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MULBERRY FANTASY: CHUN KWANG YOUNG AT THE ART PLURAL GALLERY

By Staff Writer | Wednesday, 29 May 2013

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The Art Plural Gallery in Singapore presents a solo exhibition by Korean artist Chun Kwang Young. Titled 'Assemblage', the exhibition features 22 of his most recent works. We were fortunate to be invited to the gallery to get a private viewing of Chun Kwang Young's creations and to have a chance to have a chat with the 69-year-old artist.

Having already seen pictures of his works before heading to the gallery, we figured that we had a pretty good idea of what to expect. We were wrong. Experiencing the artwork first hand was mind altering. Chun Kwang Young managed to create 3D art on a 2D landscape. The works of art are formed by the assemblage of hundreds of polystyrene foam triangles wrapped in Korean mulberry paper, known as 'hanji'.



We were curious about the reasons behind the artist's use of the mulberry paper. Luckily for us, we could ask the artist himself. Enthusiastically, he answered,

“For me, ‘hanji’ is Korea.”

He further explained that apart from his mother's face, some of his earliest memories of his childhood were of the mulberry paper. The paper is deeply rooted in Korean tradition and was at one time a ubiquitous household material, as well as a means of wrapping various objects such as medicine and food.



In the course of speaking to us about his art, Chun Kwang Young suddenly paused, looked at us, and made a very strange request. It was request that one would almost never hear in an art gallery. We were caught off guard, and not to mention very confused. He asked us to touch his art. Puzzled, but at the same time eager to break the proverbial 'Please do not touch the art' rule, we did as he asked.



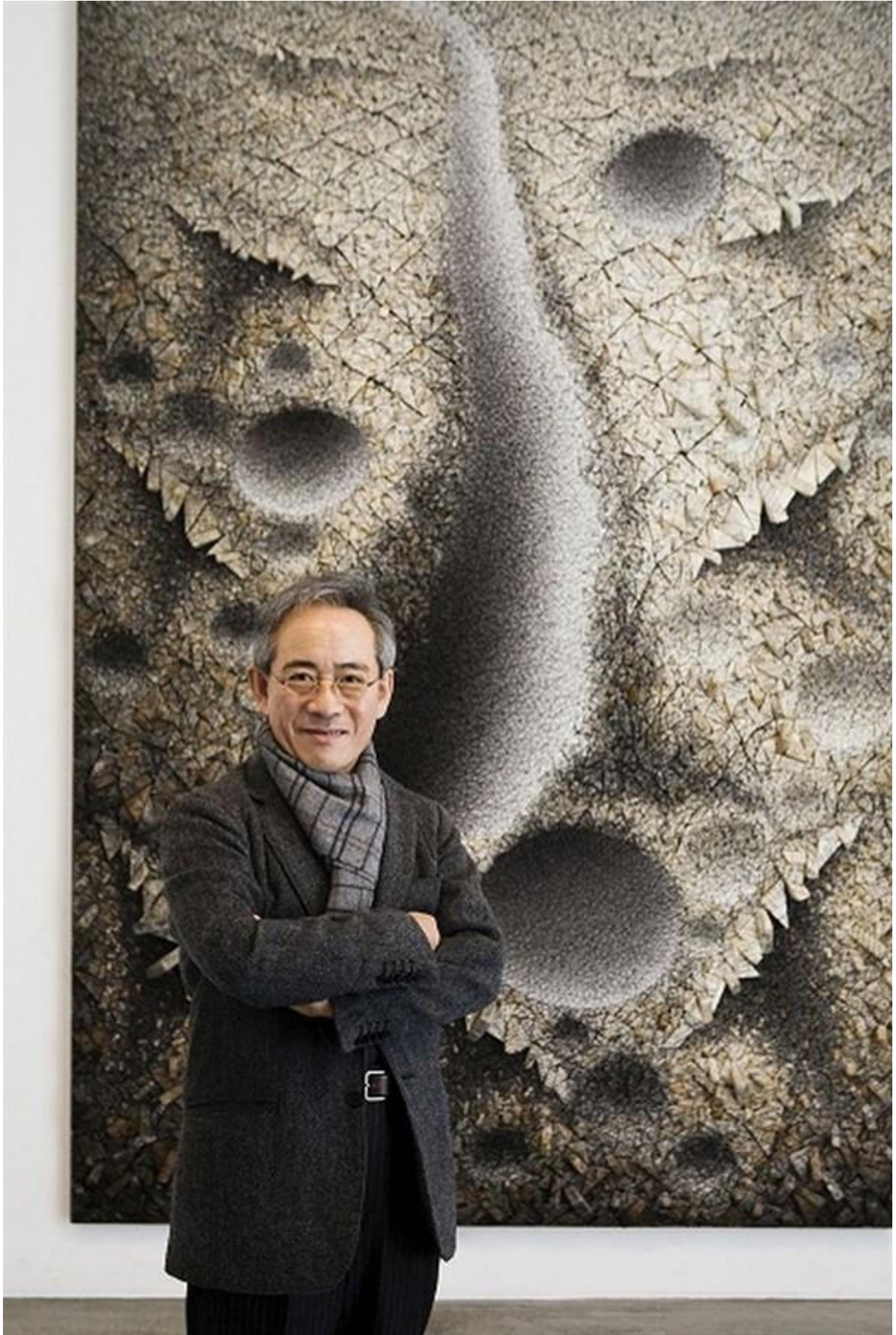
When we turned to him with a quizzical expression, he smiled knowingly and said,

“I only use mulberry paper from old books. Books that are between 70 to 100 years old. So, for generations, the paper on my art work has been handled, read, used and handed down by people from all walks of life. People who have used the books have touched the paper and left (on the paper) their spiritual essence. Now that you have touched it, you are a part of it too.”

The exhibition will run from May 29 to July 27.







Chun Kwang Young