

Minjung Kim

Regeneration

Apr 26 — May 25, 2024 | Paris, Matignon

Almine Rech Paris is pleased to announce *Regeneration*, Minjung Kim's first solo exhibition with the gallery, on view from April 26 to May 25, 2024.

Minjung Kim's time in her studio is led by the tenants of experimentation and reaction. Over the course of close to 40 years engaged as an artist, Kim's practice has consistently fed itself inherently. Each body of work responds to the one that came before it in a slight, but steady ascent toward newness.

It's within this practice that Kim found a calling that began when she was a child in her father's printshop in Gwangju, Korea. A chance discovery of hanji, a sturdy mulberry tree paper that's been used for practical purposes, such as insulation and recordkeeping, since the 1st century BCE, connected Kim with the material that would come to define her work.

In the years since, hanji paper has remained the constant in an ever-evolving practice. Creating new work with ancient techniques of mark-making, Kim uses a simple toolbox that yields endless possibility. Rather than creating on the basis of a narrative, the artist remains focused on the materials in front of her and their unique qualities. She doesn't set forth a plan prior to beginning a work, instead engaging with the medium in front of her to yield a result that is secondary to the process itself.

With *Regeneration*, Kim upholds this premise with a continuation of ongoing bodies of work as well as a new series born out of recent discoveries in the studio, from which the exhibition receives its title. Aptly produced ahead of the shift in seasons from winter to spring, the works spawn from leftover paper that Kim brought into contact with leftover watercolor. The resulting pink hues that spread across the paper's surface glow with new life as though born from the beauty of discovery. In *Regeneration*, a duality of old and new, present in Kim's entire practice, comes to the forefront and introduces an endless score of philosophical underpinnings.

Through this gesture, Kim coalesces two things that would otherwise be discarded, countering what she calls the "violent" gesture of throwing away materials with the chance for fresh opportunity. Questioning the way we ascribe value to an object as well as value systems on a more macro level, the artist elevates the materials in front of her while creating her a personal embodiment of the phrase "one man's trash is another man's treasure."

The remaining works in the exhibition share this sentiment, each the outcome of Kim's continual refinement of and dedication to a process-based investigation. Pairing her instinctive nature with instantaneous action, she demonstrates the easeful way equilibrium, balance, and harmony can be achieved – through death, new life emerges.

There is a deep knowing in all of Kim's practice. She mirrors centuries-old histories of art-making and philosophy with the contemporary landscape in a continual effort to introduce original forms and imbue spirituality within the physical realm. In a world that seems to be in constant search of new, "better" technology, *Regeneration* proves that, through the embrace of what already exists, newness is perpetually possible.

— Maria Vogel, writer