Korean art exhibit provides far-reaching opportunities

Sacramento State will host a special art exhibit opening this February that reaches out to many academic disciplines and beyond the campus to the larger Sacramento community.

“The Land and the People – Contemporary Korean Printmaking” will run Feb. 6-May 17 in the University Library Gallery. The show is curated by professor and artist Ian Harvey; Korean artist Koo Kyung Sook, professor of art emeritus, Chungnam National University; and Kim Jinha, art critic and director of Namu Art, Seoul, South Korea.

The exhibit will spotlight 10 artists working in wood block, linocut and digital processes. The artists represent the diversity and monumental scale of printmaking in South Korea. Most of the works range in scale from 4 to 12 feet.

Some faculty in Dance, English, History and Asian Studies are already planning to include the exhibit as part of their spring curricula, and Harvey and Koo are looking for even more. “We really want to find a way to create a platform for as many different disciplines as possible to participate,” Harvey says. “It’s the University Gallery. It’s for the entire University and the community.”

In fact, the Asian Studies Program is launching a Korean Concentration next semester that will include a course on Korean arts. Korean cultural events are set for some time in February, says Program Director Pat Chirapravati.

And the exhibit touches on social, political and historical events, with works such as Jung Won Chul’s images of “Comfort Women” – women forced to service soldiers during the Japanese invasion of mainland Asia in World War II.

Harvey and Koo plan on presenting a lecture in the gallery at 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 12, and will have an artist-in-residence on campus to coincide with
the University’s annual Festival of the Arts in April. The guest curator, Kim Jinha, will present a lecture during the festival about the history of wood block prints and contemporary printmaking practices.

For art enthusiasts in Sacramento, the exhibit offers a rare opportunity to see works mostly presented in Europe, Japan and China. “Only four of the artists have exhibited previously in the United States,” Harvey says.

“This is a great opportunity to see the real work and to understand the distinctive characteristics of Korean prints,” Koo says.

Participating artists are: 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.

Harvey and Koo are grateful to Library Gallery Director Phil Hitchcock for his encouragement and support of the exhibit.

Anyone wishing to develop opportunities around the exhibit may contact Harvey at iharvey@csus.edu. For media assistance, call Sacramento State’s Public Affairs office at (916) 278-6156. – Craig Koscho

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