

gimhongsok

Gimhongsok - Believe it or not

November 2017

Art | gimhongsok – Believe It or Not



*A Study on Slanted
& Hyperbolic Constitution*
– *Small Love*, 2017
Cast resin
238 x 103 x 90 cm

gimhongsok:
Subsidiary Construction
Perrotin
Hong Kong
17 November > 22 December 2017



Structuring Shadows
(bubble wrap), 2017
Pigment print on
resin coated paper

Accomplished liar: his untruths and ability to confuse his audience fascinate Korean painter, sculptor, performance and video artist, gimhongsok, whose methods elicit antagonism and acceptance in equal measure. Born in Seoul, in 1964, where he continues to live and work, despite claiming a fear of foreign travel, he studied in Braunschweig and at Düsseldorf Kunst Akademie in Germany (1990 > 1996).

The relationship between money and art is also of great interest to him. He once put on a performance in which a person he paid to wear an animal costume, held a pose for a certain length of time. For the same performance at another venue, he placed a mannequin inside the costume with an accompanying explanatory panel saying that he had paid a Spanish worker to model for him, so that on this occasion both the existence of the performer and the financial transaction existed only in the text.

While he might have us believe that he is a homebody, and that many of his ideas are derived from the long hours he spends watching TV news and documentary programmes, the content of which he subverts and manipulates in order to present convincing fictional stories of his own, his artistic concerns are far from parochial and deal with global issues – fake news, waste, and political oppression having been long-term preoccupations.

gimhongsok openly admits that plagiarism plays a strong role in his creativity. The animal costume piece mixed elements taken from Italian artist Maurizio Cattelan's *Love Lasts Forever* (1999) with Mexico-based artist Santiago Sierra's practice of hiring workers to perform tasks. In his recent sculptures, he mixes Jeff Koons-style wit with the sculptural forms of Constantin Brâncuși, while his prints suggest the spatialist techniques developed by Lucio Fontana. His earlier works borrow freely from, among others, the graffiti-based art of Jean-Michel Basquiat, from Joseph Beuys, John Chamberlain, and Carl Andre.



Structuring Shadows
(plastic bag), 2017
Pigment print on
resin coated paper



*A Study on Slanted
& Hyperbolic Constitution*
– *Cubi XII* of David Smith, 2017
Cast bronze
227 x 93 x 88 cm



Structuring Shadows
(cardboard box), 2017
Pigment print on
resin coated paper

Asked In a 2007 interview with *ArtAsiaPacific* whether there was any piece that best represented his style at the time, gimhongsok explained that, although it is common for contemporary artists to utilise diverse media, many still express a certain signature style. 'In such a light', he continued, 'I could be accused of doing something completely arbitrary or nonsensical, because neither my methodology, nor the images I create represent stylisation, which I expressly resist... As such, it is agonising for me to pick a representative work'. Although his working method might be interpreted as parasitic, he asserts that because he is not dependent upon any particular subject matter, method, or style of presentation, he often believes that he is 'on a perfect journey'.

gimhongsok's work has been regularly exhibited throughout Asia, in the USA, Australia, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands and the UK since 1998, and the fact that all of the major Korean museums, including the National Museum of Contemporary Art, as well the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, USA; Contemporary Art Museum, Kumamoto, Japan; National Gallery of Canada, Canada; Queensland Art Gallery, Australia, and many other important

international institutions, have acquired examples of it, stands as testament to the art establishment's belief in his extraordinary talent.

Nothing is ever quite what it seems in gimhongsok's creations and he delights in being found out. *A Study on Slanted and Hyperbolic Constitution – Small Love*, from his 2017 series – the series title itself is a clue that it is an appropriation of works by American sculptors **David Smith** and **Robert Indiana** – included in the forthcoming *gimhongsok: Subsidiary Construction* at **Perrotin** Hong Kong, might appear to be an unstable 2.4m high stack of taped-up cardboard boxes, however closer inspection reveals it as a hyper-realistic resin fabrication.

All images courtesy the artist and Perrotin

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