



"SP235" (2013), a spray painting by Sterling Ruby, is part of his first solo show in Korea going on at Kukje Gallery in central Seoul. Provided by the gallery

Fuzzy scenes show city's dark side

By Moon So-young

Large abstract paintings hanging on the walls of Kukje Gallery give a calm and dreamy feel with their pastel tones and blurred forms as if seen through wet, translucent windows.

But ironically, the paintings by Los Angeles-based artist Sterling Ruby have been inspired by the threatening scenes of the city. According to the artist, who came to the gallery in central Seoul for his first solo show in Korea, LA gangs competitively spray graffiti to mark out their territory every night. Then, every early morning, the city au-

thorities wash out the graffiti, leaving color stains.

The 41-year-old artist, who makes various genres of art and is getting attention in the international art market, also presents in this exhibition some ceramics from his "Basin Theology" series.

They are low and large ceramic basins filled with "broken materials that look like animal remains and architectural waste," according to the artist.

"I am smashing all of my previous attempts, and futile, contemporary gestures, and placing them into a mortar, and grinding them down with a blunt pestle," the artist wrote in a 2010

article. "I am doing this as a way of releasing a certain guilt. If I put all of these remnants into a basin, and it gets taken away from me, then I am no longer responsible for all my misdirected efforts ... This is my basin theology."

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① The show runs through May 10. Admission is free. Hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Saturday, and until 5 p.m. Sunday. Go to Anguk Station, line No. 3, exit 1, and walk 10 minutes.

For more information, visit www.kukje.org or call (02) 735-8449.