimm, will work with these binaries, and the figurative development of subversion, dissolution, deconstruction, and synthesis.



# The Musing Forest

Seo, Seong Rok

Rimm is a troubadour who sings nature. Dense forests, silent ponds, and crepuscular evening scenery are present in her works. Wild flowers, shyly peeking out can also be seen. A friendly nod and kiss with the wild flowers, whispers from the forest fill the screen. The artist recites the song of nature and introduces her companions like Orpheus, who affected the plants and animals.

The main motif for Rimm's works consists of nature, such as trees and forest. The artist creates unique landscapes using Korean lacquer, mother-of-pearl, and silver, instead of a brush and paint. Rimm, who enjoys forests and trees, was inspired by Claude Monet's Giverny garden. This garden, designed and cultivated by Monet, is widely known as the location for Monet's immortal masterpiece, Water Lily. Monet's works serenely encompasses the quiet ambience of the forest, including flowers and fruits. If Western Modern paintings with nature as motif 'assign subjects' or are 'self-projective', Rimm's works show clear contrast, by avoiding excessive intervention of subjectivity, and capturing the 'pure vitality' from the 'musing forest'.

## Walking in the Forest

Images of plants are prominent in Rimm's works. Obscure lines, unknown whether they are vines, leaves or tree branches, intersect, tangle, overlap, and slip with each other and make various expressions. The floating images of ecology decorate the screen and expand like vines. It starts miniscule, but gradually widens, and ultimately transforms into an enormous flow. This is clearly shown in Walking in the Forest (2014-2017), which embodies arcane scenery of the forest. This work started as 7 pieces, then increased into 9, 13, and drastically into 17 pieces for this exhibition in Hakgojae Gallery. Once the pieces are placed together, they create an illusion to the audience, as if they are in an uninhabited, deep forest. The breeze brushing through leaves, dense fragrance, solitary aura, and refreshing air of the forest caress the audience.

However, we are astonished by the fact that RIMM's works are created with traditional craft techniques, not with paint. The artist prepares her surface by applying numerous layers of lacquer, and creates textures of tree barks with silver to embody picturesque images of the forest.

Rimm's background in jewelry design probably had some effect on her usage of lacquer instead of oil paint, but her persistence to emphasize unique qualities of lacquer had the most impact. The work process of lacquer painting is known to be advanced and meticulous, requiring repetitive procedures, such as applying 40 layers to accomplish a perfect surface. Through this process, the artist is able to achieve unique color, sheen, and texture. Lacquer, being sticky and sensitive to temperature, advanced technique is required to manipulate it. I believe this delicate quality rather amplifies Rimm's passion. The surface, accomplished by laborious processes, demonstrates nature's beauty with its unique sheen and elegant colors.

## The Place of Tranquility

Rimm's works invite the audience to a musing place. She does not use images other than plants, and emphasizes the motifs. In other words, Rimm's screen seems restrained, but through this, shows the potential of communication through 'tranquility'. The works in Hakgojae Gallery's exhibition such as Song of the Wind in the Forest (2016), Spring in My Hometown (2017), Peach Flower, Apricot Flower and Azalea (2015-2017), Pine Tree (2015), Dancing Willows (2017), have this quality. As it is said in Caigentan, the refreshing trait and beauty of wind and flowers may only be mastered by someone who enjoys tranquility, Rimm's works are tranquil, because she believes life's delicacy can be felt in the center of a forest, where the wind is subsided and the waters placid. The calm and musing world in Rimm's works guides the audience to a quiet and still world.

Although 'tranquility' is an important part of our lives, we accept endless sounds and noises as a price for the convenience of using modern technology. Here, we agree to Max Picard's claim, 'If there is no place for silence in humans, language will become incomplete, separated from the truth and beauty'. Thomas Merton deemed that the recuperative powers of tranquility does not end by influencing individuals, but 'is a necessity for the revival of genuine communication'. Rimm choosing to use this subject in a period infested with noise and flooding speed is significant.

Recently, Rimm has held numerous solo exhibitions not only domestically, but internationally as well, at Princeton Gallery (New Jersey, U.S.), BDMC Gallery (Paris), Able Fine Art Gallery (New York) and more. Rimm has also received the 'Solo Award' in Artexpo New York, expanding her activity range. This year, she was selected for 'Start Art Fair', supervised by Saatchi Gallery (London), and had the chance to present her works. The artist's recognition in various stages is not only promulgating the excellence of Korean culture, but demonstrates craft technique's ability to create magnificent artworks.

While looking at Rimm's images, it feels as if the veil of sentiments has draped over the worn out everyday life and its busyness. Rimm's works accompany the encounter with nature and life, like the delight of meeting a flower in a tranquil place, while walking through a forest. I believe this encounter will present an unexpected 'bundle of thrill and joy'.



# Treasured Erosions

Jill Conner

The mountainous landscape across Korea and China is one of the most understated wonders of the world. The seemingly arid rocks stack high toward the sky and give root to light-weight looking deciduous trees that give vibrant color to otherwise rough, stoic surfaces. The juxtaposition seen throughout this temperate environment continues to generate a particular exotic mystique. In the sculptural paintings of Rimm, “The Ten Symbols of Longevity” appear and disappear through thick-ets of metal-smithed foliage. Rimm’s reductive representations of such a volume-filled subject further construes individual curiosity while her lyrical, calligraphic forms build a sense of illusion and atmosphere.

These traditional processes are referred to as ‘ottchil’(lacquer), ‘saengchil’(raw lacquer), ‘heuk-chil’(black lacquer) and ‘chaechil’(colored lacquer) to create ‘najeonchilgi’, the incorporation of nacre with lacquer.

Rimm’s close attention to miniature details further elevates the role of iridescence in Asian art and also renews the significance of surfaces made with the glow of polished sea shell. Unlike silver and gold, nacre reflects a range of light pastel colors that appear and interact with light that reflects upon it. Within new compositions in an exhibition titled “Chanson de la forêt” (Song of the Forest), Rimm takes viewers through the idea of undiscovered wilderness such as forests, mountains, trees, wind and sunrise.

Rimm’s sculptural paintings range from single to multiple panels since her aim is to create a sense of outdoor space. Vast expanses of dark blue, green, red, gray and black lacquer give way to busy networks of shiny, leaf-like forms. “At Sunrise” presents a graceful, curving line of tiny gold fronds that hold calligraphic carvings of clouds and water. While making one’s way around the composition, smaller shapes signifying deer, turtles, and pine trees emerge. The sun, pine trees and bamboo are defined by the light reflecting a range of tones across the dark lacquer surface. The shadows that appear opposite to the vast expanse of gold filigree transform the shiny surface into a suggestion of ocean water, as it appears still under moon and morning light.

The three vertical panels that comprise “Evergreen” show two squares of dark red around one square of dark green. Both hues represent the life cycle of this particular tree when it is robust with water and when it is without. “Pine Tree” on the other hand is a cylindrical sculpture that is balanced against a dark frame, with carved nacre objects on one side and silver on the other. This piece suggests a larger-than-life size branch of sharp needles that, when examined closely, are dozens of small representations showing the crane, water, clouds, deer, and bamboo. Before taking the viewer further into the larger context of a forest, Rimm presents “Mountain” a similarly reductive composition when seen next to “Evergreen”. However “Mountain” is a single square of black lacquer with two circles of white, leafylike forms, in the upper left and right corners. Both appear above a long line of silver that moves horizontally across the surface, curving every now and then, suggesting either the erratic, rocky landscape or a river, as a downward flow of water.

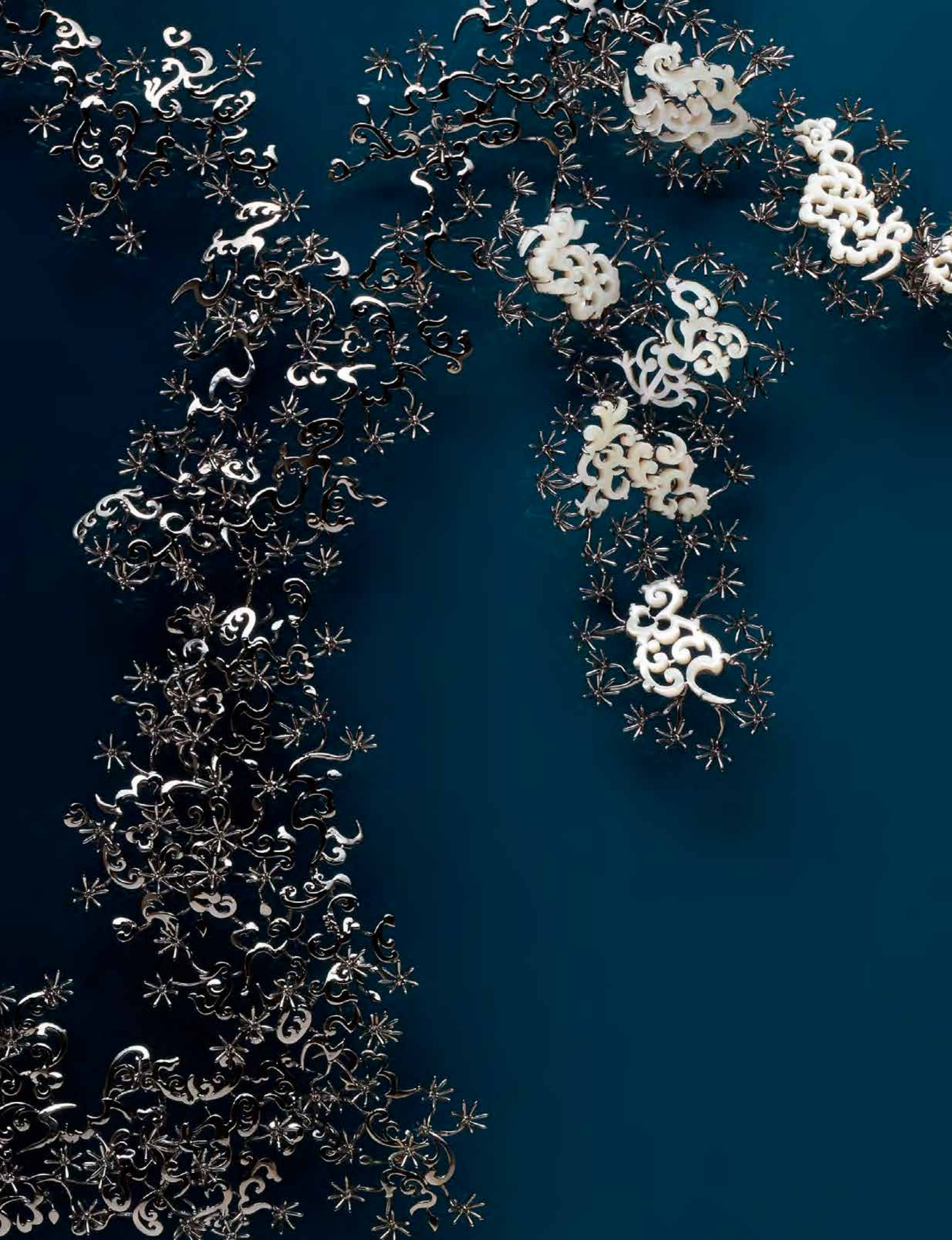
The last four compositions take the viewer into the wilderness and begins with “The Forest”, which is a two-panel piece that appears to represent the growth pattern of trees, across land, when seen from a high, aerial view. The track of these plants appears as three separate curving lines that diverge at the edge of each panel. Rimm maintains a consistent, even rhythm by also applying light shades of nacre on the ends. The silver pieces seen in the center appear much darker as each component reflects a different intensity of the shiny black surface.

The bird’s-eye view of nature’s migration turns into a heightened experience of complexity within Rimm’s grand sculptural painting titled “Walking in the Forest”. This particular painting consists of 13 panels that carry a base color of iridescent blue. Rimm clusters and expands the small, metallic and nacre forms that bear the Ten Symbols of Longevity. Through elegant repetition, the artist shows these small elements as larger, singular groups that take on their own collective.

Rimm then goes even deeper into this impression of untamed wilderness beginning with “Trees and Wind Variation”. Silver filigrees lace the corners of four panels that are seen against a warped and weatherworn surface. The artist’s decision to impose the texture of a cracked surface beneath her intricate metal-smithed networks reveal her attempt to represent the idea of wind, something that is felt but not seen. In “Song of the Wind in the Forest”, Rimm presents 11 panels that carries on with the motif of the disrupted flat surface. Except this seemingly wear and tear is not the direct result of rain, wind and condensation. But instead, these round-yet-square-like forms thatch together into the forms of the rocks that stack, shape and stretch into the mystical mountain range above.

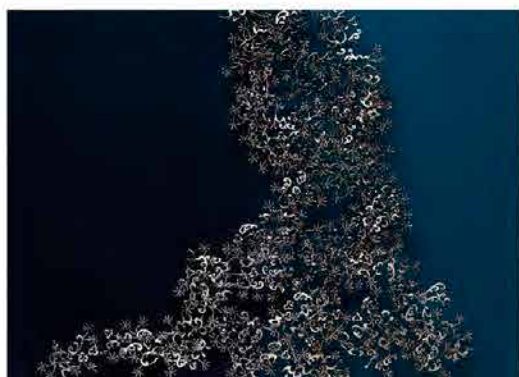
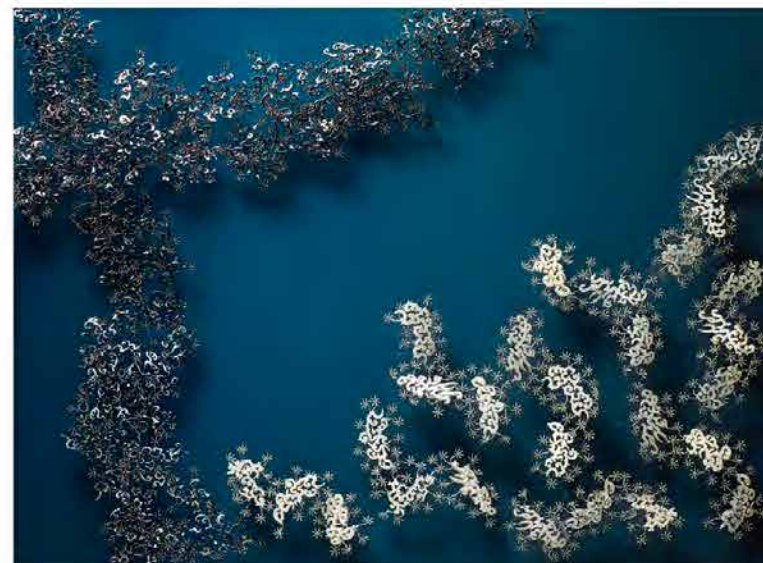
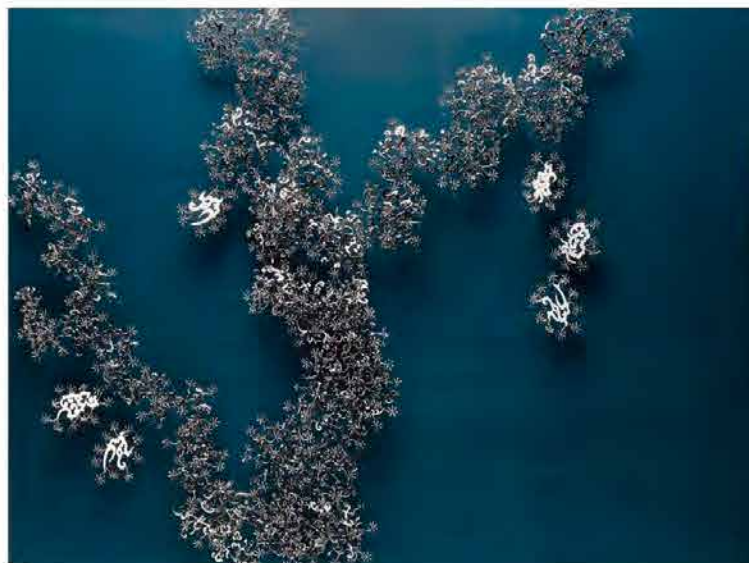
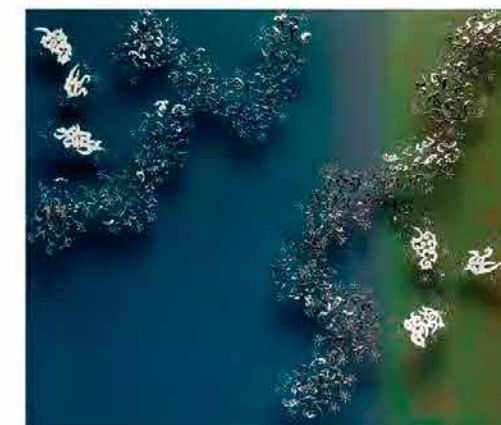
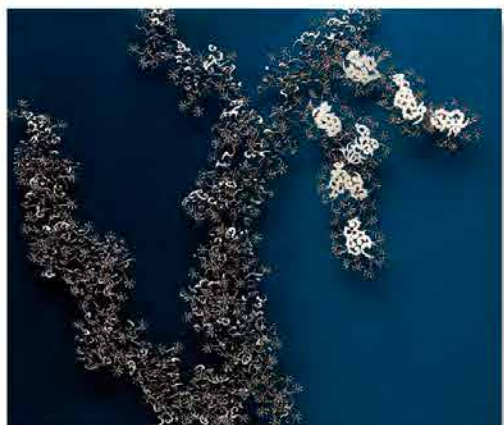
Rimm’s sculptural paintings are heroic. She consistently presents work where meaning and experience are delicately embedded within layers of intricate details. To each viewer, Rimm sets forth the challenge to not only learn “The Ten Symbols of Longevity” but to experience them through the process of meditation. “I will never forget how breathtaking it was to see my work reflecting the majestic ceiling of the Grand Palais”, state Rimm. “I feel that this light and reflection effect is what deeply touched the heart of the French people at the exhibition held in the Louvre and the Grand Palais.” In 2015 Rimm received Le Prix Eugène Fontenay as part of Le Salon International du Patrimoine Culturel du Louvre.





Artwork









## Dancing willows

2017

*Ottchil(Korean lacquer), hemp cloth, mother-of-pearl, 22K gold plated silver on wood*

122 x 162 cm





## Blue fog

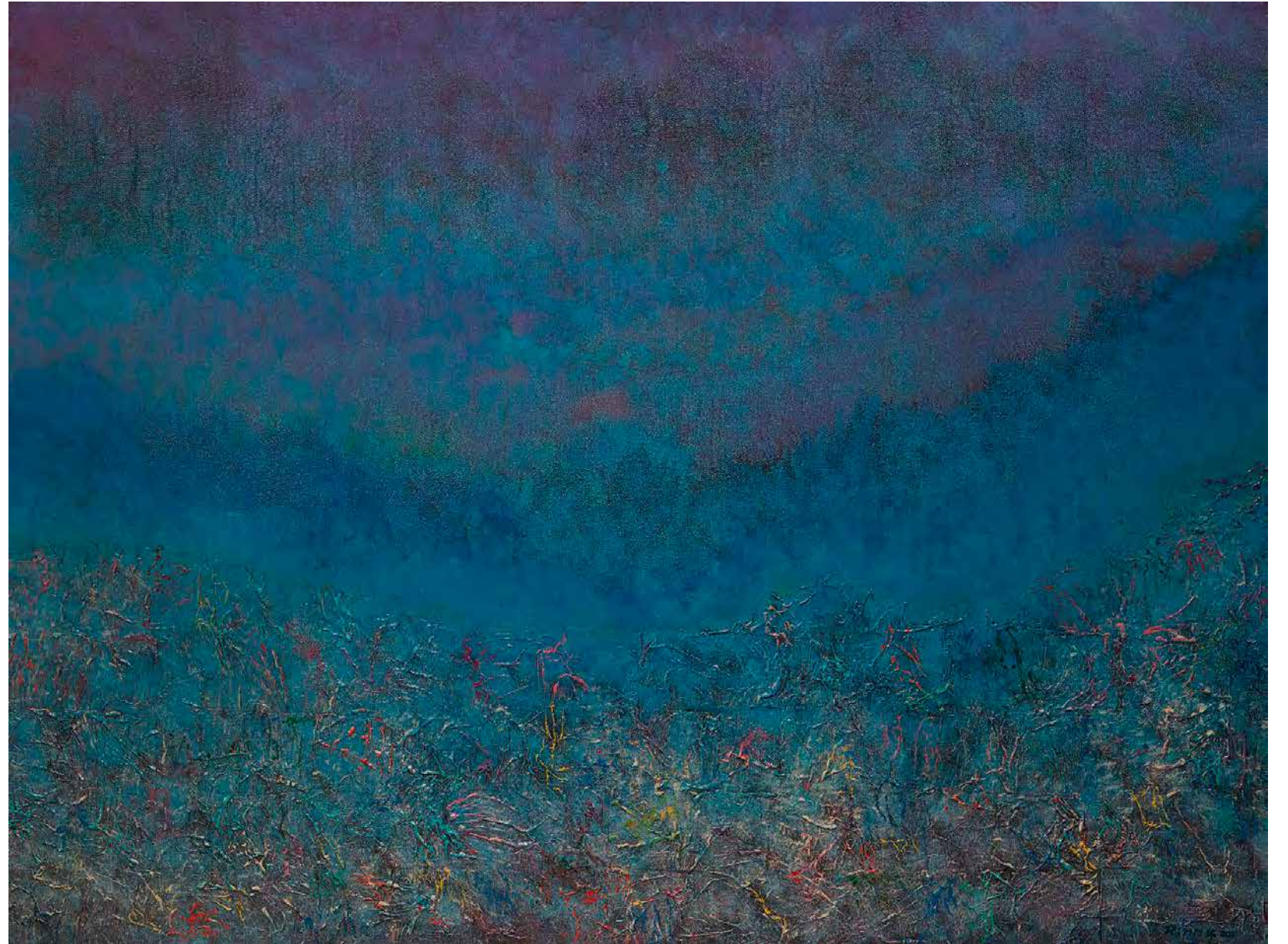
2017  
*Ottchil(Korean lacquer), hemp cloth, gemstones, silver on wood*  
 122 x 162 cm



## Sky, sea and poem

2020  
*Ottchil(Korean lacquer), hemp cloth, gemstones, silver on wood*  
 122 x 162 cm





## The Good Earth

2021  
*Ottchil*(Korean lacquer), hemp cloth, Korean paper on wood  
122 x 162 cm





## The Good Earth

2021  
*Ottchil(Korean lacquer), hemp cloth, Korean paper on wood*  
 122 x 162 cm



## The Good Earth

2021  
*Ottchil(Korean lacquer), hemp cloth, Korean paper on wood*  
 122 x 162 cm





## The Good Earth

2021  
*Ottchil(Korean lacquer), hemp cloth, Korean paper on wood*  
 60 x 70 cm



## The Good Earth

2021  
*Ottchil(Korean lacquer), hemp cloth, Korean paper on wood*  
 60 x 70 cm





# Dreaming

2018

Ottchil(Korean lacquer), hemp cloth, mother-of-pearl, pearl, 22K gold plated silver on wood

122 x 162 cm





## Dreaming

2018  
*Ottchil (Korean lacquer), hemp cloth, gemstones, silver on wood*  
 162 x 122 cm



## Dreaming

2018  
*Ottchil(Korean lacquer), hemp cloth, mother-of-pearl, pearl, silver on wood*  
 122 x 162 cm





## Field path

2018

Ottchil(Korean lacquer), hemp cloth, mother-of-pearl, 22K gold plated silver on wood

45 x 90 cm 4ps

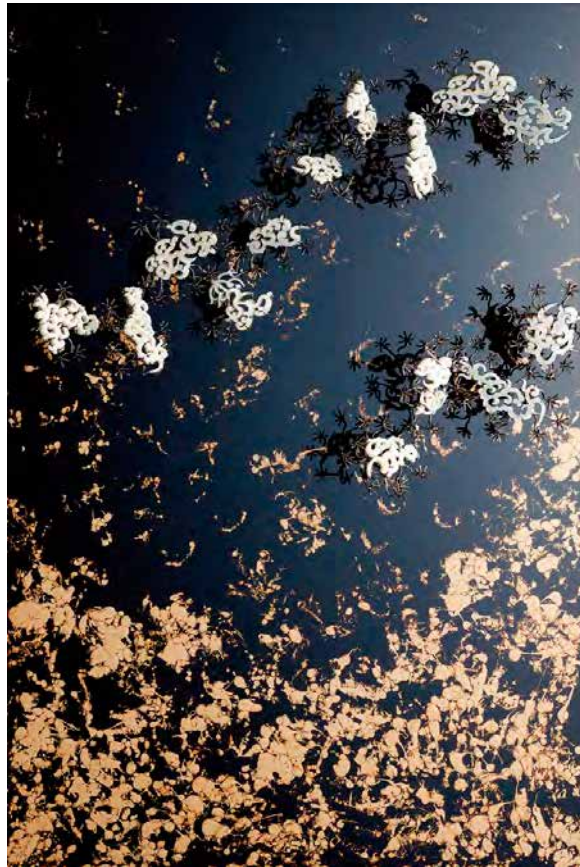




2018 Solo Exhibition

Nature Meets Nature, Art Meets Art-The Musing Forest  
Hakgojae gallery, Seoul





## Awaiting

2017

*Ottchil (Korean lacquer), hemp cloth, mother-of-pearl, silver on wood*

60 x 40 cm 4ps





Prine tree

2015

*Mother-of-pearl, silver, Ottchil(Korean lacquer)*

150 x 122 x 30 cm





Forest

2014  
Ottchil (Korean lacquer), hemp cloth, mother-of-pearl, silver on wood  
180 x 60 cm



Forest

2014  
Ottchil (Korean lacquer), hemp cloth, mother-of-pearl, silver on wood  
180 x 60 cm





## Song of the wind in the forest

2016-2017

Ottchil (Korean lacquer), hemp cloth, mother-of-pearl, silver on wood

50 x 45, 50 x 150, 50 x 45, 50 x 60 cm

45 x 59, 45 x 100, 45 x 90, 45 x 65 cm

60 x 120, 60 x 83, 60 x 110 cm





From a distance

2020  
*Ottchil(Korean lacquer), hemp cloth on wood*  
122 x 162 cm

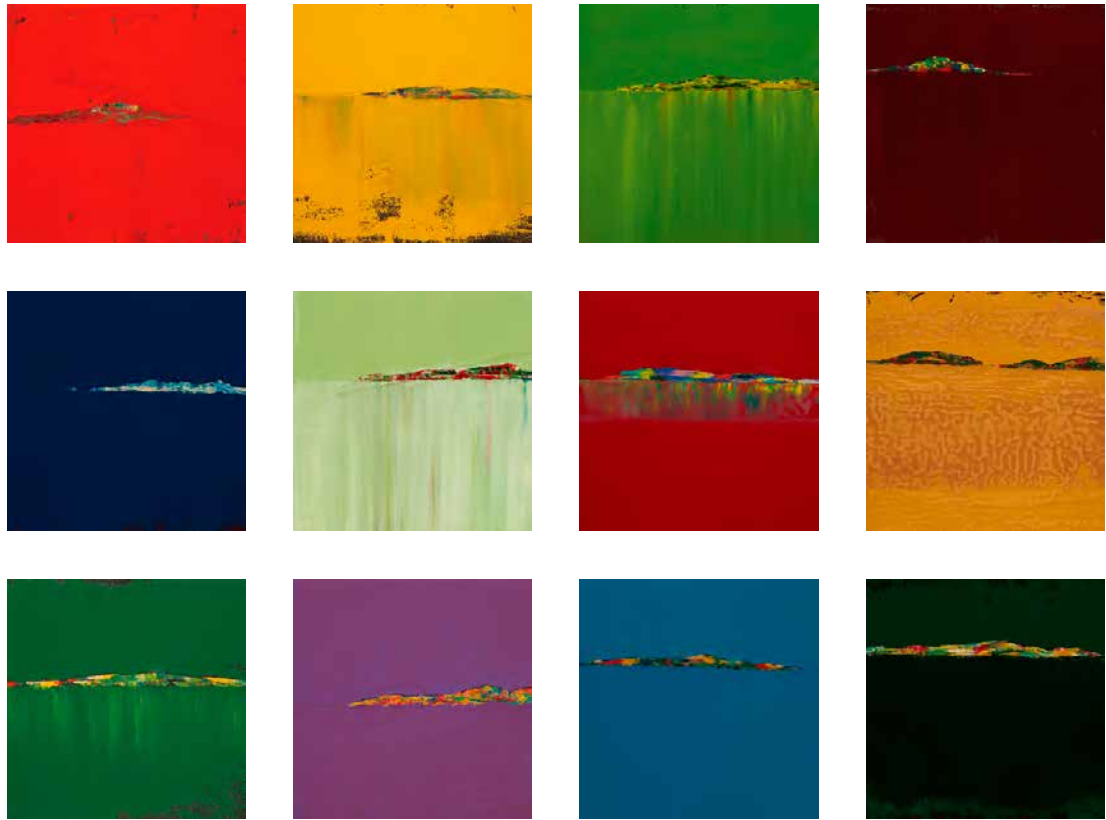




From a distance

2019-2021  
Ottchil(Korean lacquer), hemp cloth, Korean paper, mother-of-pearl, pearl, silver, brass, gold leaf, silver leaf on wood  
20 x 20 cm 105ps





Au milieu de la vie

2021  
Ottchil(Korean lacquer), hemp cloth on wood  
20 x 20 cm 12ps



Au milieu de la vie

2021  
Ottchil(Korean lacquer), hemp cloth on wood  
60 x 70 cm





2021 Solo Exhibition

Ott, Au milieu de la vie  
Hakgojae gallery, Seoul

Au milieu de la vie

2021  
Ottchil(Korean lacquer), hemp cloth on wood  
27 x 35 cm 7ps



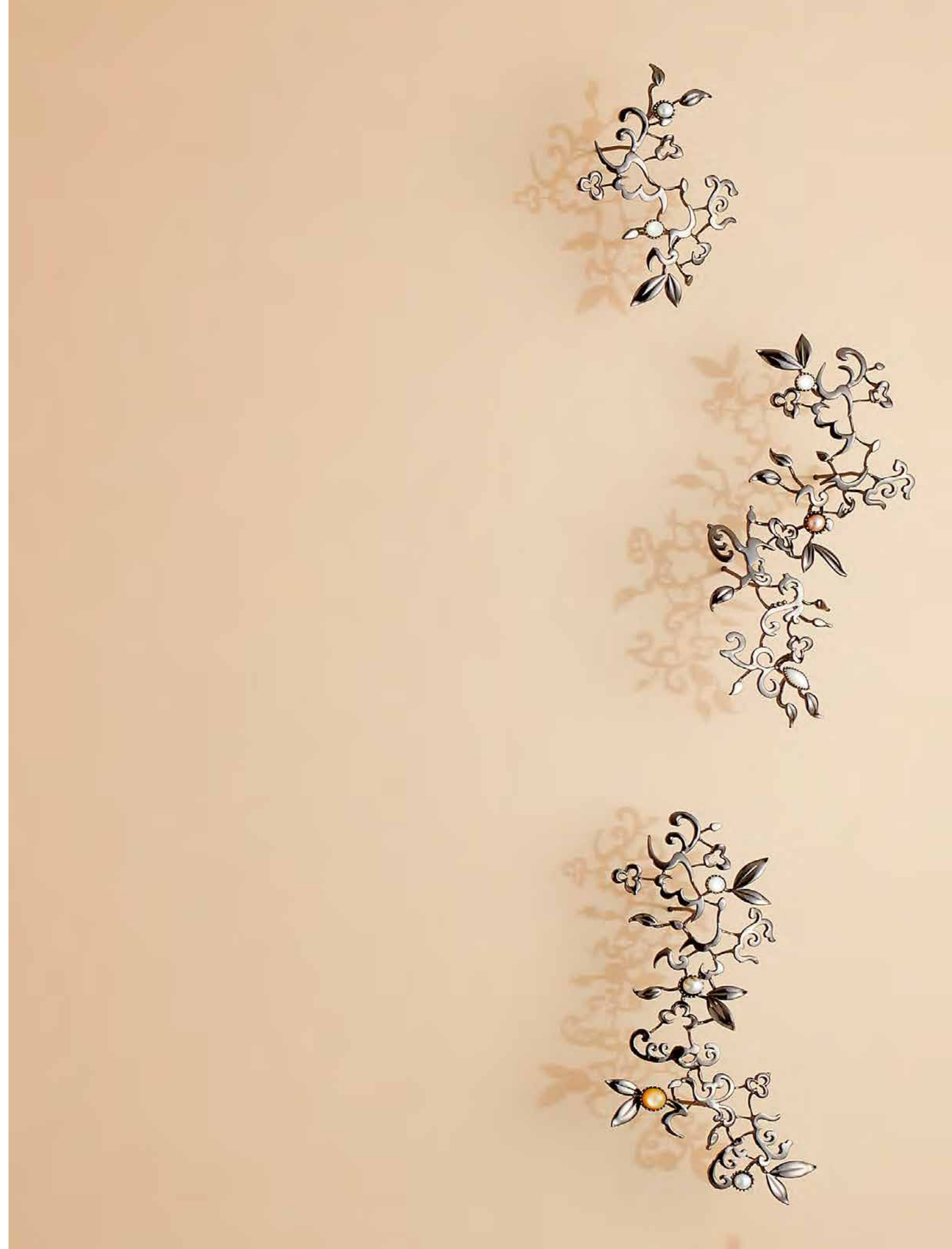


## Spring in my hometown

2017

Ottchil (Korean lacquer), hemp cloth, mother-of-pearl, pearl, silver on wood

50 x 70 cm 4ps







## In the passage of time

2018  
*Ottchil(Korean lacquer), hemp cloth, mother-of-pearl, pearl, 22K gold plated silve on wood*  
 45 x 90 cm 2ps

## Musing forest

2018  
*Ottchil(Korean lacquer), hemp cloth on wood*  
 45 x 90 cm 2ps





Windy landscape

2018  
*Ottchil(Korean lacquer), hemp cloth, mother-of-pearl, pearl, silver on wood*  
 122 x 162 cm



Blooming landscape

2018  
*Ottchil(Korean lacquer), hemp cloth, mother-of-pearl, pearl, silver on wood*  
 122 x 162 cm





Talking with trees

2018  
Ottchil(Korean lacquer), hemp cloth, mother-of-pearl, gemstones, silver on wood  
48 x 48 cm 21ps





## Sky & Secret garden

2018

*Ottchil(Korean lacquer), hemp cloth, pearl, silver on wood*

58 x 58 cm 4ps





## Sky in the orchard

2018-2019  
Mother-of-pearl, brass  
48 x 48 cm 3ps







After the rain

2019

Mother-of-pearl, pearl, brass

250 x 250 cm





Artist's note



# Artist’ note

Chae, Rimm

I started designing jewelry in 2000, with the ambition of creating “Wearable Art.” However I had always longed for an outlet to further express my creativity. Adding my experience of 20 years as a jewelry designer to the traditional art of lacquer, I started creating “sculptural paintings.”

In his critique of ‘Through the Light of the Forest’, Robert C. Morgan mentioned that “As a technique indigenous to Korean art, the resulting surface ultimately reveals a beatific resonance of silent, glimmering beauty.” This embodies the notion of ‘motion amidst rest.’

While the traditional najeonchilgi technique involves attaching the mother-of-pearl to the surface with a hot iron, my work pursues a unique form of beauty, which is created by setting the mother-of-pearls onto a lacquered canvas with silver prongs. Thus, each piece created is both flat and voluminous, traditional and contemporary, painting-like and sculptural all at the same time. By using not only mother-of-pearl but also different precious stones such as traditional gemstones (such as coral, amber, jade, lapis lazuli, tiger’s eye), pearls, turquoise, my art represents the meeting point between painting and sculpture, conceptualism and realism.

Previously, my work has taken the form of “sculptural paintings,” bringing both painting and sculpture together into one. However, more recently I have started to take the opposite approach by deconstructing and separating these two genres in my art. While my previous work focused on the traditional smooth finish of the lacquer, some of my more recent work focuses more on color and texture. Although my work is based on traditional Korean lacquer paintings, the bold use of color and repetition of points and lines bring these paintings closer to Western art.

For the past few years, I have been working on ‘Arirang Cantabile,’ a series of artwork that captures various Korean landscapes including Jeju Island, Yeosu, and the south coast of the peninsula. My work embraces both the real and the abstract, as well as techniques from both the eastern and western worlds. The rich imagery and metaphors embodied within my artwork brings its viewers into a sentimental world of past memories.

Recently, I reinterpret ‘jitae ottchil,’ a traditional technique in which lacquer is applied upon paper. After applying coats of lacquer and ‘hanji’ (traditional Korean paper) upon hemp fabric, I apply a final coat of lacquer. In my work, I freely play around with the unique hues and textures of hanji by creating colorful collages and flattening ripped pieces together.

Created from various natural materials such as lacquer, hanji, hemp, and mother-of-pearl, Chae’s artwork fondly reminds viewers of memories and traditions from their own lives. This series of art brought together invites viewers into a vast yet fantastical world.

Working with traditional precious materials such as lacquer and mother-of-pearl, which both date back to traditional times, I have felt that my work embodies both the past and present. It excites me greatly to imagine how these two different genres will further collaborate in the future.



## From a distance

2021  
*Ottchil (Korean lacquer), hemp cloth on wood*  
27 x 35 cm 2ps





# Curriculum Vitae



CHAE, RIMM

1963 Born in Seoul  
1986 BA, Ewha Womans University, Seoul  
1989 MA, Ewha Womans University, Seoul  
2009 GIA G.G.  
A member of the ADAGP  
Lives and works in Seoul

Solo Exhibitions

2021 Ott, Au milieu de la vie, Hakgojae, Seoul  
Dancing Willows, Space 776, New York  
The Earth, Ewha Womans University Seoul Hospital Art Cube & Wellness Zone, Seoul  
2019 From a distance, Hakgojae Cheongdam, Seoul  
2017 Nature Meets Nature, Art Meets Art – The Musing Forest, Hakgojae, Seoul  
Song of the Forest, Able Fine Art Gallery, New York  
Encounter Myself in the Forest, Gallery Row, Gyeongju, Korea  
2016 Resonance, Gallery BDMC, Paris  
Princeton Gallery, Princeton, U.S.

Group Exhibitions

2021 Art Busan, BEXCO, Busan, Korea  
Korea Galleries Art Fair, COEX, Seoul  
2020 Art Busan & Design, BEXCO, Busan, Korea  
Korea Galleries Art Fair, COEX, Seoul  
ART3F, Paris Expo, Paris  
2019 KIAF, COEX, Seoul  
Tree, straightness fullness gorgeousness, Kyungwoon Museum, Seoul  
3<sup>rd</sup> International Biental de Arte Barcelona, European Museum of Modern Art, Barcelona, Spain  
Taipei Dangdai, Nangang Exhibition Center, Taipei  
2018 SCOPE Miami Beach, Miami Beach, U.S.  
AQUA Art Miami, Aqua Hotel, Miami Beach, U.S.  
Artrooms Fair Seoul, Riviera Hotel, Seoul  
Art Taipei, Taipei World Trade Center, Taipei  
Texas Contemporary, George R. Brown Convention Center, Houston, U.S.  
ART Santa Fe, Art Santa Fe Community Convention Center, Santa Fe, U.S.  
International Fine Art Cannes Biennale, Cannes Palace, Cannes, France  
CONTEXT New York, New York  
Artexpo New York, Pier 94, New York  
Venezia Art Expo, Scuola Grande della Misericordia, Venice, Italy  
Korea Galleries Art Fair, COEX, Seoul  
2018 Pyeongchang Olympic Memorial Exhibition, Dual Exhibition in Lacquer, Korean Cultural Center, Tokyo  
ART STAGE Singapore, Marina Bay Sands, Expo & Convention Centre, Singapore  
2017 Art Kaohsiung, Pier-2 Art Center, Kaohsiung, Taiwan  
Withartfair, Grand Intercontinental Seoul Parnas, Seoul  
Art Taipei, Taipei World Trade Center, Taipei  
KIAF, COEX, Seoul

Start Art Fair, Saatchi Gallery, London  
Art Jeju, Hyatt Regency, Jeju, Korea  
Art Busan, BEXCO, Busan, Korea  
Artexpo New York, Pier 94, New York  
Korea Galleries Art Fair, COEX, Seoul  
Salon des Indépendants, Grand Palais, Paris  
2016 France-Germany Exhibition, Kunstraub99, Cologne, Germany  
Salon Art Shopping, Carrousel du Louvre, Paris  
ART3F, Brussels Expo, Brussels  
Down and Out in Paris and London, 5<sup>th</sup> Base Gallery, London  
ART3F, Toulouse Exhibition Park, Toulouse, France  
Paris Contra New York, Space In Arts, New York  
Artexpo New York, Pier 94, New York  
Korea Galleries Art Fair, COEX, Seoul  
Contemporary Art in Korea & India, Cultural Center of India, New Delhi, India  
2015 Salon des Indépendants, Grand Palais, Paris  
International Cultural Heritage Fair, Carrousel du Louvre, Paris  
DK 2015 – Korea Jewelry Design, Kintex, Goyang, Korea  
Korea & China Arts Festival – An Jung-Geun the Hero, Effloresces in Harbin, Harbin, China  
2014 Salon des Indépendants, Grand Palais, Paris  
Fila Korea International Stamp Exhibition, COEX, Seoul  
2013 Cheongwadae Sarangchae Jewelry Exhibition, Cheongwadae Sarangchae, Seoul  
ClIFF, Conrad, Seoul  
2012 Cheongwadae Sarangchae Jewelry Exhibition, Cheongwadae Sarangchae, Seoul  
2011 Premier World Fashion – Formal Style Gala, Grand Hyatt, Seoul  
2010 Formal Style Gala for G20's First Ladies, Grand Hyatt, Seoul  
2009 Seoul Design Olympiad – Best of Best Jewelry Design, Seoul Sports Complex, Seoul  
100 Contemporary Metal Craft Artists of Korea, Gallery Gac, Seoul  
2008 Formal Style Forum (Hosted by KOFOSA), Ritz Carlton, Seoul  
2007 Jewelry Fashion Show with Vera Wang & Roberto (Hosted by Casa & DongA TV), Habitat for Humanity Korea, Seoul  
2006~16 Korea Jewelry Design Association Exhibition

Awards

2021 Gold Prize, Special Prize, Selected, 41<sup>st</sup> International Modern Art Contest Exhibit, Korea Paintings & Calligraphic Association, Seoul  
2018 Director's Award, Artexpo New York, New York  
Leonardo da Vinci International Art Award, Borghese Palace, Florence, Italy  
2017 Solo Award Winner, Artexpo New York, New York  
2016 Gold-Minister Award, Good Design Award, KIDP, Seoul  
Grand Prize, 15<sup>th</sup> International Jewelry Design Competition, Korea Jewelry Design Association, Seoul  
2015 Eugène Fontenay Award, International Cultural Heritage Fair – AIAM, Carrousel du Louvre, Paris  
Selected, Good Design Award, KIDP, Seoul  
Gold Prize, 14<sup>th</sup> International Jewelry Design Competition, Korea Jewelry Design Association, Seoul  
2014 Gold Prize, 13<sup>th</sup> International Jewelry Design Competition, Korea Jewelry Design Association, Seoul  
2013 Selected, 5<sup>th</sup> Korea National Icon Design Competition, Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs, Seoul  
Selected, Good Design Award, KIDP, Seoul



Selected, 32<sup>nd</sup> Grand Art Exhibition of Korea – Design Department, Korean Fine Arts Association, Seoul

Specially Selected, 9<sup>th</sup> World Jewelry Design Contest, KOFJI, Seoul

2009 Selected, 44<sup>th</sup> Korea Design Exhibition, KIDP, Seoul

2008 Specially Selected, 27<sup>th</sup> Grand Art Exhibition of Korea – Design Department, Korean Fine Arts Association, Seoul

Specially Selected, G-Design Fair, Korea Design Center, Seongnam, Korea

Gold Prize, 7<sup>th</sup> International Jewelry Design Competition, Korea Jewelry Design Association, Seoul

2005 Silver Lipped Cultured Pearl Award, 30<sup>th</sup> International Pearl Design Contest, Mikimoto, Tokyo

Selected, 30<sup>th</sup> Japanese International Pearl Design Contest, Mikimoto, Tokyo

2001 Asian Facet Award Winner, JDMI Signity, Hong Kong

Bronze Prize, 28<sup>th</sup> Japanese International Pearl Design Contest, Mikimoto, Tokyo

