

## Artist's fine brushstrokes simple but profound

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By Kwon Mee-yoo  
meeyoo@ktimes.com

Artist Kim Hong-joo, who uses ultra-fine brushstrokes to depict abstract figures, is holding a solo exhibit at Kukje Gallery in downtown Seoul.

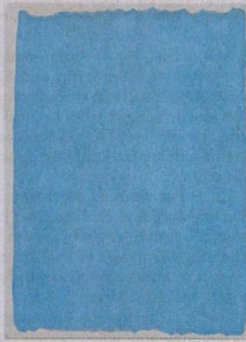
At first glance, Kim's works look like random-shaped figures, but when examined closely, the paintings are filled with numerous fine brushstrokes.

The exhibit features 12 of his latest works painted after 2010. The 70-year-old artist left them all "Untitled," as he didn't want to bound the viewers in the frame of the title.

"I painted in a trivial, private manner. There is nothing difficult or abstruse in them," the artist said during a press preview on Dec. 17. "There is no theory or ideology behind my paintings, so please enjoy as they are."

Kim is an artist who believes that the artist's intentions should not interfere with the appreciation of spectators. There is no right side up for his paintings, as he thinks it is meaningless to sort out directions in abstract paintings.

Born in Hoein Township, North Chungcheong Province in 1945, Kim studied painting at Hongik University. Even at earlier stages as an artist, Kim was the defiant type, not following trends. In the 1970s, Kim presented hyperrealistic paintings and experimented with critique and performance, which was contrary to the vogue of "dansaekhwa," or Korean monochrome paintings. Instead, Kim pursues alternative aesthetics with



Kim Hong-joo "Untitled" (2015)

Courtesy of Kukje Gallery

unique techniques.

Kim's working process is outside-of-the-box as well. Instead of a neatly stretched and stapled canvas, Kim hangs the canvas fabric on the wall and directly paints on it. As he uses extremely fine brushstrokes to color the canvas, the process makes his eyes tired even though he wears reading glasses.

"The accumulation of extremely fine brushstrokes and the extensive labor of the artist who masterfully balances legibility and abstraction continue to demand attention from the viewer," said the gallery, "and it is this disjuncture between acute observation on the one hand, with a kind of willful disregard for narrative closure on the other that makes Kim's paintings disturbing and sublime."

The exhibit runs until Jan. 24. For more information, visit [www.kukje-gallery.com](http://www.kukje-gallery.com) or call (02)735-8449.



Installation view of Kim Hong-joo's solo exhibit at Kukje Gallery in central Seoul

Courtesy of Kukje Gallery