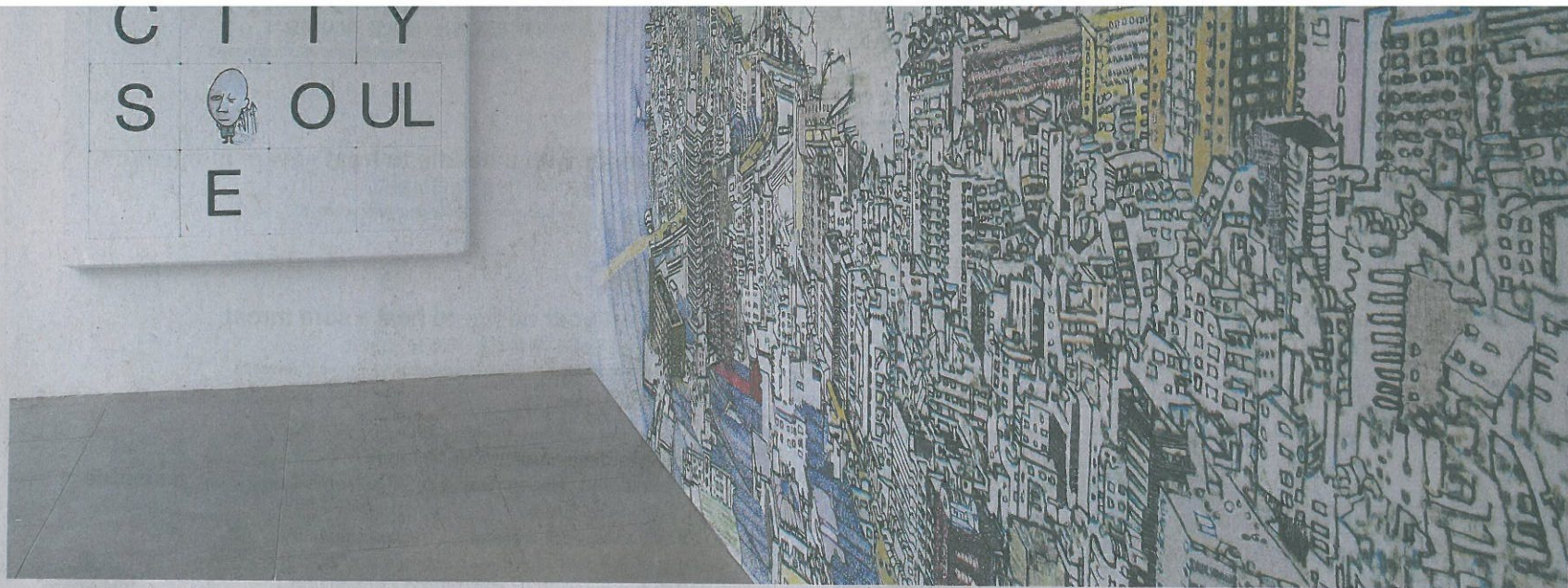


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Fahrettin Orenli's installation "The Project THE CITY SeOUL" highlights his works displayed at the Corner Art Space in southern Seoul.

Courtesy of Corner Art Space

Seoul searching

Artists juxtapose subtly differing images of the sprawling metropolis

By Kwon Mee-yoo
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Seoul, a bustling cosmopolitan city that never sleeps, is increasingly a source of artistic inspiration.

This is nowhere more evident than in the city's own art galleries that allow visitors to discover the many aspects of this sprawling metropolis caught by the eyes of artists here and abroad.

Korean artist Roh Choong-hyun is exhibiting 25 of his landscape paintings of Seoul at the Kukje Gallery in central Seoul under a theme he titled "Prosaic Landscape."

The main objects of Roh's paintings are the areas near the Han River, perhaps the city's most significant gift, which flows through an urban forest mixed with state-of-the-art skyscrapers and aging apartments stacked like egg cartons.

Roh's paintings also breathe a sense of dreaminess into mundane locations such as convenience stores, basketball courts and swimming pools.

The exhibition begins in a small room that gathers Roh's portrayals of the city's night views and nocturnal riverside scenery, which are stunning.

The main room is highlighted by "A Walk," a painting of pedestrian walking alone along the Han River on a snowy day.

Roh said inspiration for the work came from Korean traditional landscape paintings, in which people are drawn in tiny figures at the bases of mountains in simple colors and lines, which he believes ideally captures the sense of a person and their surroundings.

Roh uses bolder expression in his paintings of Seoul in summertime. The image of deserted swimming pools overflowing with water during the monsoon season is familiar to Koreans, but Roh manages to make it look exotic and whimsical.

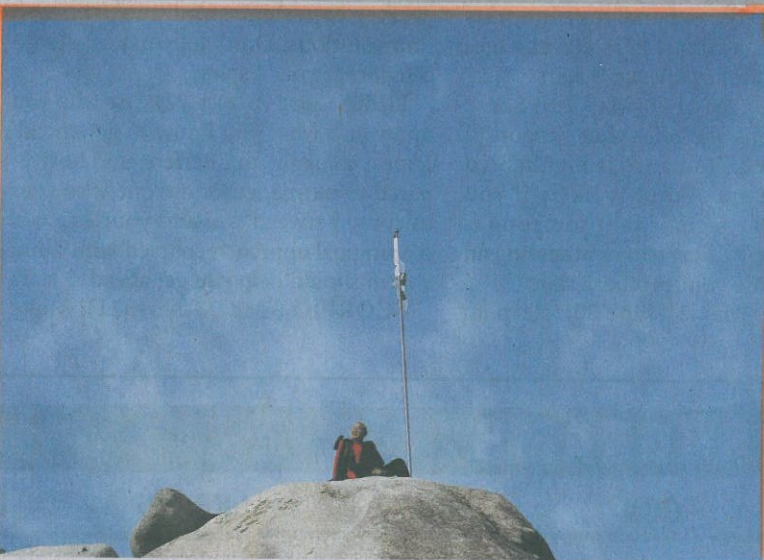
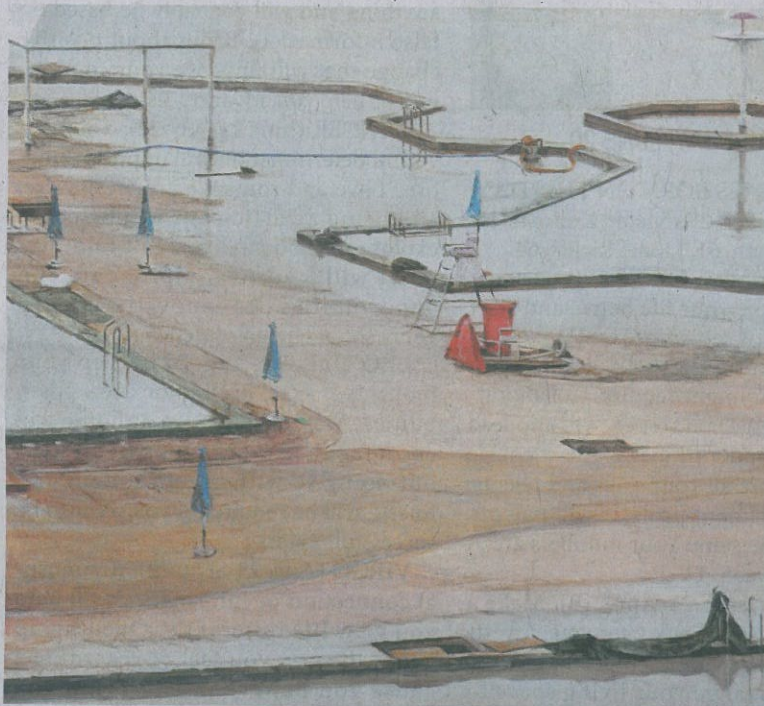
Yoo Jin-sang, professor of Kaywon School of Art & Design, said Roh's paintings are smart, contemporary extensions of traditional styles. He described the works as a breath of fresh air in a Korean art scene predominated by photos, installation and media art.

"Roh is an artist who expresses images as he was taking a picture. His works seem to carry a sentiment that are uniquely Korean, but he keeps a certain distance from his objects at the same time," Yoo explicated.

Roh's solo exhibition runs through July 14. For more information, visit www.kukjegallery.com or call (02) 735-8449.

Plastic surgery on Seoul

Fahrettin Orenli's "The Project THE CITY SeOUL" at Corner Art Space in



Clockwise from top left: Roh Choong-hyun's "End of Summer 3," Orenli's "Divide and conquer—family band," Roh's "Convenience Store," Catherine Sarah Young's "Seoul43"

Courtesy of Corner Art Space, Kukje Gallery, National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art

ing a time when it seems that the Starbucks god has thrown up on its streets.

Through his work, Orenli has always displayed an interest in a sense of "borders" and "boundaries," which may have something do with being born between parents with faith in different Islamic sects and his current frequent travel between Istanbul and Amsterdam. To him, Seoul, a city where the ultra modern coexists with the past, is a desirable subject.

He previously held a few exhibitions in Korea including "Contemporary Exuses" at the gallery Take Out Drawing in 2010 and group exhibit "Be mobile in immobility (The materialized memory)" at the Total Museum of Contemporary Art in 2011.

In the current exhibition, Orenli created a huge crossword puzzle that plays on the spelling of Seoul, which becomes "Soul" without the "e."

"Seoul became a part of endless accumulation of capital and it is important to understand the soul of the city in search for the future of urban life in Orenli's works," Yang Ji-yoon, director of Corner Art Space, said.

2010, according to The Economist. Another survey shows that one in five 20-something women in Seoul had gone under the knife to alter their appearance.

Orenli sees a connection between Seoulites refusing to hesitate to transform their physical features artificially and the city that went through rapid changes in the past decades in the process of industrialization. Even the gallery where his works are currently exhibited shares the building with a cosmetic surgery clinic.

His perception of plastic surgery is connected to restoring artworks and he brought a copy Henri Matisse's work "Parakeet and the Mermaid," which went through restoration in 1996 at Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. He removed coloring from the painting and installed it on the window of the gallery, so viewers can see the fuss of urban scenery through the painting.

The exhibit runs through July 7. For more information, visit www.cornerartspace.org or call 070-7779-8860.

Seoul Seoul Seoul

errest and most erratic album of his six solo releases. He is in militant form on the 10-track set, rapping over beats that are artsy, electronic and gloomy. It's a far stretch from the contemporary rap and pop success he achieved with more than a dozen Top 10 hits, including "Gold Digger," "Stronger" and "Heartless." But that isn't necessarily a bad thing.

"Yeezus" continues on the dark and emotive path he set on 2010's "My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy" and "808s & Heartbreak," which was released two years earlier. The production throughout "Yeezus" is exceptional, with Rick Rubin, Daft Punk, No ID, RZA and more helping out. The album flows nicely, with songs including layered vocals and transitions that elevate them to great heights: "On Sight" starts the album with the right energy and West gets an epic and soulful assist from Charlie Wilson on the closing track, "Bound 2." It's a classic Yeezy effort and arguably the album's best track.

Lyrical, though, West isn't always at his best. The album lacks deep storytelling from the 36-year-old, which he powerfully delivered on past albums. He sounds random and frustrated at times, and at others, he'll frustrate you (he raps of an oral sex act from a nun on "I'm in It"). Really? FOR-REALZY YEEZY?

West raps about religion a good amount on "Yeezus," which is his Jesus-like moniker. "If I don't get ran out by Catholics, here come some conservative Baptists," he says on "Black Skinhead." And on "I Am a God" — well, you get it.

But religious folks won't be the only ones upset with the album: While West has promoted "Yeezus" with performances on

Art collector Saatchi over row with TV

LONDON (AFP) — British art collector Charles Saatchi said on Tuesday that he had accepted a police caution for assaulting his wife, celebrity chef Nigella Lawson, to bring an end to the public row over the incident.

Photographs of the 70-year-old former advertising executive with his hand around Lawson's neck appeared in a Sunday newspaper, sparking a chorus of criticism in the press and social media.

Saatchi has defended the incident as a "playful tiff" but on Monday volunteered to be questioned by detectives at a London police station, where he received a police caution.

The publicity-shy art collector, who owns the Saatchi gallery, told the London Evening Standard newspaper that he decided to accept the caution to stop "this hanging over all of us."

"Although Nigella made no complaint I volunteered to go to Charing Cross station and take a police caution after a discussion with my lawyer, because I thought it was better than the alternative of this hanging over all of us for months," he said.

Police confirmed in a statement that "a 70-year-old man voluntarily attended a central London police station and accepted a caution for assault."

Cautions are not criminal convictions, but are handed to adults who admit a minor offense and can be used as evidence of bad character in court. A suspect who does not accept a caution may be arrested and charged. On Monday, Saatchi defended his behavior after photographs of the incident appeared in the Sunday People tabloid.