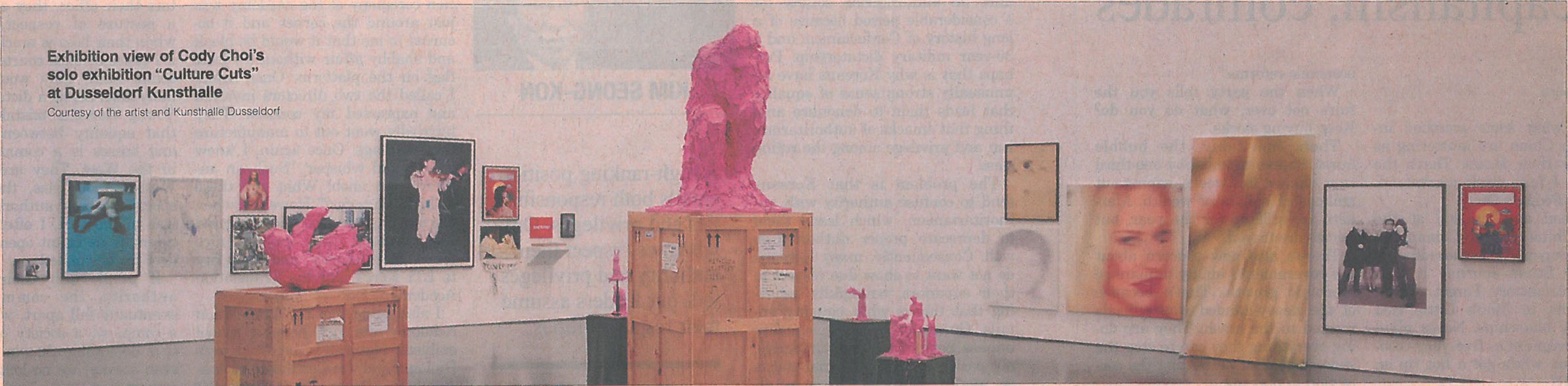


Exhibition view of Cody Choi's solo exhibition "Culture Cuts" at Dusseldorf Kunsthalle

Courtesy of the artist and Kunsthalle Dusseldorf



Korean artists bask in global spotlight

Yang Haegue, Cody Choi hold exhibitions at major international art institutions

By Lee Woo-young

Korean artists Yang Haegue and Cody Choi are successfully transcending physical and cultural boundaries with their works, holding exhibitions at major art institutions around the world.

Yang, a Korean-born artist currently living in Berlin and Seoul, is showing her installation works at four major art institutions — the Museum of Modern Art and Guggenheim Museum in New York, Vienna Biennale and the Modern Art Museum in Stockholm.

The artist, using everyday materials to create resounding messages about society, nature and the human race, has emerged as a compelling talent in the international art scene.

Two of her installations entered the collection of the MoMA and Guggenheim Museum in New York. The installation piece "Salim" is being showcased at the MoMA's ongoing exhibition "Scenes for a New Heritage" along with another 40 pieces of contemporary art.

Guggenheim is showing Yang's installation of window blinds titled "Series of Vulnerable Arrangements," initially presented

during the Venice Biennale in 2009, in their collection exhibition until Sept. 9.

"Window blind installations are something that most audiences will readily identify as my work. They deal with very specific material concerns related to the economy of labor, fabrication and craft, while exploring dualities of such aspects and man-made, industrial characters," said Yang, who is also participating in the Vienna Biennale with her blind installation "Escaping Transparency" until Oct. 4.

Cody Choi, based in Seoul, assumed a key role in the international art scene with works using various mediums to explore questions regarding cultural identity.

Choi is holding his first retrospective at the Kunsthalle Dusseldorf in Germany, a comprehensive exhibition that introduces the artistic world he developed over the last 20 years.

The artist is well known for a range of works that explore cultural identity with humorous twists. Since he experienced identity clashes between being Asian in the U.S., and again upon emigrating in the mid-1980s and being an American in Korean society, the artist has explored his inner conflicts and confusion derived

from identity clashes in his artwork.

"The Thinker" sculpture best represents the artist's attempt to deliver the anxiety and confusion he had when he tried to fit into American society.

"This work took the form of Rodin's 'The Thinker' sculpture, and was molded with wet toilet paper saturated with Pepto-Bismol, medication that Choi frequently took to soothe his upset stomach in the U.S. The artist humorously expresses the 'cultural indigestion' he suffered inside," said Lee Ji-young, associate director of PKM Gallery in Seoul, which represents the artist.

His renditions of other well-known works of Western art, such as Gerhard Richter's paintings, also point out Asians' attitude that regards highly Western art without fully understanding the history and backgrounds of the Western artists.

"When Western art is so dominant in our art world, I wanted to ask people 'Do you know the meanings?' This is my own critical approach to this attitude," said Choi.

The Cody Choi retrospective "Culture Cuts," which runs until Aug. 2 in Germany, is expected to tour around Europe, including the Netherlands and France.

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"Future Light" by Yang Haegue at the Vienna Biennale 2015

Stuart Whipps/Courtesy of the Tiroche DeLeon