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ON TARGET *DALLAS ART FAIR'S 8TH TURN*



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BY STEVE CARTER



CONCENTRATIONS EAST

The DMA's project-based series celebrates its 35th year with a first-ever off-site exhibition featuring Margaret Lee's site-specific installation at Duddell's in Hong Kong.

The Dallas Museum of Art's *Concentrations* series has been a feather in the encyclopedic museum's cap for 35 years, a keystone of its unflagging commitment to contemporary art. *Concentrations*'s mission of presenting project-based exhibitions of international emerging and underrepresented artists has resulted in some of the DMA's most provocative vanguard shows over the years—Charline von Heyl, Phil Collins, Kiki Smith, Slavs and Tatars, and Stephen Lapthisophon, to name only a few. But to celebrate the 35th year of the series, the DMA went abroad with *Concentrations* for the first time ever, and the buzz is audible. *Concentrations HK: Margaret Lee* is a departure, a conceptual collaboration between the DMA, New York-based artist Margaret Lee, and Duddell's, a decidedly nontraditional art venue in Hong Kong. *Concentrations HK: Margaret Lee* is on view at Duddell's through June 2016. The

opening was brilliantly timed to coincide with Art Basel Hong Kong, March 24–26, when the international art world's eyes are on the East.

"I don't think the museum has ever initiated a project that exists solely outside of the museum walls," says exhibition organizer Gabriel Ritter, the Dallas Museum of Art's Nancy and Tim Hanley Assistant Curator of Contemporary Art. "It's of great interest to the DMA to be aligned with a space like Duddell's, but also to be aligned with the art world elite of Art Basel Hong Kong, which is very quickly becoming *the* destination in Asia for contemporary art. It's just a really fantastic opportunity for us and also for Margaret Lee." Duddell's itself is unique. Located in the heart of Hong Kong's Central district, it's a multifaceted showplace that's not only a world-class, two-Michelin-star restaurant, but also home to a

renowned program of contemporary art exhibitions; it's an artistic hub designed to satisfy more than just one appetite. *Concentrations HK: Margaret Lee* is a 2-D and 3-D site-specific installation that begins along Duddell's marble staircase and threads its way upstairs to the Salon and Library. "In my opinion the installation's perfect for the space," Ritter enthuses.

Margaret Lee is a rising star in the arts firmament stateside, and this exhibition marks her first foray into Asia. Lee's parents left Korea in the '70s and moved to New York in search of better opportunity; Margaret is their first American-born child. "I think Gabe [Ritter] understood that working with someone like me, someone who's kind of caught between worlds, might have an interesting perspective of what it means to be a Western artist, and bringing my art to the East," Lee muses. "I'm one of those 'bridge generation' people who doesn't quite fit in either place, but then becomes a very interesting conduit—it's like things getting lost in translation." Lee is something of a shape-shifter as well; in addition to her own art practice, she's a partner at the artist-run 47 Canal, a gallery on NYC's Lower East Side, and changes hats again as studio manager for photographer Cindy Sherman.

Lee began to conceptualize the exhibition during a recent full-access visit to the DMA. She photographed iconic works from the collection, including not-on-view pieces, and started to riff on

the possibilities. "I was thinking about what the DMA and Duddell's represent in very basic terms, the West and the East," she says. "Dallas is very American, and very particular to Texas. For the installation I decided to focus on one piece from the DMA collection, a Brancusi sculpture called 'The Beginning of the World.' But rather than it being 'I took all these photos at the DMA and I'm just putting them at Duddell's,' it's more that I went to the DMA, took some photographs, decided to work with one very important work, and then from that was able to generate my own images."

Constantin Brancusi's *The Beginning of the World* (1920) is a Modernist masterpiece fashioned of marble, nickel, silver, and stone; its absolute geometry nonetheless seems to suggest anthropomorphic possibilities. The iconic image is appropriated throughout the 15 or so works that comprise the installation, incorporated in Lee's self-standing metal sculptures and hanging wall pieces; the show also includes new watercolors and plaster cast trompe l'oeil vegetables, a recurring Lee motif. "She's part of a group of artists with, and between, photography and sculpture," Gabriel Ritter explains. "And there's a very interesting play between high and low—the Brancusi next to a sink, a showerhead. She's hyper-aware of that; it's humorous but it's also a kind of critique."

"Everyone involved is very excited," Ritter adds. "In many ways Margaret is acting as a kind of ambassador for the DMA in this project...hopefully it won't be the first and the last. Maybe it opens the door for other interesting collaborations to bring the DMA into this international conversation—who knows what future iterations could be? I think there are a lot of possibilities here." **P**



Left: Margaret Lee, *W.D.U.T.U.R. #3*, 2016, dye sublimation photograph and acrylic paint, 28 x 42 in., courtesy of the artist and Jack Hanley Gallery; Above, left: Margaret Lee, *W.D.U.T.U.R. #2*, 2016, dye sublimation photograph and acrylic paint, 28 x 42 in., courtesy of the artist and Jack Hanley Gallery; right, Margaret Lee, *W.D.U.T.U.R. #4*, 2016, dye sublimation photograph and acrylic paint, 28 x 42 in., courtesy of the artist and Jack Hanley Gallery