

As young children, the Queen and the General first met outside the impenetrable walls of the imperial castle. The Queen demanded that her guards kill the many pigeons that nested atop the walls, but because the walls were so high, the guards could not reach the pigeons. The clever General, who came from a family of beggars, fed the pigeons grains of fortune-rice, which caused the pigeons’ stomachs to explode. The Queen, who had always been fascinated by death and carnage, immediately realized that she had found her perfect partner for life, her soul-mate.

They were both 7 years old when the Queen had the General’s family killed and brought him to the castle, where he was educated in all matters of combat and warfare. By the time he reached his adolescence, he had already become by far the greatest warrior in all the empire, and thus became the general of the Queen’s army. He cut off the heads of 444 warlords, and conquered the entire eastern hemisphere. He cared for the Queen, and followed each and every one of her orders without question. When the Queen ordered him to find the rulers of peaceful neighboring kingdoms and to pluck out one of each one’s eyes, he complied. Despite his violent profession, the General would go home to his wife and children, and would forget about the killings.

During her 89th year of reign, people began to say that the Queen’s mind had become infected by demons. The extreme selfishness of her goals grew more apparent to the General, and for the first time, he hesitated upon hearing her orders. Still, he followed the Queen’s wishes to ride a Pegasus into space and destroy all the planets, moons, and stars that were visible from the Earth. She had developed sleeping problems, and said that the lights in the sky bothered her at night. And so according to her wishes, the skies became starless. Upon returning, the Queen was disgusted by the appearance of the Pegasus. In fact, the Pegasus was not entirely visible to the human eye, and could only be perceived as blurs of color and light. When she demanded that the General cut off the wings of the Pegasus, he replied, “But the Pegasus has no wings.”

The Queen grew increasingly suspicious of those around her, and began to fear that a conspiracy was being planned. The General wasn’t afraid of the Queen, but the Queen was afraid of him. Her paranoia affected her perception of the general, as he no longer appeared human to her. Through her eyes, he took on the form of a large beast with golden fur and a hideous face which appeared drawn and anxious. She locked herself inside her castle, and never came out. She sent her three sons, who had been trained as royal assassins to the General’s house to kill him. But the General killed them, and fled the kingdom, while the Queen issued a decree of the General’s banishment. From inside her castle, she would peer out from behind the walls in fear, knowing that the General was very well capable of killing her and her entire army. Wandering in the wilderness, the General would gaze sadly upon the walls of the kingdom, hoping that the Queen would forgive him.

The General would continually circle the entire kingdom, killing any armies which might attempt to invade. He did this half out of boredom, and half out of the hope that the Queen might appreciate his efforts and forgive him. After 149 years passed, the General became a part of the wilderness, turning into stone. Realizing this, the Queen finally left her castle, went out into the wilderness and smashed the stone General into dust. When news of the General’s death had spread, the Queen’s kingdom was invaded and conquered by her enemies.

——— Casper Kang

Although possessing a great sense of spontaneity and improvisation, Casper Kang creates his artworks through a process of meticulous planning and laborious execution. It would be accurate to say that his works are strongly design-oriented, as he himself has stated on several occasions, that before he starts a painting, he envisions a picture of the completed work in his mind, and works towards that image. Although he is perhaps a 'designer' at heart, I believe that he probably enjoys his occupation as an 'artist' as much as he does because through his art, he has found a form of design which does not require a specified function, besides aesthetic beauty. When looking at his architectural works from university and professional practice, it is clear that he had a tendency to sacrifice function for the sake of form. Similarly, his artworks possess a similar deviation from the conceptual and ideological aspect of art. The selection and portrayal of the subject matter are based strongly on personal taste and preference, yet he makes little effort to contemplate why he chose those visual forms or why he expresses them the way he does, until after said artwork is complete.

Kang believes in post-rationalization, and makes a conscious effort not to consider any potential meaning in his work while it is in progress. There is a sense of purity in this methodology, since language is a human convention, while vision is something we are born with. There is a child-like quality to the way he perceives the world around him. Kang has assumed that by staring at his visual forms for long periods of time while working (‘Seclusion’ took him a full year to complete, during which time he shaved his head and did not leave his studio for months at a time) and after completion, the strictly visual language will allow him to understand what it is he wanted to express. This can be seen as a form of acknowledgement and respect towards his sub-consciousness, and perhaps also an exercise in personal discovery or 'therapy'. This aspect of conceptual post-rationalization in Kang's work is interesting in that it contrasts starkly with the visual aspect of his paintings, which requires several stages of premeditated planning and execution (sketches, computer-aided drawing, hand silk-screening, painting).

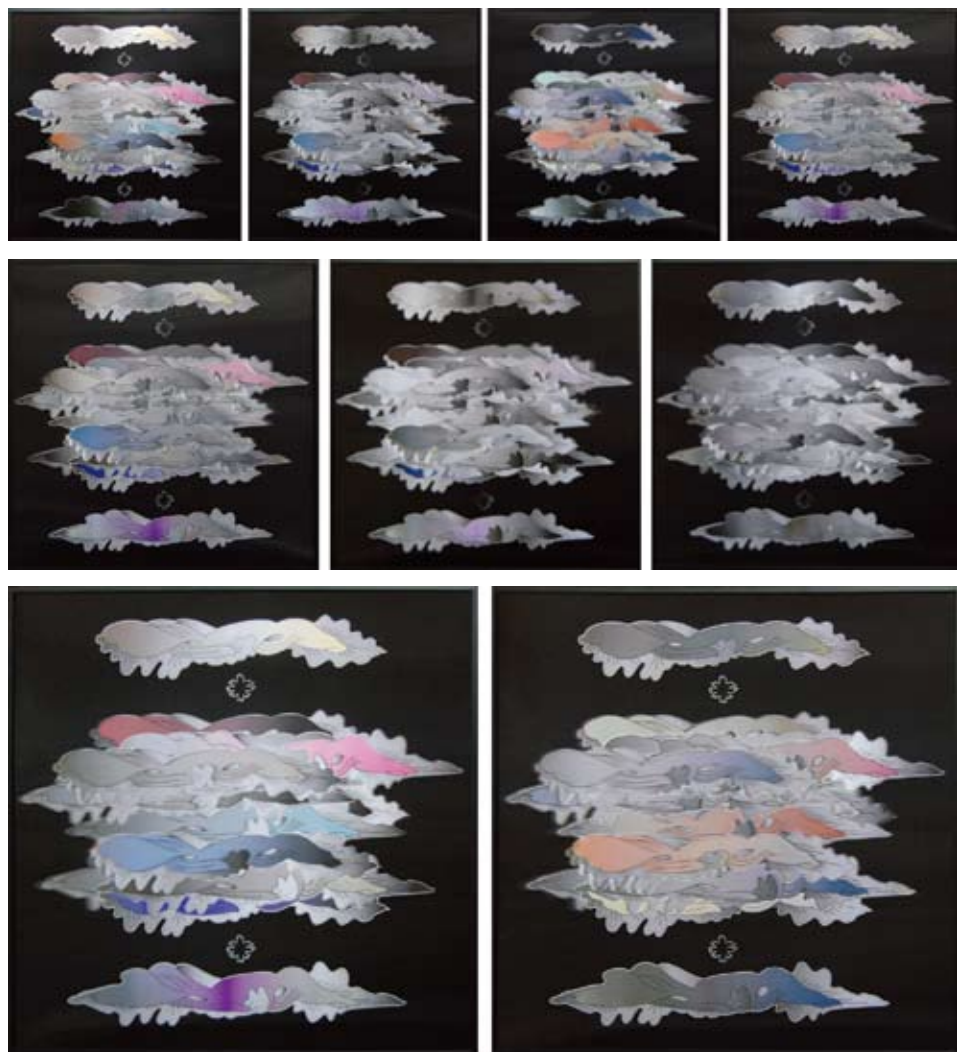
Not to be confused with mechanically ‘printed’ artwork, his paintings are hand silk-screened and painted by hand with painstaking precision, as some of the metallic colors require up to 20 coats to achieve desired opacity while leaving no visible brushstrokes. In a sense it is a backwards form of design, since design has by convention required concept and purpose before execution begins. This demonstrates a remarkable ability to separate the inner 'designer' from the inner 'artist' which co-exist within the individual. They are aware of each other, both working simultaneously towards the same goal, influencing each other to make certain decisions, yet they are kept from communicating directly with one another during the process.

The predominantly 'Korean' content of his subject matter and the mode of expression reflect on his obsession with cultural heritage, and indicate a degree of confusion towards cultural-identity. As a second generation Korean-Canadian, Kang displays curiosity and sentiment towards his mother culture, yet does not strive to comprehend or embrace it fully. His Korean heritage is merely a means for visual expression, yet in his own words, he respects Korean tradition greatly, and observes the degradation of traditional Korean values and customs in the westernizing/globalizing world as an inspiring phenomena. His recent paintings which portray the Unesco monument 'Suwon Fortress', are based purely on his initial visual impressions. He intentionally made no effort to research the historical significance of the fortress, nor did he visit the site. His paintings are personal virtual extensions of reality, presenting endless compositions of Korean aesthetics which are uneducated interpretations of an individual not entirely included or excluded from Korean culture, and society as a whole.

——— Hugo V. Dubicanac
P.hD., Psychologist



DISILLUSIONMENT I, III, V, 90 X 65 CM EACH
ACRYLIC & SCREEN INK ON CANVAS
2012



STARLESS NIGHT SKIES, 48 X 48 CM EACH
EDITION OF 10 FRAMED LENTICULAR HOLOGRAMS
2012



*VARYING DEGREES OF COLOR AND GRADATION
DEPENDING ON ANGLE OF VIEWPOINT





SECLUSION, 480 X 130 CM
ACRYLIC & SCREEN INK ON CANVAS
2011

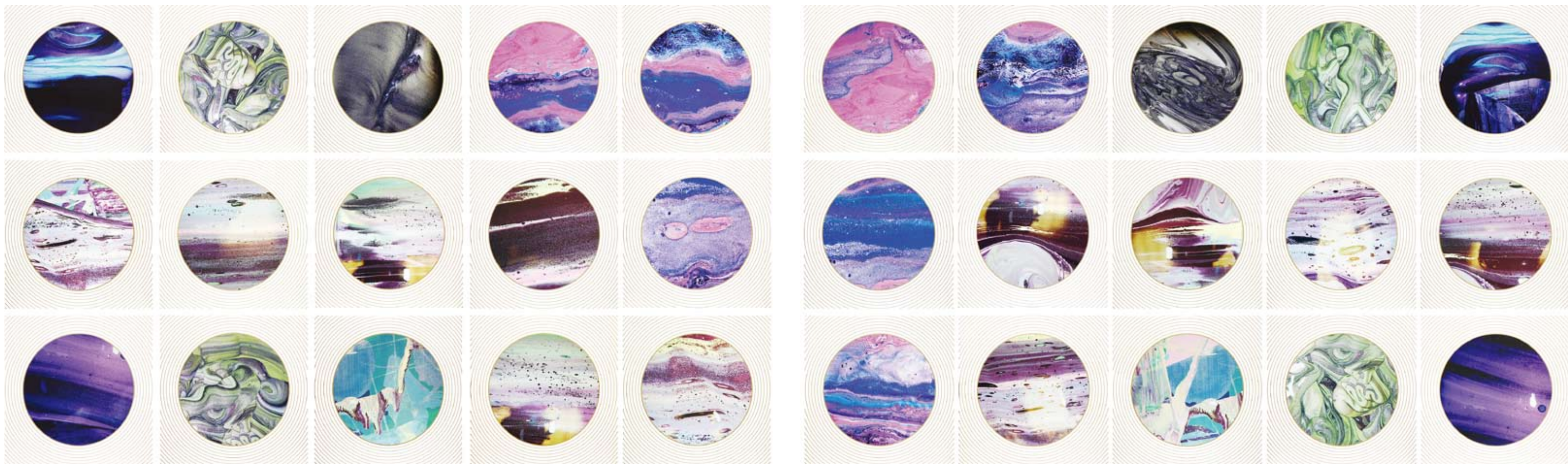


BANISHMENT I, II, III, IV, V, 91 X 116 CM X 5 PIECES
ACRYLIC & SCREEN INK ON CANVAS
2011



WILDERNESS I, II, III, IV, V, VI (CLOCKWISE), 110 X 110 CM X 6 PIECES
ACRYLIC & SCREEN INK ON CANVAS
2011





PEGASUS, 40 X 40 CM X 30 PIECES
DIGITAL PIGMENT & SCREEN INK ON CANVAS
2010



CASH MONEY (이황, 신사임당, 세종대왕), 130 X 130 CM X 3 PIECES
 ACRYLIC & SCREEN INK ON CANVAS
 2010



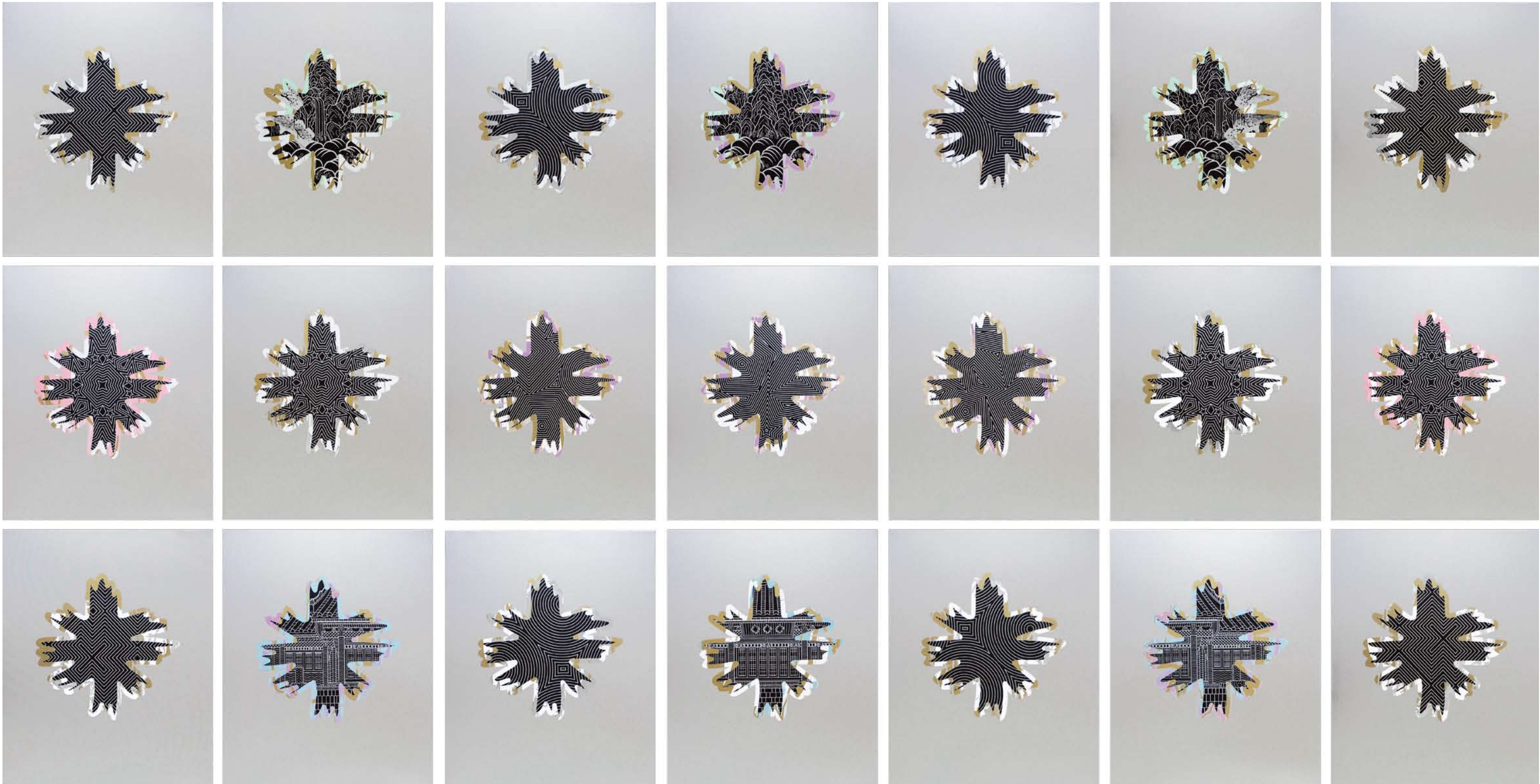
DDD, 390 X 160 CM
ACRYLIC & SCREEN INK ON CANVAS
2009



SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS (최경원, 지현정, 정지성, 남궁철, 김지은, 송주호, 이하정, 서한영, 구송이), 70 X 94 CM X 9 PIECES
DIGITAL PIGMENT ON ARCHIVAL PAPER, CUSTOM PAINTED FRAMES
2010



100% ASTERISKS, 45 X 53 CM X 3 PIECES
ACRYLIC & SCREEN INK ON CANVAS
2010



100% ASTERISKS (KOREAN CURRENCY PATTERNS), 45 X 53 CM X 21 PIECES
ACRYLIC & SCREEN INK ON CANVAS
2010



1000% ASTERISK, 130 X 160 CM
ACRYLIC & SCREEN INK ON CANVAS
2010



1000% ASTERISK, 130 X 160 CM
ACRYLIC & SCREEN INK ON CANVAS
2009



Casper Kang was born in 1981 in Toronto, Canada. After completing his B.A.S. (Architecture) at Carleton University, he moved to Seoul, South Korea in 2004. There, he worked for several architectural firms over a period of about 2 years. Feeling disillusioned by society, and also due to his affinity towards art since childhood, he quit his job to pursue a career as a painter, which he hopes to maintain until his death. Inspired by modern social conditions, the visual forms and subject matter of his work draw from such outlets as cultural identity, capitalism, and individualism.

Asterisks frequently appear in most of his works, as both his signature and logo. Symbolizing that which is 'special', and emphasizing the sentiment of 'apathetic personal interpretation' in modern society; the notion of grey, as in the absence of black and white, the dissolution of morality, the dismissal of history, convention, and implied meaning, as well as liking or disliking something for no particular reason. As an asterisk is used to signify something of importance in a text, Casper Kang's asterisk paintings, when hung in a certain place, announce that that particular space is 'special'. Casper Kang currently resides and works in Seoul.

CASPER KANG

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EDUCATION

- B.A.S., Carleton University School of Architecture, Ottawa, Canada, 2004

DESIGN EXPERIENCE

- Designer, SPACE GROUP (주) 공간건축설계사무소, 2004-2006
- Designer, HIMMA (주) 힘마건축, 2006

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- "Self Dynasty", Gallery Imazoo, Seoul, South Korea, 2011
- "C.R.E.A.M. (Cash Rules Everything Around Me)", Gallery CHA, Seoul, South Korea, 2010
- "Phantasmagoria III", Daily Projects, Seoul, South Korea, 2009

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- "8 Seconds (제일모직) Opening Ceremony", 8 Seconds Gallery, Seoul, South Korea, 2012
- "Showcase Reboot", Platoon Kunsthalle, Seoul, South Korea, 2012
- "YMCA", Gallery Imazoo, Seoul, South Korea, 2011
- "Spring, We Will Spring", Gallery Imazoo, Seoul, South Korea, 2010
- "International Young Artists' Exhibition", Coreana Art Museum (Space*C), Seoul, South Korea, 2008

ART FAIRS

- "Art Edition 2012", COEX B-hall, Seoul, South Korea, 2012
- "CIGE (China International Gallery Exposition) 2012", China World Trade Center, Beijing, China, 2012

COLLABORATION PROJECTS

- "빙그레 바나나맛 우유 Artist Collaboration", 2012
- "Absolut Vodka Bottle Artwork Collaboration", 2012

CASPER KANG / *SELECTED WORKS* / MMXII

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