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‘The Land and the People’ brings Korean prints to Sac State

Landscapes, people, even bold political statements – 10 Korean printmakers capture it all in a free exhibit opening Thursday, Feb. 6, at Sacramento State’s Library Gallery.

“The Land and the People – Contemporary Korean Prints” represents the diversity and scale of contemporary printmaking in South Korea.

About 90 works – many large scale – of three generations of artists represent techniques from traditional woodblock and linocut to experimental silicon casting and digital processes.

The exhibit runs through Saturday, May 17, with a reception from 5 to 8 p.m. Feb. 6. It is curated by Ian Harvey, Sacramento State art professor; Koo Kyung Sook, art professor emeritus, Chungnam National University, South Korea; and Kim Jinha, art critic and director of Namu Art, Seoul, South Korea. Gallery hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday.

Despite the range of themes in the exhibit, there is a commonality. “It is exciting to see how artists in an Asian tradition effortlessly merge the purposes of abstraction, symbolism and documentary into a unified act of communication,” Harvey says.

It has taken three years for Koo and Harvey to bring this exhibit into being. Travelling to Korea, visiting the artists’ studios, and coordinating the arrangements across the Pacific were a lot of work, but an enjoyable and interesting experience. Koo and Harvey will present a public lecture at the gallery at 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 12.

Ten artists are taking part in the exhibit: An Jeong Min, Chung Sang Gon, Jung Won Chul, Kim Eok, Kim Joon Kwon, Lee Sang Guk, Lee Yun Yop, Ryu Yeun Bok, Suh Sang Hwan and Yoon Yeo Geul.

Jung Won Chul’s images focus on “Comfort Women” – women who were forced to service soldiers during the Japanese conquests of World War II. “The intricacy of Jung’s technique, and the resulting richness of texture, transforms the women’s facial expressions into a topography of experience,” Koo says. “But it is the light, shining...
through all the textures, that imbues the women with a presence that exceeds the tonal documentation of photography.”

Jung will be a visiting artist to the Art Department, working in the Kadema Hall print shop April 7-13. He will present lectures and demonstrations, and produce a print and a small edition.

Exhibit curator Kim Jinha also will present a lecture during this time period on the history of Korean wood block prints and contemporary printmaking. Both appearances are part of the University’s Festival of the Arts.

For more information on the exhibit, contact Harvey at iharvey@csus.edu. For media assistance, call the University’s Public Affairs office at (916) 278-6156. – Craig Koscho

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