

# JEAN SHIN: INCLUSIONS



Crow Collection of Asian Art

May 16–October 18, 2015



A landscape of celadon shards *in situ* behind ceramic kilns, South Korea, 2002. Photo courtesy of the artist and Cristin Tierney Gallery, New York



Presented in partnership with the Nancy A. Nasher and David J. Haemisegger Family SOLUNA: Dallas International Music & Arts Festival; Special thanks to Jean Shin, Cristin Tierney Gallery, New York; Mark Moore Gallery, Los Angeles; the city of Icheon, South Korea; and the College of Visual Arts and Design at the University of North Texas

FRONT COVER:

*Celadon Threads* (detail), 2008, digital embroidery and stitching, inkjet print on Arches Paper, 23 x 16 inches. Courtesy of the artist; SOLO Impression, New York; and Cristin Tierney Gallery, New York

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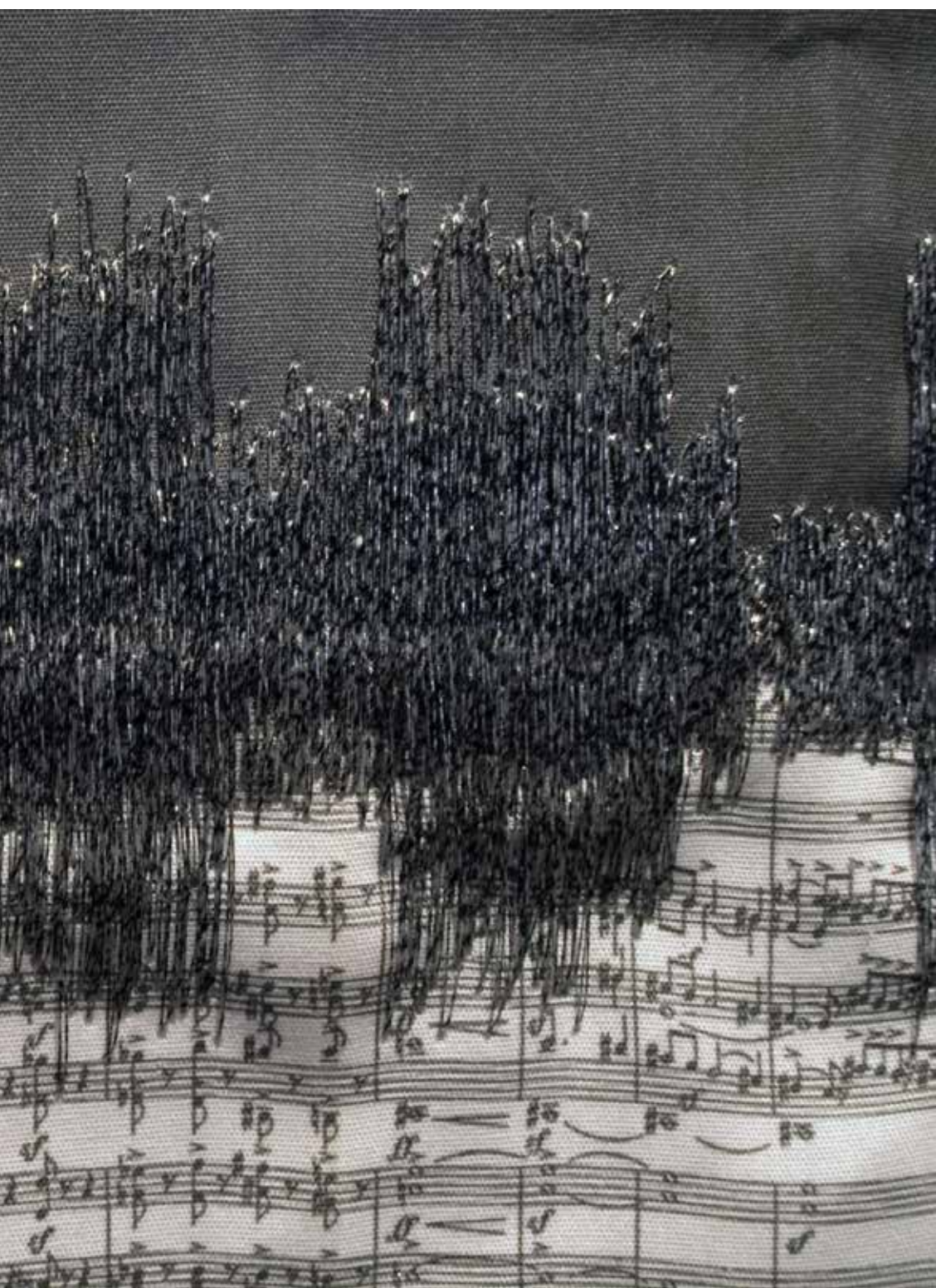
*Inclusions* presents a selection of New York-based contemporary artist Jean Shin's work in video, installation, sculpture, photography, and mixed media. The title of the exhibition draws attention to the inclusive nature of her artistic practice, which relies heavily on accumulating large quantities of material or objects that would otherwise be considered useless remnants and usually go entirely unnoticed. Shin is particularly interested in deconstructing and recombining the cast-off objects in our everyday lives in unusual and unexpected ways by shifting our perspectives and revisiting subjects in different contexts. When collecting materials and assembling them into new shapes and forms, Shin often brings together communities and participants, highlighting the stories, labor, and history embedded in everyday objects.

The title of the exhibition also alludes to Shin's engagement with the art of ceramics, an important traditional art in Korea. In mineralogy, the word "inclusion" describes a foreign body trapped inside a host during its formation, and in ceramics it can refer to a particle or air bubble either trapped or intentionally added to the clay body or fired glaze. This term is sometimes presented as a flaw and at other times considered an asset. While in South Korea for an artist's residency in 2002, Shin discovered mounds of pottery shards at kiln sites in the city of Icheon, a center of ceramic production especially known for celadon, the traditional green-blue glaze applied to porcelain. These shards were the remnants of imperfect or flawed ceramic works that were destroyed by the potters immediately after their creation. Shin imported several tons of these broken ceramics to New York and has given them new life by using them to create new works of art, among them *Celadon Landscape*, a new site-specific installation in the Museum's Sculpture Garden, and *Celadon Displays*, a new sculptural work on view in this gallery. Shin's exploration of the beauty of discarded celadon shards, as well as their presence in her new body of work, offers a thoughtful engagement with Korean ceramic arts and their place in museum collections in Korea and abroad. Like all of her works of art, these pieces also raise questions about what we choose to include in life and art, and what we gain when we examine things that are usually excluded.





*And We Move (Pause)* (detail), 2008, inkjet prints on cotton fabric, with digitized embroidery, 32.5 x 42 inches. Courtesy of the artist; SOLO Impression, New York; and Cristin Tierney Gallery, New York







*Wooden Floor* (detail), disposable wooden chopsticks, dimensions variable.  
Courtesy of the artist and Cristin Tierney Gallery, New York

**EXCERPTS FROM  
A CONVERSATION WITH JEAN SHIN,  
MARCH 2015**

Describe your installation, *Celadon Landscape*, at the Crow Collection of Asian Art.

**JS:** *Celadon Landscape* is a site-specific work made out of approximately two tons of broken celadon fragments sourced from Korea. The broken shards of ceramic form the shape of two traditional Korean “male” and “female” celadon vases, each 8 feet tall. The pair of colorful vases recline in the Crow Collection’s Zen garden as if they are emerging out of an endless landscape of fragmented celadon.

When did you first become interested in Korean celadon?

**JS:** I became fascinated by Korean celadon during a 2002 artist’s residency in Seoul. I saw many beautiful collections of celadon vases on display in museums but discovered I was drawn more to the production facilities outside of Seoul. There, behind the kilns, was a vast landscape of broken ceramics that generations of potters had discarded over decades of work. These vessels were all destroyed because they were flawed, but in their vast accumulation, they produced a new type of beauty.

Years later, I created *Celadon Remnants*, a permanent public artwork for New York City’s MTA’s Art & Design Program. Making a mosaic with celadon shards imported from Korea became a metaphor for the Korean diaspora living in Flushing, Queens, where the piece was sited. Although each broken ceramic vessel is unique, they share similar traditions and history. Transported to a new context the celadon material, like the Korean American community, forms a new identity.

You have described your work as being made from “humble remnants.” What draws you to these objects?

**JS:** I see value in these cast-off objects. They remind us of our cultural identities precisely because they have been consumed, used, worn, or discarded. These leftover objects retain key traces of their owners’ lives. In my work, I imagine new possibilities, a second life for these remnants.

Your installation and exhibition are part of the inaugural SOLUNA: International Music & Arts Festival. This year's theme is "Destination (America)." How does your piece relate to this theme?

**JS:** In a very literal way, *Celadon Landscape* is an installation whose material and cultural history were imported from Korea to America. By creating a landscape, one "naturalizes" the material in all senses of the word. This, too, is a process of inclusion, one specific to being American.



Jean Shin, *Celadon Threads*, 2008, digital embroidery and stitching, ink-jet print on Arches Paper, 49.5 x 23 inches. Courtesy of the artist; SOLO Impression, New York; and Cristin Tierney Gallery, New York



## WORKS OF ART IN THE EXHIBITION

### CELADON DISPLAYS

2015

Ceramic shards, museum pedestals

Courtesy of the artist and Cristin Tierney Gallery, New York

Ceramic discards donated by the city of Icheon, South Korea

*Celadon Displays* is a new sculptural work created for exhibition at the Museum in conjunction with the opening of *Celadon Landscape*, a new site-specific installation in the Sculpture Garden. Intrigued by the visual culture of museums that exhibit artifacts and fine works of art selected for their beauty and historical importance, Shin incorporated museum pedestals and vitrines into a new abstract sculpture filled with discarded remnants of flawed ceramic vessels imported from Korea. The resulting composition offers visitors the chance to view the beauty within these imperfect fragments, and raises questions about what art is considered representative of a culture, and what is excluded.

### CELADON THREADS

2008

Digital embroidery and stitching, inkjet print on Arches Paper

Courtesy of the artist; SOLO Impression, New York; and Cristin Tierney Gallery, New York

This series of works on paper created with digital embroidery and stitching explores the visual language of traditional Korean ceramic forms. These vases and their iconic silhouettes carry cultural meanings, including distinctions of gender. The sinewy, long-necked bottle is considered female, while the broad-shouldered, stocky jar is considered male. Such vessels, traditionally potted by male artists, were decorated with auspicious imagery that also had gender associations: wisdom and prosperity for men, and fertility and happy marriage for women. By transposing her interest in ceramics and their fragments into embroidery, Shin appropriates an art form typically associated with female artists.

### FOUND INSTALLATION SERIES

2002

Digital C-print

Courtesy of the artist and Cristin Tierney Gallery, New York

FOUND INSTALLATION (SEAMS, TAPES, AND CORDS)

FOUND INSTALLATION (VINYL ROLLS)

FOUND INSTALLATION (RIBBONS)

FOUND INSTALLATION (STEEL RODS)

While in South Korea in 2002, Shin often explored the open marketplaces of the city of Seoul. In these markets, she saw piles of merchandise and materials, stacked and organized in ways that resonated with her interest in sculptural installations. These “found installations” became the subject

of a series of photographs in which the images are cropped to eliminate any references to their specific location, although those who know these Seoul markets may recognize them. The photos show the careful arrangement of merchandise as assemblages of shapes and colors that can be seen both as commonplace commodities and as abstract visual compositions.

## **WOODEN FLOOR**

2002

Disposable wooden chopsticks

Courtesy of the artist and Cristin Tierney Gallery, New York

In *Wooden Floor*, thousands of disposable wooden chopsticks have been temporarily arranged into an elaborate composition that recalls the structure of wood flooring. These common, utilitarian items which are normally discarded after one use create a pattern of square tiles, as shown here, or the herringbone, parquet, and plank flooring of previous installations. The work turns the permanence of architecture on its head, while placing it in dialogue with the temporality of food and consumption. Like a beautifully raked Japanese rock garden, the installation is not meant to be physically walked on but instead it becomes a place of contemplation for the eyes and mind.

## **GRAFTED SETTINGS SERIES**

2015

Nickel-plated stainless steel flatware

Courtesy of the artist and Mark Moore Gallery, Los Angeles

### **GRAFTED SETTINGS (TREE)**

### **GRAFTED SETTINGS 2 (SAPLING)**

In the sculpture *Grafted Settings (Tree)*, Shin investigates the history and cultural connotations of flatware. The practical, utilitarian function of the utensil serves as cross-cultural common ground. It facilitates the basic human need for sustenance. Yet historically, flatware has become loaded with divisive cultural significance, evoking associations embedded with connotations of class, etiquette, and privilege. This complexity is similarly evident in her use of the tree as an object representing both utility and idealized beauty. In combination, the tree and flatware suggest a harmonious coexistence of culture and nature, while softly referencing their mutual fragility. The patterns and quality of the utensils reflect the styles and social etiquette from the time of their creation. The sets also speak to family traditions, the rituals of dining and hosting, and the wide variety of occasions during which they were used: casual or fancy, intimate or formal, daily or holiday.

## **ANNUAL RINGS**

2015

Graphite on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Mark Moore Gallery, Los Angeles

The *Grafted Settings* series explored the sculptural possibilities of metal flatware, carefully polished, bent, and welded, into the form of young trees. The *Annual Rings* series is a group of related works on paper that traces the

development of another sculpture created with donated flatware from the community around the Montclair Art Museum: a tree stump with annual rings that were assembled in concentric, organic forms. The paper placed over the “growing” sculpture was rubbed with graphite, revealing drawings that both call to mind the passage of time and also show the particularities of each carefully selected utensil.

## **AND WE MOVE**

2008

Single-channel digital video with sound

Duration: 5 min.

Courtesy of the artist and Cristin Tierney Gallery, New York

In the video work *And We Move*, Shin focuses the viewer’s eyes on what seems to be an abstract black and gray moving image set to music. The image is actually an extreme close-up of the back of a conductor as he leads an orchestra. Undulating folds of light and shadow move across the screen as his jacket pulses in rhythm with each rise and fall in sound. The notes of Czech composer Bedřich Smetana’s *Ma Vlast* and French composer Jacques Ibert’s *Flute Concerto* filter through the movements of the maestro’s body and inscribe themselves on his clothing where the acoustic becomes legible. The title refers to the phrase that the conductor uses to incite the performers to begin playing their musical instruments. Overall, this project investigates the interdependence of music and its visual representation, conceptually fusing the aural and the optical.

## **AND WE MOVE (PAUSE)**

2008

Inkjet prints on cotton fabric, with digitized embroidery

Courtesy of the artist; SOLO Impression, New York; and Cristin Tierney Gallery, New York

This series of inkjet prints on fabric is made up of three intersecting elements: stills from the video work *And We Move* which show a dramatic close-up of a conductor’s back as he leads an orchestra, the compositional score of Czech composer Bedřich Smetana’s *Ma Vlast*; and the excerpted sound waves of the edited video’s audio of the performance. The video stills—capturing the moments of music and physical movements frozen in time—are printed above the musical score. The wavy lines of the audio levels are embroidered between the two, suturing the written language of music to the digital recording of a performance.

## **PENUMBRA**

2003

Single-channel digital video with sound

Duration: 5 min.

Courtesy of the artist and Cristin Tierney Gallery, New York

The video work *Penumbra* relates to a site-specific sculptural installation of the same name at the Socrates Sculpture Park in New York, comprised of the fabric stripped from discarded, broken umbrellas gathered from city streets



after windy rainstorms. The umbrellas have been sewn into a large canopy-like assemblage installed among the trees and animated by the wind. The video also captures the sounds of the sculpture in its outdoor location: the rustling and flapping of the fabric, the chirping of birds, and the chime-like sounds of another artist's nearby sculpture. A "penumbra" is a partial shadow, and this installation plays on the relationship between the umbrella cloth and the natural elements of wind, rain, and sunlight. The sculpture is also an example of the care with which Shin approaches the labor-intensive processes of collecting, deconstructing, repairing, and reconfiguring in order to create something beautiful and unexpected.



*Penumbra*, 2003, single-channel digital video with sound (duration: 5 min.).  
Courtesy of the artist and Cristin Tierney Gallery, New York

## BIOGRAPHY

Jean Shin is an internationally recognized American artist known for her monumental installations that transform everyday objects into elegant expressions of identity and community. For each project, she amasses vast collections of a particular object—old clothing, broken umbrellas, flatware, ceramic shards—which are often sourced through donations from individuals in a participating community. These intimate objects then become the materials for her conceptually rich sculptures, videos, and site-specific installations. Distinguished by her meticulous, labor-intensive process and her engagement of community, Shin's arresting installations reflect individuals' personal lives as well as collective issues that we face as a society.



Jean Shin

Her work has been widely exhibited in major national and international museums, including in solo exhibitions at the Montclair Art Museum (2013), Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art in Arizona (2010), Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, DC (2009), the Fabric Workshop and Museum in Philadelphia (2006), and The Museum of Modern Art in New York (2004).

Born in Seoul, South Korea, and raised in the United States, Shin attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 1999 and received a BFA and MS from Pratt Institute in Brooklyn. She lives and works in New York City.



*Annual Rings*, 2015,  
graphite on paper,  
18 x 24 inches.  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Mark Moore Gallery, Los Angeles



*Grafted Settings 2 (Sapling)* (detail), 2015, nickel-plated stainless steel flatware, 47 x 31 x 11 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Mark Moore Gallery, Los Angeles







*Found Installation (Vinyl Rolls)*, 2002, digital C-print, 16 x 20 inches.  
Courtesy of the artist and Cristin Tierney Gallery, New York

## RELATED PROGRAM

### **Adventure Asia: Play. Make. Repeat** **Saturday, June 6 | 10 am–2 pm**

Join the Crow Collection of Asian Art for a free day of family fun celebrating the exhibition *Jean Shin: Inclusions*. Known for her elaborate sculptures and installations that transform everyday objects into elegant expressions of identity and community, the artist will inspire you to create your own work of art using a variety of mediums and methods.

## MUSEUM HOURS

Tuesday–Thursday 10 AM to 9 PM | Friday–Saturday 10 AM to 6 PM  
Sunday noon to 6 PM | Closed Monday

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