

Liu Jianhua

March 31 – April 29, 2023
1/2F, Pace Gallery Seoul

Opening Reception: March 30, 5–7 PM



Liu Jianhua, *A Unified Core*, 2018 © Liu Jianhua

Seoul–Pace is pleased to present an exhibition of sculptural installations by Liu Jianhua at its arts complex in Seoul. The presentation will focus on Liu’s mastery of porcelain, a material he has been experimenting with since 1977, when he began working as an apprentice in the Jingdezhen Pottery and Porcelain Sculpture Factory—the oldest established center of ceramic production in China. Significant series from the artist’s oeuvre will figure in his upcoming show in Seoul, including *A Unified Core* (2018); *The Shape of Trace* (2016–2022); *Blank Paper* (2009–2019) and *Lines* (2015–2019).

Through his works across sculpture and installation, Liu explores themes of accumulation and impermanence, using ceramics, found objects, artifacts, and detritus as means to examine Chinese history and culture. His longstanding engagement with porcelain can be understood as part of centuries-old craft traditions in China. Liu also uses this material as marker of contemporary development within the context of globalization.

The bodies of works included in Pace’s forthcoming exhibition underscore the artist’s increasingly philosophical approach to form and abstraction, which has characterized his practice in recent years. In 2008, the artist moved away from the sociopolitical themes that had previously informed his work, focusing instead on simple, pure forms to meditate on histories of visual culture in China. This approach has resulted in the sculpture series *Blank Paper*, in which thin sheets of white porcelain are hung on the wall, as well as the series *Lines*, for which the artist creates coiling ribbons of porcelain that intersect and collide at various points on the wall.

Liu’s 2018 installation *A Unified Core*, also on view in the show in Seoul, comprise approximately 500 white teardrop-shaped pieces of porcelain suspended from the ceiling. As viewers walk around the work, they experience an immersive environment that encourages deep, serene contemplation.

Other highlights of the exhibition include the artist’s recent series *The Shape of Trace*, which serves as an investigation of various threads of human cultural development throughout history. Through its lyrical form, this porcelain work evokes the passage of time and the long arc of history. The material of this sculptural installation has great significance within the history of the artist’s own practice—as such, Liu’s use of porcelain for the work aligns with its conceptual focus on evolution and progress.

Liu will participate in the 14th Gwangju Biennale in Korea, which opens on April 7 during the run of his exhibition with Pace in Seoul.

Liu Jianhua (b. 1962) began his career in 1977 by working at the Jingdezhen Pottery and Porcelain Sculpture Factory. In 1985, he was admitted to the Fine Arts Department of the Jingdezhen Pottery & Porcelain College, majoring in Sculpture. After graduating in 1989, Liu went on to teach at the College of Fine Arts at the Yunnan Institute of the Arts. Since 2004, Liu has been a professor in the Sculpture Department of the Fine Arts School of Shanghai University. Creating sculpture and installations in porcelain, found objects, and other materials, Liu responds to Chinese culture and

material history within the context of globalization. He was selected to participate in 14th Gwangju Biennale in 2023.

Pace is a leading international art gallery representing some of the most influential contemporary artists and estates from the past century, holding decades-long relationships with Alexander Calder, Jean Dubuffet, Barbara Hepworth, Agnes Martin, Louise Nevelson, and Mark Rothko. Pace enjoys a unique U.S. heritage spanning East and West coasts through its early support of artists central to the Abstract Expressionist and Light and Space movements.

Since its founding by Arne Glimcher in 1960, Pace has developed a distinguished legacy as an artist-first gallery that mounts seminal historical and contemporary exhibitions. Under the current leadership of President and CEO Marc Glimcher, Pace continues to support its artists and share their visionary work with audiences worldwide by remaining at the forefront of innovation. Now in its seventh decade, the gallery advances its mission through a robust global program—comprising exhibitions, artist projects, public installations, institutional collaborations, performances, and interdisciplinary projects. Pace has a legacy in art bookmaking and has published over five hundred titles in close collaboration with artists, with a focus on original scholarship and on introducing new voices to the art historical canon.

The gallery has also spearheaded explorations into the intersection of art and technology through its new business models, exhibition interpretation tools, and representation of artists cultivating advanced studio practices. As part of its commitment to technologically engaged artists within and beyond its program, Pace launched a hub for its Web3 activity, Pace Verso, in November 2021.

Today, Pace has nine locations worldwide including a European foothold in London and Geneva, and two galleries in New York—its headquarters at 540 West 25th Street, which welcomed almost 120,000 visitors and programmed 20 shows in its first six months, and an adjacent 8,000 sq. ft. exhibition space at 510 West 25th Street. Pace's long and pioneering history in California includes a gallery in Palo Alto, which operated from 2016 to 2022. Pace's engagement with Silicon Valley's technology industry has had a lasting impact on the gallery at a global level, accelerating its initiatives connecting art and technology as well as its work with experiential artists. Pace consolidated its West Coast activity through its flagship in Los Angeles, which opened in 2022. Pace was one of the first international galleries to establish outposts in Asia, where it operates permanent gallery spaces in Hong Kong and Seoul, as well as an office and viewing room in Beijing. Pace's satellite exhibition spaces in East Hampton and Palm Beach present continued programming on a seasonal basis.

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