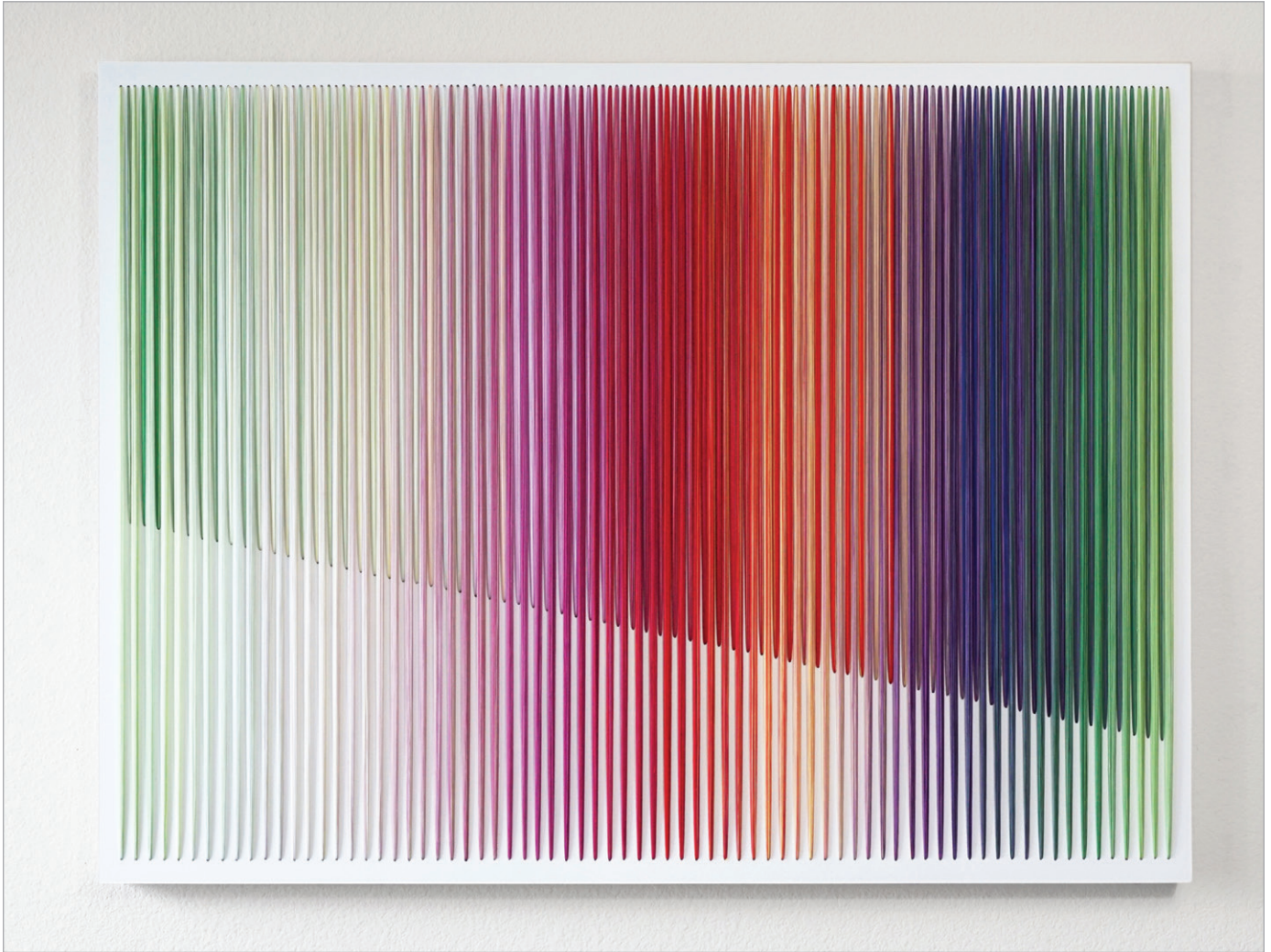


BUMIN KIM

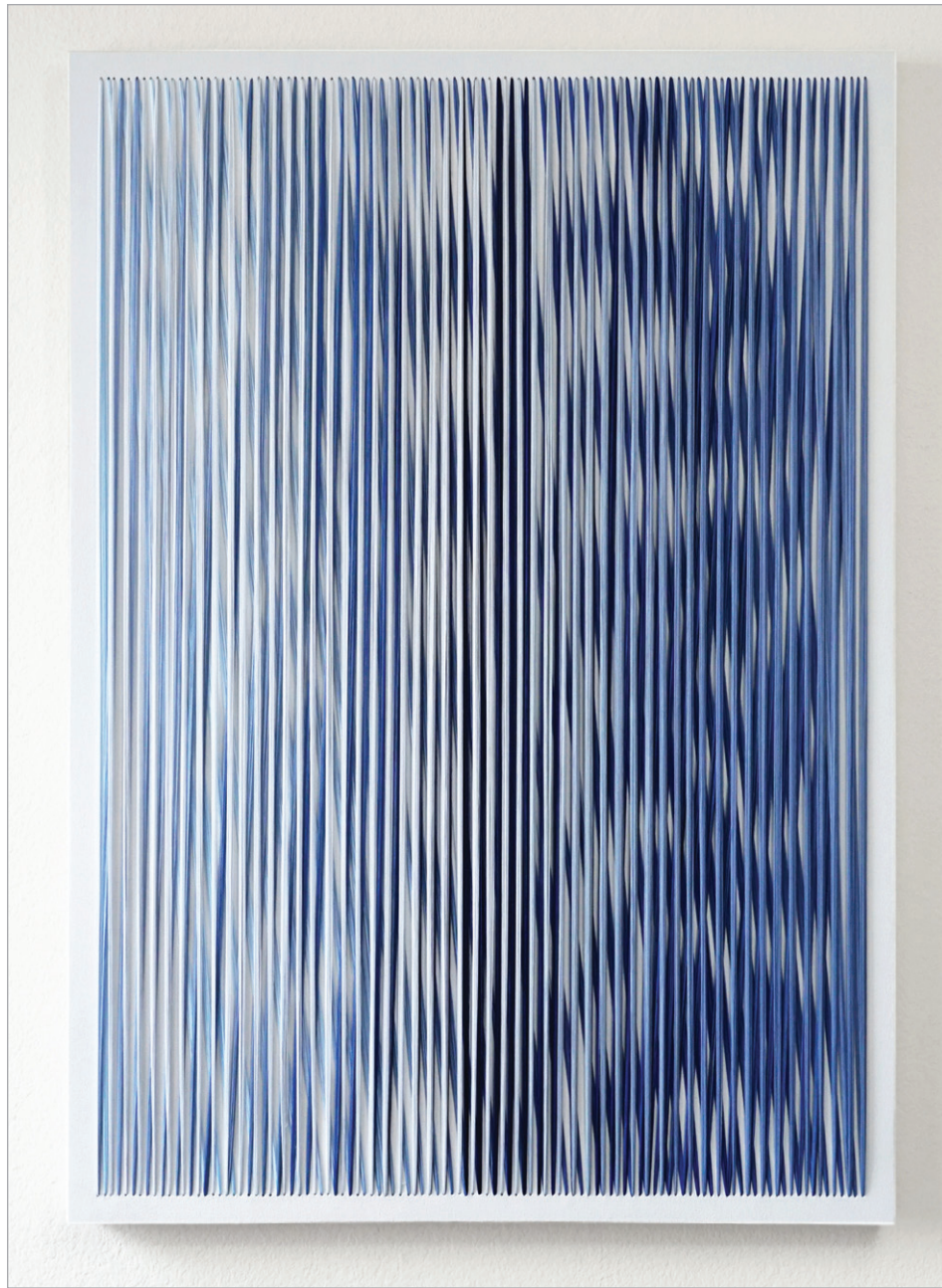
WALK THE SKY



WOMEN & THEIR WORK

MARCH 9 - APRIL 18, 2019

AUSTIN, TEXAS



Above: *Overcast*, 2019, thread and acrylic on canvas wrapped wood panel, 46" x 36"

Cover Panel: *Prism*, 2019, thread and acrylic on wood panel, 36" x 48"

WALK THE SKY

“A work of art is motionless only in appearance. It seems to be set fast—arrested, as are the moments of time gone by. But in reality, it is born of change.” – Henri Focillon, *The Life of Forms in Art*

Naturalistic metaphors are well matched to Bumin Kim’s singular artistic practice, which is inspired by the changing patterns and subtle hues of the skies in North Texas where she lives and works. Kim’s recent woven reliefs and threaded constructions inhabit a liminal realm, much like the charged spaces between the earth and sky, where depths converge on flatness and solid forms dissolve into immaterial prisms of flowing color. Her works are not, strictly speaking, paintings, drawings, sculptures, or textiles; instead, they combine different aspects of these varied media simultaneously.

While Kim’s work finds inspiration in natural forms and processes, they could hardly be called landscapes or skyscapes; instead, they might be better described as experiments in visual—as well as *tactile*—perception, manifesting a variety of distinctions in hue, value, luminosity, pattern, mass and texture. Her works also directly implicate an embodied viewer, one who plays an active role in unspooling the visual and haptic potentials of her art.

On a purely formal level, Kim’s vibrant and playful abstractions toggle subtly between the optical and the sculptural, flatness and depth, texture and color, prominently foregrounding thread as a practical alternative to paint. For the most part, she exchanges painting’s natural disposition towards the gestural mark for the gracile tension of dyed, bundled, and woven strands of cotton and acrylic fiber. These strands, which Kim draws meticulously through holes drilled into painted wooden

panels, are usually laid down in multiple layers of alternating parallel and diagonal rows.

The awareness of perception and sensation inaugurated by Kim’s art can be considered analogous to our experience of nature’s atmospheric play of light and its palpably shifting pressures and densities. The apparent stability of Kim’s work is ultimately belied by subtle expressions of unpredictability and change, fundamental (if overlooked) aspects of art described above by French art historian Henri Focillon. As one glides past one of Kim’s threaded reliefs, solid forms dematerialize within colored strands or alternately seem to emerge from behind, much as a wayward hiker scaling a mountain might glimpse—through screens of trees—the raking contours of its summit drawing near. It is in this spirit, I believe, the wonderfully illogical title of the exhibition, *Walk the Sky*, acquires special resonance.

In much of Kim’s work, forms that appear from a distance as unified fields or bands of color, transform up close into scintillating bundles of delicate hues and fine contrasts, revealing a complex dialogue between microscopic and macroscopic scales. In some works, like *Night Hatching #1* or *Night Hatching #2*, muted scaffolds of interwoven diagonals and orthogonals are drawn across darkly painted grounds; only upon close inspection, however, do these dark backgrounds reveal constellations of hand-painted stars, to both the surprise and delight of the viewer.

Kim’s work is at once bold and yet delicately subdued, a paradox similarly afforded to us by lived and *felt* experience, often frustrating our best attempts to rationalize or explain it. Even at their seemingly most naturalistic or referential, Kim’s choices of color—as in vibrantly pulsating works like *Winter Forest*,

White Daisy, or *Black Night Morning Glory*—are never direct translations from the world. As Kim points out, such choices are also deeply intuitive, capable of revealing a broad range of human emotions from the outwardly sensual to the inwardly cerebral.

Kim’s materials are as much technically pragmatic as they are amply symbolic, given her particular interest in nature and sensation, as well as the varied connotations weaving elicits from the spheres of everyday life, artistic practice, or even mythology. Kim’s poignant use of thread serves, in her words, “as a metaphor for joining two separate entities,” itself a poetic expression of affective longing and metamorphosis. Metaphor—as both a literary and, perhaps less obviously, a visual rhetorical device—serves the most basic (and perhaps ancient) communicative function: the capacity for one thing to stand in for another. In this sense, metaphors *bind*; they tie together two distinct entities to create a



Night Hatching #1, 2018, thread and acrylic on wood panel, 48" x 36"



Seeding #3, 2019, thread, acrylic, fabric, and wood, 14" x 3"

conjoined whole, a paradoxical manifestation of likeness from difference. Yet our very ability to perceive words as either sounds or images, or alternately works of visual art as verbal concepts, underscores this disjunction between sense and meaning. Like Kim's art, metaphors can thus also *change*; art can reveal, as she says, inherent "transformative powers to be[come] anything."

In works like *Overcast* or the several *Moon Fragments*, dense thickets of strands play out in varied rhythms and counterpoints, offering evocative impressions of both day and night skies, as if one were viewing light from the sun or moon filtered through clouds in the atmosphere—masses of tiny dewdrops set ablaze by rays of living color. In other works, like those of Kim's *Vexillum* series (titled after the Latin word for the flag-bearing standards carried by Roman legions), thick masses of strings in lively color combinations evocative

of heraldic banners cascade in waves from shallow wooden boxes. Two other works that are closely related, *Rainbow* and *Prism*, draw comparison to Ellsworth Kelly's iconic spectrums, thematizing the physical breakdown of visible light into its discrete spectral identities; as modern science informs us, light is a dual entity, at once manifesting material (particle-like) and immaterial (wave-like) aspects.

Through an almost "minimalist" idiom, many of Kim's artistic experiments employ simple and repetitive compositions that belie a near-infinite range of formal possibilities and even subtler effects of hue, light, and shadow. Historical comparisons to some 20th century abstract artists—from Anni Albers to Fred Sandback—are hardly superficial, despite a shared affinity for bold colors and simplified geometries. What makes such comparisons significant is their collective attempt to resolve individual with universal experience, the momentary with the timeless. Kim, like her historical predecessors (although not beholden to their examples), uses unconventional means and materials to challenge the ideal sanctity

of the picture plane, to push her art back into the phenomenal world of lived experience.

Kim, who moved to the United States from her native Korea, recognizes the transformative potential of art and values its important reparative function, one that helps mitigate those painful displacements caused by both time and distance. One of Kim's favorite poems, "One Night I Count The Stars," written by celebrated 20th century Korean poet Dong-Ju Yun, poignantly recounts his longing attempt to name the stars in the night sky after old friends and family, lost loves and near-forgotten memories: "All of them are so far away / like the stars that are infinitely distant." While we cannot halt the march of time or recapture all we have lost, the great promise of art and poetry—the power of its forms and colors and words and metaphors—allows us, if only in our hearts and minds, to bridge that yawning gap, much as starlight from distant galaxies ties the cold vastness of the cosmos closer together.

-Gilles Heno-Coe is an art historian and writer based in Austin, Texas.



Vexillum, 2019, Thread and wood, 7" x 14" each

Bumin Kim

EDUCATION:

- 2015 MFA, Drawing and Painting, College of Visual Art and Design,
University of North Texas, Denton, Texas
- 2004 BA, Fine Arts, Kyung-sung University, Busan, South Korea

SOLO EXHIBITIONS:

- 2019 *Walk the Sky, Women & Their Work*, Austin, Texas
- 2018 *land·scape*, Ro2 Art Gallery, Dallas, Texas
- 2016 *Accumulation, Carillon Gallery*, Tarrant County College,
Fort Worth, Texas
- Accumulation*, Ro2 Art Gallery, Dallas, Texas
- 2015 *Night Hatching*, Oak Cliff Cultural Center, Dallas, Texas

SELECTED JURIED EXHIBITIONS:

- 2018 *5th Annual Artspace111 Regional Juried Exhibition*,
Juried by Christina Rees, Artspace111, Fort Worth, Texas
- 2017 *Materials: Hard+Soft International Juried Competition and
Exhibition*, Juried by JoAnn Edwards, Patterson-
Appleton Arts Center, Denton, Texas
- 2016 *Expo 2016*, Juried by Rachel Rogerson, 500X Gallery,
Dallas, Texas
- 2015 *Rising Star*, Turner House; Oak Cliff Society of Fine Arts,
Dallas, Texas
- Art Kudos International Juried Competition and Exhibition*,
Juried by Charles Long, Artkudos.com
- In the Making*, Juried by Rachel MacKenna, Michelle Thomas,
and Kai Peter Martin, UNT on the Square, Denton, Texas
- Expo 2015*, Juried by Susan Roth and Jordan Roth, 500X
Gallery, Dallas, Texas
- Graduate Spring Invitational*, UNT Art Gallery (formerly
known as Lightwell Gallery), Denton, Texas
- 2014 *5 to watch*, Juried by Susan and Jordan Roth, The Gallery
at Visit Addison, Addison, Texas
- 2013 *Graduate Fall Invitational*, UNT Art Gallery, Denton, Texas
- Graduate Spring Invitational*, UNT Art Gallery, Denton, Texas
- Toulouse Graduate School Exhibition Encore*, UNT on the
Square, Denton, Texas

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS:

- 2018 *OC3: Identified*, Oak Cliff Cultural Center, Dallas, Texas
- 2017 *Chaos*, Ro2 Art Gallery, Dallas, Texas

- 2016 *Trilogy: Origin, Stands and Alchemy*, Union Art Gallery at
UNT, Denton, Texas
- 2015 *Belonging*, Ro2 Art Gallery, Dallas, Texas
- 2014 *The Turn by Bumin Kim*, Kai Martin, Rachel Fischer, and
Michelle Thomas, Cora Stafford Gallery at UNT,
Denton, Texas
- Agent Form*, Panhandle House, Denton, Texas
- 2013 *Intersections*, UNT on the Square, Denton, Texas

AWARDS:

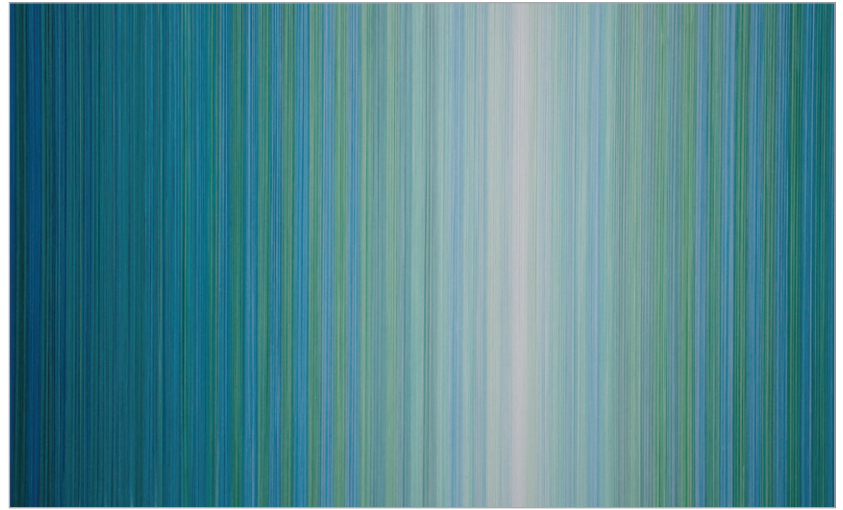
- 2018 Business Council for the Arts, Dallas, Texas
- 2017 *30th Materials: Hard+Soft International Competition and
Exhibition*, Award Winner, Juried by JoAnn Edwards,
Patterson-Appleton Arts Center
- 2016 *Art Kudos International Juried Competition*, Finalist,
Artkudos.com
- 2015 *Art Kudos International Juried Competition*, Finalist,
Artkudos.com
- 2015 *Expo 2015, Top 5*, Juried by Susan and Jordan Roth,
500x Gallery, Dallas, Texas
- 2014 Texas Public Education Grant
- 2014 Paul Voertman Scholarship, University of North
Texas, Denton, Texas
- 2013 Toulouse Graduate School Exhibition, Third Place for Visual
Arts, University of North Texas, Denton, Texas
- 2012 UNT Academic Achievement Scholarship, University
of North Texas, Denton, Texas

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESS:

- Ty Bishop, "Featured Artist Bumin Kim", *Friend of the Artist Volume 7*,
October 5, 2018, P.60-63
- Alaena Hostetter, "In the Old Dallas Power & Light Building, Three
Art Shows Find Space This Month", *D magazine*, April 2, 2018
- Scott Gleeson, "Landscapes", *Peripheral Vision Arts*, January 28, 2018
- Sarah Odum, "Materials: Hard+Soft 2017", *We Denton Do It*,
February 13, 2017
- Kendall Morgan, "4 Must-see Dallas art gallery shows to check off your
list this December",
Culture Map Dallas, December 3, 2015



Left: Water pond, 2018, thread and acrylic on wood panel, 36" x 36"



Right: Water pond, 2018, (detail) thread and acrylic on wood panel, 36" x 36"

Women & Their Work

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Known for its pioneering spirit, embrace of artistic innovation, and commitment to Texas audiences and artists, Women & Their Work is now celebrating its 41st anniversary. Presenting over 50 events a year in visual art, dance, theater, music, and film, the gallery features on-going exhibitions of Texas women artists and brings artists of national stature to Texas audiences. Since its founding, Women & Their Work has presented 1,910 artists in 320 visual art exhibitions, 152 music, dance and theater events, 16 film festivals, 30 literary readings and spoken word performances, and 675 workshops in programming that reflects the broad diversity of this region. Nationally recognized, Women & Their Work has been featured in Art in America, The New York Times, ArtForum, and on National Public Radio and was the first organization in Texas to receive a grant in visual art from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Women & Their Work reaches over 700 school children and teachers each year through gallery tours, gallery talks with exhibiting artists, participatory workshops, in-school performances, dance master classes, and teacher workshops.



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