RAIN.
You see a head covered by hairs. On top of the hairs, water drops are falling down such as pearls.
The water falls down from the mid long hairs and hold in a white basin. You can turn around and around you
will photo is the face of the head. This image-sculpture is coming from a drawing that I’ve done with lines
finishing by dots. It is thus important to see the water drops falling down from the extremity of the hairs.
I’m interested in shaping this state of in-between, transformation of the heap (amas) of hairs like
vegetative mass, into a liquid state. I’m trying to keep this state in suspense, the water flows as much as it
can, it is a fountain functioning in a continuous loop. The sound of the water blurs our perception of time
in a repetitive movement, leading us in an endless time. Or even restful, introducing a grotesque dimension
on a head without voice.

In the popular imagery, the association of hairs and of water is not rare. In the movie directed by Charles
Laughton, The Night of the Hunter (1955), one can see the corpse of the murdered wife of the priest floating
on the bottom of the river, the corpse in a car, hairs waving in the sens of the seaweed.
One can see some resemblance with Gui-chine, the Korean ghost wearing in white, generally represented by a
female figure with long black hairs waving in the wind hiding her face. But everyone who has been following
the story knows who it is, to haunt the weak spirits.

To come back to the RAIN, this cut head has somehow a meditative aspect as I said, thanks to the sound of
falling water, such as on the edge of the fountain in a garden.
The name RAIN is coming from this visible movement from top to bottom, and it is a fountain emphasizing the
transfigured link. I take the rain for a fountain, I like to imagine things being upside down, such as the
relationship with others...

LE MAUGE.
One hour from Nantes in France, there is a countryside called Le Pays des Mauges. Since almost 30 years,
locals have been fighting to have their own public high school. This collective dream became true in 2015 in a
small city called Beaufre. A very ambitious school project opened 24 hours, with huge garden place and
residency for students and professors, an education focused on agriculture and hygiene products, and a future
program for adults in the frame of lifelong learning. Since LE MAUGE has been produced in response to so
called 18 artistique as public commande, the context is more than political.
As you enter to the high school domaine by walking on the slightly climbing path for about 300 meters, as
you approche to the entrance of the main building constructed in the respect of environment, you are face
to a huge manlike rock fountain. 8 meters high, nevertheless from the upside, it is not that huge since the
monster is raised up in between two different levels of terrace. In the region, there is a legendary rock
called The rock which drinks where the hight of the cliff from the water is same than the hidden part of the
river.
The monster fountain has already hairy mosses. We built the fountain to encourage the environment to grow
mosses which can be the ancestor of humain kind. The bryophyte is one of the most ancien form of life
appeared on our land. It has the seaweed in memory still, it has a very primitive structure of plant.
Because of the multitude of surfaces, it is used by scientists to mesure the pollution in the air.
Its name, LE MAUGE, is coming from the interpretation of its etymology. It can be the deformation of
metallica, of the metallic soil or of the mauvais gens meaning bad people.
Now its more green and hairy with its new humid microcosm overwhelming the giant monster. The power of water
brings nature raising a local mythology. We can ask if the water brings the rock alias monster or the monster
brings the moss...
This photo is taken during the construction site showing the process of making with projected concrete and its
hydraulic system. It was late in the afternoon on Saturday after a long and tough labor with all our
team. On site you can actually see two faces, front and back.

PLASTIC CUP.
This is a disposable cup laid down on a plastic tray, fast food style, with a straw coming out of the cup.
This cup spits out the transparent drink through the straw, this is a fountain as well. Or a permanent
object. Here, the cup is on strike by rejecting its function, task that is given to it at some point, so as
to better think about. One might find several works that I have done in form of objects in movement.
What I’m interested in might be to give a chance for those objects to talk, a voice, which is a vibration,
a movement.
This fountain is very different than the RAIN except that both have a recognizable form, a head, a cup. This
recognizable form, in other words, these popular forms allow me to pass through the other side of the
immediate reality so as to organize an experience of linguistic form which invites us to reverse our roles
against our environment.

IDO.
Pronounced IDO in French, close to hideux which means hideous or ugly.
During Evento, contemporary art Biennale in Bordeaux, I have been interested in common transport.
The bus is the place where ephemeral community is forming.
I took it as a furtive brief monument in the city. To do that, I have disguised the public city bus with
hairy mask, on the level of its head, the hairs at the scale of the vehicle. We had to figure out how to weave
for it.
The bus covered like that was marking its everyday itinerary from the down town to the periphery of Bordeaux
with its usual public bus driver. And since we see a bus most of time in movement, its wide fur in the wind,
one can have impression to see a monster.
Most of time, even though the furs are dark, people were smiling while seeing it. As soon as the bus passed by,
the back of the bus is uncovered, one can ask if what has been seen is true or not.
AN AFGHAN IN CORSICA.

I have been walking in Cap Corse in Cosica, dressed up and hooded, all made in a flowery fabric, reminding the little flowers of the Mediterranean Sea where the island is situated. Some would talk about AN AFGHAN IN CORSICA.

For example, in construction and the meaning of the geometrical forms. Quilted in Nubi technique line by line by artisans of Tong-Yeong, the direction of sewing participates in the recalling a proverb in a certain way. I took the traditional Korean blanket format produced till the ‘80s. Since several years, I am working on a re-interpretation of Korean traditional blankets, each blanket recalling a proverb in a certain way. I took the traditional Korean blanket format produced till the ’80s. Quilted in Nubi technique line by line by artisans of Tong-Yeong, the direction of sewing participates in the construction and the meaning of the geometrical forms. For example, in Even Monkeys Fall from Trees - Even agile persons can make mistakes, here, the two circles represent a head of monkey, a direct reference to Two circles No 127 of the Russian constructivist Alexandre Rodtchenko (1920). Situated in between 2 diagonal branches in gray. Since the monkey is falling down, the direction of sewing is vertical as well as the background from upside down. Like in a comic to signify the sense of falling. In Asia, the colors are related to the cosmology and the directions. For example, Black - North, Red - South, Bleu/ Blue - East, White - Ouest and Yellow - Center. People say that sleeping the head toward the north is good for health, this, in Asia as well as in Europe. Whoever sleeps under this blanket can dream like a proverb, spinning like a compass.

When presented on a low pedestal, it reminds of the position of bed. When presented on th wall, the physical impact of colors or of contours is slightly more important.
The blanket is sort of frontier between reality and dream. In that very intimate place I imply a collective dream. I imagine that the collective story contained in the pattern of the blanket can influence the dream of the person who uses it.

The proverbs I’ve been working with are as following,

Choose the red shirt = Take the best
Show a duck’s foot = Lie
Even before a beauty such as Mount Diamond, if you have an empty stomach you won’t see it
Swim on the ground = Easy
Blood of the bird’s foot = Very small quantity
Eat the rice cake lying down = Easy
Until the black hairs turn into white as leek root = Longtime couple
Lick the watermelon = Rush job
The fake apricot is shinier = Useless
The pumpkin rolls in with all its branches = Unexpected wealth

Pressed down by scissors = Cannot wake up after a nightmare
The darkest place is under the oil lamp = One does not see the thing which is too close
The calf has a horned butt = Insolent
One ignores the first Korean letter \‘ᄀ\’ [kijʌk] next to a sickle = Very ignorant
Even the egg has bones = A series of bad luck
As the crow flies, the bear falls = Two bad events occur at the same time
Cut the water with knife = Couple’s quarrel never last
I will put my finger on the boiling fermented bean = I swear it is (not) true
Be crushed in the foot by a trusted axe = Betrayed by someone you believed in
If your tail is too long, it would be trampled upon = Bad behavior will be known soon or later

The empty cart creaks most = The hypocrite talks a lot
The ghost would sing (wailing) = Very rare event, incredible
If you see a hen laying eggs you get lucky
Even monkeys fall from trees = No one is perfect
There is no smoke without fire in the chimney
Even a straw sandal has its pair = Each person has a soulmate
To be accompanied by a jang-gu (drum) = To agree
Out of jealousy, to dig one’s finger into somebody else’s kaki fruit
The cloud and the rain = Carnal love
Words from salivating lips = A lie

At sea, a turtle reaches a plank with a hole in it to put his head through so as to breathe = A rare event
Multitude of sesame seeds are falling = A young couple having fun
Gayageum (zither) and Bipa (lyre) = A harmonious couple

Through this project I called \‘U\’, the capital letter whose form is a container, I try to explore the relationship between the oral culture and the handicraft to find out a certain primitive gesture that people adopted to be independent.

Parallel lines sewed line by line. That reminds me of the landscape of rice field.
Or the parallel lines which symbolized the water bringing life in the prehistory.

PETITE DENT.
The Gobelins Manufactory of the Mobilier National in France asked me to do a collaboration. After visiting their different sites with artisans such as tapestry or furniture, I decided to work with lace makers of bobbin lace (dentelle aux fuseaux) in Puy-en-Velay.

I re-interpret a later sixteenth century pattern to construct a folding screen (paravent) miniature. The pattern upside down is multiplied and the form is readable in big size by differentiation of colors.
In addition to that, the object will filter electromagnetic radiation which can provoke new diseases related to the utilisation of electronic device such as cell phone with wifi...

DUSK SOUP.
When I was invited to realize a solo project in a space equipped with a kitchen behind a library in Marseille called \‘HO\’ like Histoire de l’Oeil, reference to George Bataille coincidently the same name of the caterer in front of that place, I propose to do a continuous party project with soup served all day long during the period of the show. We painted one wall in yellow, the other in pink. Then we put a big pot (marmite) on hotplate full of yellow vegetable soup and pink soup in front of the other. When asked why these colors, I answered that those two colors was that of sunset. In Altkirch, we painted all walls of one room in violet and served violet soup made out of organic purple carrot pourpre of the region. A ceramist neighbor made the bowls.
Maybe we can become transparent by eating a violet soup in a violet space by the time of violet sunset ?

PPR.
People used to call PARIS PROJECT ROOM as PPR, like, Pinault-Printemps-Redoute. But it sounds more like pépère, meaning tranquil in French.

Seulgi Lee 2018
Arlène,

You told me you were interested in the story of the rabbit in the moon. I’ve been dwelling on this. Seulgi has never directly used myths. But they feed her motivations, quite acutely, and clarify somewhat her work process. Identifying figures in abstract shapes and revealing these figures in languages are the two actions that come together in her work and that are found in the tale and interpretation of the lunar geography.

To me, the blanket series is particularly well achieved. What I find the most pleasing is that they are appreciated by all, those accustomed to contemporary art, or to graphic design and design in general, or simple visitors, whether they are Korean or not, and... artisans themselves (who discover a new meaning in their work). This is rare. It’s a work that is about current folklore, rather than traditions. It’s popular. A few years ago in Gwangju, I witnessed a fresh and enthusiastic audience. Undoubtedly because they all played along at the two-step interpretation. Step 1: Appreciating the geometrical composition, the enjoyment of the colours, the fine silk, the meticulous craft, etc. Step 2 (after reading the title): The emergence of the figure (which is, for some, well anchored in spoken language). As for these two dimensions to not rule each other out, Seulgi transcribes the expression graphically, by simplifying it, contradicting it with different colours, pushing it to the limit of its potential interpretation. She stops the process on this fine line, at the very edge of abstraction, without the compositions ever becoming abstract per se. And in fact, it may not even be abstraction.

The new basket series also plays with language and craft. But their encounter is very different and I wouldn’t know how to explain it without describing the situation. Ixcatlan is a very poor village, lost in the mountains of north Oaxaca, two hours away from tarmac roads. Before the Spanish arrived, it was a town of 30 000 inhabitants, with their own language, Ixcateco. Now, there are only 400 in the registers, and less than 10 speak Ixcateco. They all know how to weave palm leaves. It’s custom to pay with straw hats. In the streets and on the mountain paths you can see people weaving as they walk. A community of women (I believe the feminist aspect to be important here) form a cooperative and execute challenging commissions (baskets, mezcal bottle claddings...). It’s quite a scene : eight women meet in a breezeblock 9m² room, and sit on chairs with their back against the walls, weave, chat and joke. Seulgi spent two weeks with them, drawing what she understood of their weaving methods, shapes that simultaneously animated the conversation. Only very few people know how to build a sentence in Ixcateco, but words crop up everyday. Designating the shapes that they were weaving became a game and brought memories back to life. They named their collective Xula (Ixcateco in Ixcateco). Inventing new shapes so as to name them, to allow an ancient language to resurface, an unusual mission for an artist, but not for a linguist: Evangelia Adamou, inalco, Ixcateco specialist claims to use stimuli during her interviews.

More loosely, the common point between the two projects: the artist’s position, playful and curious, halfway between the intellectual and the artisan. Finally, relocating our spiritual activities in our artisanal activities, and the other way round, is an ordinary posture for an artist. The shortcut may be somewhat awkward, but with these two bodies of work, Seulgi positions herself by offering figures that allow encounters.

Concerning the current installation, I don’t want to insist on the on the dreamlike landscape that the blankets connote, on the nightmares and oblivious images in our expressions, but Seulgi has nonetheless imagined their vertical hanging in one room, and horizontal in the other. She reminds that: up and down / across are the two weft types used for making petates; that there is only a small step from thanatos to tenates ; that the baskets are used to wrap tortillas, but also the dead in Mexico, and also hid widows in Korea at a certain point, but I’m starting to drift off...

S. 2017
What happens when you’re following the full moon rabbit, and you come upon a language that is almost dead, or maybe last one, what difference does this make, and then what is this vanishing dialect? A myth from the pre-Hispanic period (similar to a Korean belief) relates that the Mexicans were quite sure that there was a rabbit lying on the moon. For them, it was the reason behind the moon’s craters, and it obscured the moon’s brightness so that it would be less dazzling than the sun. In addition to the contrast between the two stars, the animal here signifies our obsessive desire to want to see a shape in any kind of (abstract) landscape coming before our eyes.

With eight capital letters and an invented word inspired by votive expressions, DAMASESE invites us to discover animated signs and their opposites. It plays with our vague desires to recognize (or not) a letter and a language in its most primitive attire. Starting with Ixcatec, hailing from the Oaxaca region of Mexico. Of pre-Hispanic origin (and thus contemporary with the above-mentioned allegory), this Oto-Manguan language has become extremely rare, being spoken by less than ten people. It has the specific feature of having no written form, and it is as a result associated solely with the present, and its recording. Intrigued by this language’s legacy, Seuligi Lee took this starting point to set up an exchange with a community of women basket-makers based in Santa Maria Ixcatlan, called Xula (meaning Ixcatec in Ixcatec = a nice tautology). To do this, for days on end she observed their techniques for weaving baskets, while she simultaneously discovered this unknown language. This experiment and acclimatization in turn gave rise to hybrid (as well as hybridized) tenates (baskets), extending at the same time to a pronounced word, or its association with a line. In the same way as the disappearance of the lexicon, sentences have become rare because few inhabitants actually communicate in this language; some of them know a word or two, thus creating a stammering effect, and sentences with no agreements, and even without verbs. A little like when you learn sign language (bear in mind that it differs in every country) and you only know how to sign letters, which makes it hard to have a conversation!

The basket’s shape is dictated by a force field that is, to be sure, in dialogue with the material, but also the word. In this respect, Tim Ingold states that: “the action [read, the weaving] has a narrative quality, in the sense that all movement, like a line in history, is rhythmically developed based on the previous movement, while anticipating the next movement.” In an earlier book, the British anthropologist analyzed the relation between line, weaving and text. According to him: “The line formed on an already existing surface [...] is the trace of a movement, the one we see on a surface which has been woven using threads—like that of the blanket—develops in an organic way in one direction, through the repetition of crosswise and to-and-fro movements which go in the other direction. This distinction also offers a key for understanding the relation between weaving and writing. Because the shared derivation, [...]of the words "text" and "textile" comes from tax and "weave", the writing that is usually defined by the inscription of traces on a surface has been inspired by the weaving model.” The “neo-tenates” also propose an autonomous “neo-dialect” (or a “neo-currency” of exchange) like woven palm fronds before them, whose primary syntax is these anthropomorphic structures whose typology is related to certain exotic flowers. In particular those tropical carnivorous plants with the name Nepenthes, existing in the form of different varieties and especially in the mountains of the State of Meghalaya in India. Set on structures made of metal rod, these gregarious baskets (like pink flamingoes) propose new signs constructed on a shrewd game of inside-outside, containing-contained, horizontal and vertical alike. New generation urns, in a way! And why not the other meaning of Nepenthes, referring to Homer by way of the memory of the potion which Paris gave to Helen to drink after her kidnapping, to make her forget about the land of her birth? Through the ensemble of their dots, angles and almost body-like attitudes, these “neo-petates” (woven palm fronds) are furthermore akin to astronomical constellations with powerful imaginative potential: “Wedg (soft as a telephone), Uburo (here and there pink horses neigh), Tundu (the madman has a blue/green broken nose) and Guashunga (a girl with neat hair).”

Here are adages that have become poems, just like in the “nubi(s)” brought together in the syllabary unit “Um” with a sound somewhere between a Chinese ideogram and a Korean phonogram. These votive sculptures composed of bright, flamboyant and multi-hued colours from front to back, or else black and white (tending to create a disappearance of the lexicon, sentences have become rare because few inhabitants actually communicate in this language; some of them know a word or two, thus creating a stammering effect, and sentences with no agreements, and even without verbs. A little like when you learn sign language (bear in mind that it differs in every country) and you only know how to sign letters, which makes it hard to have a conversation!

DAMASESE

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1 The “tenate(s)” lie at the heart of the lives of the Mexicans of Santa Maria Ixcatlan.
2 They are also used to wrap foodstuffs, protect heads in the form of sombreros, and protect the bodies of the deceased.
5 The prefix “neo” is used in its various qualities and in particular the one that describes a new fact, but also a constructed language, i.e. created in record time by several people.
6 In the attractions of Newmoorong, chosen as Asia’s cleanest village in 2003
7 The petates are weavings made of palm fronds (and in particular mats made using this technique) which appeared in the pre-Hispanic period.
8 The term “Tongyeong Nubi(s)” lie at the heart of the lives of the Mexicans of Santa Maria Ixcatlan.
9 In an earlier book, the British anthropologist analyzed the relation between line, weaving and text. Because the shared derivation, [...]of the words "text" and "textile" comes from tax and "weave", the writing that is usually defined by the inscription of traces on a surface has been inspired by the weaving model.”

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Arlène Berceliot Courtin 2017
Blanket Project U (유, 柔)

The simplified geometrical shapes in the vividly colourful fabrics present fresh and vigorous images. The bold contrast and subtle chroms of the primary colours with the various directions of the stitches, vertical, horizontal and diagonal, rhythm the vitality of the forms. Dreamlike images, these abstract forms of intimate colours and shapes trigger the reminiscence of something vague and yet not so unfamiliar. The ambiguous objects are eventually manifested by their titles. These Korean proverbs stimulate an association between image and language, process in which the image is a proverb in itself.

Seulgi Lee transforms a selection of Korean proverbs into simplified forms and primary colours. These metaphors vary in their composition and colour scheme. For instance the proverb, "a pumpkin and its vine roll in all at once", becomes a round and sensitive form simplifying the shape of a pumpkin. The orange shape is fully expanded to the edge of the frame, contoured by a bright blue background. Dynamic motion is evoked through the vertical lines of the pumpkin and the horizontal lines of the background. The meaning of the proverb, that great fortune will unexpectedly appear, is not understood through the image, but generated as a direct perception of the proverb in a visual and tactile sense.

Significantly, this direct perception is mediated by the originality of the colours and the forms in the image. Seulgi Lee devised to maintain an identical consensus of language by transforming the proverb into an image using the traditional Korean five cardinal colours and basic geometrical shapes. The cardinal colours (blue, red, yellow, black and white) stem from the five cardinal elements of Yin and Yang as symbols of basic principles of creation and existing order of nature as a universe. Based on the perception of non-objectified nature, they reflect a primitive language of spiritual communication between Man and universal nature. The basic geometrical forms, also originating from the image of nature, are an emblem integrating the essence of natural things and the basic formative language, thus allowing space to the onlooker's own perception.

The proverb-image is inscribed on the blanket, similar to a quilt using the Korean traditional craft, Nubi. In this craft, the material is not just a tool, as the artisan needs to fully understand the materiality of the fabrics, to then use skills according to the material itself. Seulgi Lee invites a master craftsman of Korean Nubi, Seongyeon Cho (Tongyeong Nubijang) to make the quilts with his skilful hands. The process of quilting, as a meeting point between hands, cloth and needle, engenders the proverb-image through conscious directions of straight sewing lines. The image directs the way of stitching, the stitches form the image and the cloth includes vigour to the forms enveloping the coldness of geometrical shapes. Finally, it's through contact of the body and the proverb quilted into the blanket that the body can perceive its sense.

In this process, the blanket regains the original identity of universal nature accepting the body as a small universe. Not just in its function or as a tool for the protection of the body, the image on the blanket becomes a language to communicate beyond the level of ornament or decoration. The stitch lines on the quilted blanket seem to reflect the comb-pattern carved on the prehistorical earthenware as a conjuring language praying for life's fullness through abstract images of nature, such as the ceaseless flow of water or rain fertilizing the land. This is associated to the U in the title, originating from the wave pattern of water and the curving sign of both grapheme and utterance. Further still, Seulgi Lee plays with the shape of the U, its hollow or its bridge, associating the image of the blanket surrounding a body. She then develops the title in relation between the cover and the body, adding the Korean (유) and the Chinese (柔) that have the same sound as U. As a phonogram, Korean 유 gives its meaning by an ideogram, the Chinese 柔 that stands for softness and mildness as the most ideal to force to overcome the powerfulness of nature, to not be overwhelmed by nature. As a result Blanket Project U (유, 柔), in the process of making the covers, hand combining the natural fabrics creates a "performative language by conjuration" as a communication between Man and nature.

Usually exploring her inner communication with everyday objects, Seulgi Lee searches for the inherent identity of the individual object. Here however, she seems to seek for the collective identity of her community of origin through one of its everyday objects. The blanket grafts together the oral culture of the proverb and the traditional craft of quilting. Her proverb-image evoking the fundamental essence of language originated from the potential of primitive language, latent in a collective unconscious, awoken by the image as a raw experience. Through proximity and contact, the blankets tell descended stories of wisdom and humour of the proverb in primitive language stored in our unconscious. In this relationship, the symmetrical lines of the stitches on the cover seemingly imply the primitive condition, the equal relationship between human beings and any other beings, not as a fixed image but as a conjuring language to recover the asymmetrical distorted relationship of instrumentation of nature. It awakens our primitive senses in our daily lives. In the realm of art, Blanket Project U (유, 柔) also awakens the primitive essence of art itself, its forgotten and yet intrinsic mode, conjuration.

Sara Oh 2015
The Power of Now

When asked what art means to her, Seulgi LEE replies, ‘It is the skull from the story of Monk Wonhyo. Wonhyo is a Korean Buddhist monk from the seventh century. During his pilgrimage to China, Wonhyo looks for something to drink in the dark, finds a bowl containing liquid and relishes it. The next morning, he realises that the container was a skull and what he drank was putrid water. I think art is a container like this skull. Robert Filliou said, « Art is what makes life more interesting than art. » Art is like a bowl that contains life.’ Born in Seoul in 1972 (her parents were both painters), Lee relocated to Paris in 1992, later graduating from the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts. Following exhibitions in major museums in Paris, her first solo exhibition in Seoul was presented at Ssamzie Space (2004). One of her key contributions to the Parisian contemporary art scene was the co-operative project space Paris Project Room, which she managed with Simon Boudvin (2001-3). Appointing an imaginary Frenchman called Marcel Wallace as their director, they mounted more than 250 highly experimental shows. Since then, Lee has participated in Elastic Taboos, the Korean group show at Kunsthalle Wien (2007); the 7th Gwangju Biennale (2008) and the Triennale d’Art Contemporain, Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2012).

Lee has developed a practice characterised by vibrant colour, gesture, simple yet elegant forms and performance. Assembled out of everyday belongings, masks and pedestrian objects, her works explore a vocabulary more appropriate to craft, challenging the usual distinctions between sculptural syntax and a design aesthetic. Their often political nature is apparent in such actions as An Afghan in Corsica (2001), which documents the artists wandering the streets of Corsica dressed in a bright floral veil suggestive of a burqa or hijab. ‘When I went into a bar run by a separatist,’ she elaborates, ‘a man was furious at my performance. I told him that it was for the liberty of Afghan women, who are forced to wear the burqa. I tried to incite confusion and a redefinition of the situation...’ In another show of solidarity, Lee metoculously embroidered large pink strike banners for French protesters to use while marching against proposed legislation to restrict employment. Meanwhile Bâton (2009) comprises a group of seventeen long sticks sheathed in silk. Playful yet slightly ominous, they lean against the wall in various configurations, evoking banners, parades and ritualistic displays.

‘Depending on the project, my work is an object or a performance. That is to say, the idea can be expressed as a person or a thing,’ Lee explains. ‘Rain/Fountain’ (2005) is a fountain where water falls on a life-sized head... One looks for the face underneath the hair but cannot find it. The water drops follow the hairs until they reach the tips and then fall on the floor... and make a clear sound. The constant sound makes the viewer attentive to the slowing of time...’ Lee is also avidly interested in ‘the popular appeal of decorative arts’. U (2012), for example, ‘is a traditional Korean bedcover made in the original technique’. Collaborating with bedding craftsmen, Lee decorated bed linen with colourful images of Korean proverbs, calling the results ‘communicative bed sheets’. Though they are abstract, they become legible ‘once the viewer understands the proverb... One of the reason why Korean bed sheets are colourful is that, unlike the Japanese, who put them away in closets after use, Koreans folded them neatly and put them on the side of the room for decoration.’

Marcelle Joseph 2013

Chairs can walk

I was there to see friends and because of an invitation card with a red/yellow/purple/pink photo showing a glass and a straw with water running out of it. From the inside to the outside. A fountain – and a perfect example of communication. I found other friends there too: a cardboard box practising flying, and three (maybe two) cables put together to boost an adapter plug.

I’m attracted to marvels. And to write the most beautiful thing I can write about Seulgi Lee, I write: Seulgi Lee shows us the potential of things. With Seulgi Lee things are never under stress.

Today I saw two photos of popular festivals, one in Viterbo in Italy and the other on the island of Menorca, in the Mediterranean. These are two festivals I like a lot. In Viterbo the Macchina di Santa Rosa – a 35-metre tower – is paraded by a hundred people who have been training for this for a year. In Menorca groups of twenty villagers each carry a stallion and its rider, and the winning team is the one that holds out longest. When I compare these celebrations with others that feature throwing tomatoes or oranges, I realise that it’s simple things that make me happy.

The big ball of clothes is the best means of storage and transport. Putting things together and then rolling them along seems to me one of the things that can make me happy. For the moment I’m wondering what I can do and can’t do with my friends: how can you empty an ostrich egg without making a hole in it? (There are women who dive thirty metres down without scuba gear, and androids who commit suicide by holding their breath – it creates a short-circuit, I guess)

I couldn’t go out walking on fish, but I could throw them in the air hoping something would catch them before they fell. On the other hand, I like the idea of being accompanied by someone or something. When Seulgi Lee crosses Chicago, I have the impression that she’s the one who’s out walking with the knife, whereas watching a film I always have the impression that it’s the knife that is out walking with the murderer. I don’t know yet what all this means. But I’m sure it’s something you could build marvels on.

[In IDEM (DITTO), book published at the same time than the eponymous exhibition of Seulgi Lee at the Contemporary art centre of la Ferme du Buisson, Noisiel, East-Paris, 2009]

Jochen Dehn 2009