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BY BEN STEVENS

New York: PARK Seo-Bo “Ecriture”

May 28, 2015 at Galerie Perrotin New York in New York.

PARK SEO-BO “Ecriture”

Opening Reception: Thursday, May 28, 6-8pm

May 28 – July 3, 2015

Galerie Perrotin, **New York**

Galerie Perrotin, **New York** is pleased to present the second exhibition dedicated to Korean artist Park Seo-Bo, following his first solo show at Galerie Perrotin, Paris last December. Born in 1931, Park Seo-Bo is a seminal figure in Korean contemporary art and one of the founding members of the Dansaekhwa monochrome movement, a synthesis between traditional Korean spirit and Western abstraction, which emerged in the early 1970s in post-war Korea and has gained international recognition since. An official collateral event in this year’s 56th Venice Biennial, “Dansaekhwa”, is currently held at the Palazzo Contarini-Polignac (until August 15) and on the occasion of the Year of Korea in France (2015-2016), a major exhibition dedicated to Korean artists in France – including Park Seo-Bo, will take place at the Cernuschi Museum in Paris: “From Lee Ungno to Lee Ufan: Korean Artists in France” (16 October 2015 – January 2016). Although the Korean monochrome movement has never been defined with a manifesto, the artists affiliated with Dansaekhwa, including Chung Chang-Sup and Lee Ufan, are commonly known for their use of a neutral palette (namely white, beige and black), their material emphasis of the pictorial components and fabrics, and their gestural and systematic engagement within the artworks in the making. As a matter of fact, in Park Seo-Bo’s paintings, process and discipline prevail, whereas the French Art Informel scene originally inspired the artist’s early aesthetics.

Indeed, back in 1961, Park Seo-Bo earned a UNESCO scholarship to study at the Sorbonne and ended up spending a whole year in Paris, where he furthered his knowledge of Art Informel, which arose in Europe parallel to the American Abstract Expressionism during World War II and became prevalent throughout the 1950s. As soon as 1957, Park Seo-Bo had already helped establish in Seoul the Hyundai Artists Association around the principles of Art Informel, the gestural and abstract techniques of which, like those of Action Painting and Color Field in the **United States**, would enable young Korean artists to express their anguish in the immediate aftermath of the Korean War. The influence of Art Informel in the early works of Park Seo-Bo can be seen in his series “Primordialis” from the early 1960s, which is characterized by aggressive brushstrokes, dark hues and amorphous forms. Yet by

the mid-1960s, the artist had already rejected the occidental manners that he had primarily adopted and started devoting his time to learning about oriental philosophy.

Park Seo-Bo's own pictorial tabula rasa, if you will, and subsequent spiritual introspection gave birth to the series of monochromes he calls "**Ecriture**", which means 'writing' in French and has become the generic title of all his artworks and exhibitions since 1967. For almost 50 years now, within a strict and reduced vocabulary – which he narrowed down to the repetition of simple patterns echoing throughout his paintings and the limited color palette of Dansaekhwa – Park Seo-Bo has never ceased to empty his monochromes from, if not the trace of his gestural commitment, self-expression or the emotional outpouring that a single impulsive stroke carried in his early days. In this regard, his pictorial endeavors do certainly share some striking similarities with the parallel evolution in France of "the painter of black", Pierre Soulages, who also started off his career as a leading figure of Art Informel.

See PARK Seo-Bo "Ecriture" on Evensi

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