

“I collaborate with nameless women”

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'Blue Hammock' (2010, loan form the Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas, USA).
[Photo Gallery Art Link]

A small gallery near the Jungdok Library in Samcheong-dong, Seoul. When you enter the building surrounded by red bricks, visitors will be surprised by the installation. It is a delicate hammock made by sewn pieces of old worn uniforms that somebody has worn. A lot of threads hanging down under those old cloths are shaking. The title of the work is 'Green Hammock'. One of the representative works of Oh Ke-Sook Lee(78), who has been working with thread and installation based on her life and experience, which belongs to permanent collection of the Spencer Museum of Art, University Kansas, USA.

Gallery Art Link 'Life traces'

Traces of Women's Hard Work has Reborn as an Artwork

“Trusting Comforting and Caring Women's Heart and Strength”

Oh, Ke-Sook Lee solo exhibition at the gallery Art Link, Seoul, A 'Green Hammock' is hanging in the exhibition titled "The Place Where Life Passes," that is filled with a message of respect and dedication to the women of this world by the artist working with needles and thread.

I can help to noticed in the first place by the 'Blue hammock' made with uniforms of US Army Woman's Nurse from the battlefield of Vietnam.

As I worked in to the store of recycling used US Army items, I saw the piles of familiar helmets, canteen, blankets, uniforms holding beds, that recalled my memory of the Korean war witnessed when I was nine years old. I wanted to touch the wounds left by the war, and I wanted to keep the traces of the women who looked after wounded soldiers among them. "

The writer whom I met at the exhibition hall said with a voice like a girl. "Even though it is a uniform with a sad memories of war, I wanted to reconstruct it as something that would make someone's body rest comfortably." "The hidden story of the wounded souls on the battlefield" I expressed it in a thread that was hanging down. "

Lee Kyung-eun, the director of the gallery, said, "Although Oh Ke-Sook Lee has left the country and worked in the United States, her work has been influenced by the theme of 'Asian' and 'Women' I have been fascinated by her work that has evolved for identity and has been planning her exhibition since 2012 ". This exhibition is the third exhibition to be opened at Artlink.



Oh, Ke-Sook Lee, 'Journey ' (2019, hand embroidery thread, Korean paper, mixed material, 188x206x30cm).
[Photo Gallery Art Link]



Oh, Ke-Sook Lee, 'Fruit Sacks' (2019, Fruit Sacks Recycled, Mixed Materials). [Photo Gallery Art Link]



Oh, Ke-Sook Lee, 'Her Hand' (Mixed Materials) [Photo Gallery Art Link]



Oh, Ke-Sook Lee, 'Her Hand' (Mixed Materials). [Photo Gallery Art Link]

In addition to the 'Blue Hammock', the installation works of 'Her Hand', 'Fruit Sack (Empty Breast)', 'Placenta' and 'Journey' attract attention. The material is cloth that have been worn by old women and traces of women's hand embroideries that transcends nationality. By incorporates her work with used clothes and vintage household linen that had been embroidered and crocheted by unknown women, artist praises the women's hard work and their creativity that blossomed in such a way.

In 1963, she graduated from Seoul National University and went to the United States, earned her post graduate study at the University of Missouri, and majored in painting from Kansas City Art Institute in 1982.

When she was awarded with her oil painting, it made her realized that painting could be painted by anyone. Since then, she has burned all of the paintings. The time of the wandering has become a long trail for her to find her way of making art with her voice of as an Asian woman.

“When I looked back the History of Art, countless women's images are made by men, lacking female point of view. I wanted to make art draw women through my feminine experience and memory. “

"I tried to work with Korean calligraphy ink and rice paper, but I also think that materials are all male stuff too. Then the hand stitch I had learned from my grandmother were recalled. My grandmother, who embroidered a red thread on my socks, did not know how to read and write but knew how to express her heart with the embroidery "



Oh, Ke -Sook Lee, 'Traces # 3' (hand made Korean paper, handmade mixed material, 51 x 41 cm, 2019). [Photo Gallery Art Link]

Her “Thread drawings” started like that. Since 1999, she brought in vintage handkerchiefs, cloths, and knitting races of 'nameless' women from the used market to her works. I put my own embroidery on the work left by unnamed women.

Oh said, "I wanted to include my grandmother's legacy in contemporary art. When I work with a piece of cloth that shows the labor traces of women around the world, I am working with women in the world beyond my work." The exhibition extends by July 18th.

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78year old Installation Artist Oh, Ke-Sook Lee,
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