



For Immediate Release



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WORLD PREMIERE OF JONAH BOKAER'S 'ON VANISHING' TO BE PERFORMED ON THE SOLOMON R. GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM'S ROTUNDA FLOOR, JULY 14

Commissioned by the Guggenheim as part of Lee Ufan's Retrospective

The world premiere of Jonah Bokaer's "On Vanishing," commissioned by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum as part of "Lee Ufan: Marking Infinity," a retrospective celebrating the work of the Korean artist, sculptor and philosopher, takes place on the Guggenheim's rotunda floor on July 14. There will be two performances of the 40-minute, site-specific work, one at 6pm and the other at 8pm.

Set to John Cage's rarely performed "One⁸," played live by cellist Loren Kiyoshi Dempster, "On Vanishing" presents an accumulation of changes in the bodies of its five performers, including Bokaer. Through movement and gesture, dimensions of space grow and expand over time, while others appear to contract. In his first choreographic dialogue with sculpture, Bokaer poses the question "How does the body erase itself, to prefer matter against presence?"

MORE

Tickets, which are \$30 for general admission, \$25 for members and \$10 for students, are available online at www.guggenheim.org, over the phone at 212-423-3587 or in person at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (1071 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY). Admission is limited and will involve floor seating or standing on museum ramps. Please contact publicprograms@guggenheim.org if you require any special accommodations.

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SOME IMPORTANT FRENCH NEWS: On June 6, Jonah Bokaer was awarded the Jeune Talent Chorégraphique of SACD (Société des auteurs et compositeurs dramatiques) for his choreography of "Three Cases of Amnesia," as well as "Filter," which was commissioned by and received its world premiere at the 2011 Les Hivernales d'Avignon festival. The SACD prize included a 1000 Euros check.

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**PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR THE GUGGENHEIM'S PRESS RELEASE ANNOUNCING
"LEE UFAN: MARKING INFINITY" AND JONAH BOKAER'S "ON VANISHING"**

GUGGENHEIM

NEWS RELEASE

Guggenheim Museum Presents *Lee Ufan: Marking Infinity*

**First North American Retrospective of the Internationally Acclaimed Artist,
Featuring Sculpture, Paintings, Works on Paper, and Installations**

Exhibition: *Lee Ufan: Marking Infinity*
Dates: June 24–September 28, 2011
Venue: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Avenue, New York
Location: Full rotunda and ramps; Annex Levels 4 and 7
Preview: Thursday, June 23, 10 am–12 pm

(NEW YORK, NY – June 23, 2011)—The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum presents *Lee Ufan: Marking Infinity*, the first North American museum retrospective devoted to the artist-philosopher Lee Ufan (surname: Lee, given name: Ufan), a preeminent sculptor, painter, and writer active in Korea, Japan, and Europe over the last forty years. The exhibition positions Lee as a historical figure and contemporary master, charting the artist’s creation of a visual, conceptual, and theoretical terrain that has radically expanded the possibilities for Post-Minimalist art. Lee is acclaimed for an innovative body of work that revolves around the notion of encounter—seeing the bare existence of what is actually before us and focusing on “the world as it is.”

Featuring some ninety works from the 1960s to the present—including a new site-specific installation—the exhibition is installed throughout the museum, beginning with the rotunda floor and extending up the six ramps of the Frank Lloyd Wright–designed building and into two Annex Level galleries. Organized to reflect Lee’s method of working in iterative series, the selection of sculpture, paintings, works on paper, and installations includes Lee’s most iconic works, many presented in the United States for the first time. Objects are on loan from major public and private collections in Japan, Korea, Europe, and the United States. *Lee Ufan: Marking Infinity* is on view from June 24 through September 28, 2011.

This exhibition is made possible with lead sponsorship from Samsung.

Major support is provided by the Korea Foundation. Generous support is also provided by The Japan Foundation. Additional support is provided by the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation.

We recognize the Leadership Committee for the exhibition, including founding support from Timothy Blum; the Dedalus Foundation, Inc.; HyungTeh Do; Arne Glimcher; Marc Glimcher; Elvira González; Tina Kim; HyunSook Lee; Nicholas Logsdail; Isabel Mignoni; the Naoshima Fukutake Art Museum Foundation; Jeff Poe; Thaddaeus Ropac; Rosemarie Schwarzwälder; Masami Shiraishi; Sadao Shirota; and Jill Silverman.

Lee Ufan: Marking Infinity is organized by Alexandra Munroe, Samsung Senior Curator, Asian Art, at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. Sandhini Poddar, Assistant Curator, Asian Art, and Nancy Lim, former Asian Art Curatorial Fellow, provided curatorial support.

Richard Armstrong, Director of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and Foundation, noted, “Lee Ufan is an artist of extraordinary creative vision. Admired, even revered, abroad, Lee is surprisingly little-known in North America, and this late-career survey, which we offer to the public as part of the Guggenheim’s Asian Art Initiative, is overdue.”

“Samsung is proud to support this exhibition of the work of Lee Ufan. Samsung is a passionate patron of the arts, with many activities, from the opening of Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art, in Seoul in 2004, to sponsored Korean art galleries and exhibitions in museums around the world. We are happy that *Lee Ufan: Marking Infinity* will bring the work of an outstanding and innovative artist to audiences in North America,” said David Steel, Executive Vice President at Samsung Electronics America.

Artist’s Background

Lee Ufan was born in southern Korea in 1936 and witnessed the political convulsions that beset the Korean peninsula from the Japanese occupation to the Korean War, which left the country divided in 1953. He studied painting at the College of Fine Arts at Seoul National University and soon moved to Japan, where he earned a degree in philosophy from Nihon University, Tokyo, focusing on phenomenology and structuralism.

Lee is an influential writer on aesthetics and contemporary art and is recognized as the key theorist of Mono-ha, an antiformalist, materials-based art movement that developed in Tokyo around a series of seminal writings Lee published between 1968 and 1971. In these and later essays (selections of which are featured in the exhibition catalogue for *Lee Ufan: Marking Infinity*), Lee constructs an aesthetic system that challenges the closed objecthood of modern art. He eschews objective form for a relational structure and spatial dynamic that induces us to encounter the bare existence of what is actually before us, to focus on “the world as it is.” He promotes these mutual relationships between work, viewer, and surroundings by shifting the artist’s role from an act of creation to a practice of mediation. Rooted in his philosophical stance and going beyond the binaries of Eastern and Western aesthetics, Lee’s art and writings partook of the radical global rethinking that transformed contemporary art in the 1960s and 1970s, when terms such as “system,” “structure,” and “process” recast the object as a dynamic event occurring outside the studio confines in everyday time and space. His sculptures were shown in several group exhibitions at Tokyo’s leading galleries and museums in the late 1960s and 1970s, a period when he also began presenting his work in Germany and France. Coincidental with the early recognition of

his work in Europe, Lee's minimalist, systematic paintings gained critical praise both in Tokyo and Seoul, where he became a seminal figure in the Korean monochrome school.

Lee began working in Paris in the 1970s and has since split his time between Japan and France. He was a visiting professor at Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris during the 1990s and professor of art at Tama Art University in Tokyo from 1973 to 2007. From the 1971 Paris Biennale, which introduced Mono-ha to Europe, to his solo exhibition *Lee Ufan: Resonance* at the 2007 Venice Biennale, Lee has won great recognition for his work. He has been the subject of major exhibitions at the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, Brussels (2009); the Yokohama Museum of Art (2005); the Musée d'Art Moderne de Saint-Etienne Métropole (2005); the Samsung Museum of Modern Art, Seoul (2003); Kunstmuseum Bonn (2001); the Galerie Nationale du Jeu de Paume, Paris (1997); and the National Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul (1994). He was awarded the Praemium Imperiale for painting in 2001 and the UNESCO Prize in 2000. Lee is the author of seventeen books, including the English-language anthology *The Art of Encounter* (2007). In 2010, the Lee Ufan Museum, designed by Tadao Ando, opened at Benesse Art Site Naoshima, Japan. Lee's work is currently on view in two exhibitions as part of the Venice Biennale.

Exhibition Overview

The exhibition has been designed in close collaboration with the artist and features signature works from Lee's sculptural series *Relatum* (1968–) as well as works from Lee's five major series of paintings, works on paper, and prints spanning 1972 to the present: *From Point* and *From Line* (1972–84), *From Winds* (1982–86), *With Winds* (1987–91), *Correspondance* (1991–2006), and *Dialogue* (2006–). A selection of iconic work from Lee's Mono-ha period offers a rare appearance of this vanguard movement in a U.S. museum.

Six key sculptures and paintings from the 1960s to the present are installed on the rotunda floor, the High Gallery, and Rotunda Level 1 as an introduction to the exhibition. These include *Relatum* (formerly *Phenomena and Perception B*) (1968/2011), a sculpture of the Mono-ha period that Lee re-creates for this exhibition comprising a large rock, a pane of glass, and a sheet of rolled steel. In an act of controlled chance, he drops the rock on the plates, cracking the glass on impact and bringing into being a relationship of coexistence between them. Also included in the introductory galleries is a recent painting, *Dialogue* (2007), a work comprising three panels, each featuring a single broad, gray-black brushstroke that hovers on an expanse of white canvas ground. Like much of Lee's work, *Dialogue* activates a resonance between what is seen and unseen, made and not made.

From Point and *From Line* Series: 1964–1978

The exhibition is organized both chronologically and thematically. Beginning on Rotunda Levels 2 and 3, graphite drawings and early paintings chart the initial development of Lee's visual language. In *Untitled* (1964), Lee strikes the paper repetitively to create a dense field of dots or lines, the two basic units of East Asian calligraphy and painting that Lee learned as a child and that remain central to his conceptual and compositional principles.

In 1972–73, Lee embarked on two painting series, *From Point* and *From Line*. For *From Point*, he mixed ground mineral pigment with animal-skin glue, the traditional medium of East Asian painting, and

brushed this powdery, crystalline emulsion on primed canvas in a performative, systematic act. Restricting his palette to a single color on a white ground (cobalt blue or burnt orange, evoking sky and earth, respectively), Lee loaded his brush with pigment and marked the white canvas with regular dabs from left to right until there was no more left on the brush. Works in the *From Line* series pursue a similar approach, moving vertically with a single gestural stroke, literally tracing the recurring passage of cyclical time. This sense of temporal infinitude is enhanced by Lee's choice to leave the canvases unframed, allowing us to imagine the painting expanding into its surroundings.

Mono-ha Sculptures and Installations: 1968–1979

In the galleries and outdoor terrace of Annex Level 4 and along Rotunda Level 4, the exhibition features fourteen sculptures and installations from Lee's historic Mono-ha period. Literally "School of Things," this Japanese art movement grounded in the critique of modernity produced floor-based, scatterlike works that explore the phenomenological encounter between natural and industrial materials, employing rocks, steel plates, glass panes, lightbulbs, cotton, and Japanese paper in their barest condition to create vividly real spatial and temporal structures. As Mono-ha's leading theorist and practitioner, Lee recast the object as a network of relations based on parity between the viewer, materials, and site. Mono-ha works are essentially performative and site-specific, requiring Lee to recreate them onsite. After 1972, Lee titled his sculptural works *Relatum*, a philosophical term denoting objects or events between which a relation exists. "A work of art, rather than being a self-complete, independent entity, is a resonant relationship with the outside," Lee has written. "It exists together with the world, simultaneously what is and what is not, that is, a *relatum*."

Relatum (formerly *Language*, 1971/2011) is installed on Annex Level 4, presenting an array of floor cushions, each loaded with one large, bodily stone. This uncanny work, conflating the outdoors with the artifice of a gallery, encompasses the relationships between the site, its lighting, and our movement through it. In *Relatum* (formerly *Phenomena and Perception A*, 1969/2011), Lee takes a broad band of latex marked as a measuring tape, lays it across the floor, and places three stones of varying sizes on it at various points. The elastic band stretches and buckles, disrupting the system of measurement it codes. Another work, *Relatum* (formerly *System A*, 1969/88) presents a cube of steel plates whose seams burst with wads of artificial cotton. While presenting a physical opening up of the object to the surrounding world, Lee explores the conceptual coexistence of structure and process, permanence and mutability.

With Winds, Correspondance, and Later Relatum Series: 1980–2009

In the 1980s, Lee developed two series, *From Winds* and *With Winds*, in which free and dynamic brushstrokes stir up a deeply empty space. While this painterly development appears expressive and full, it reflects Lee's increasing interest in painting as a visible structure of invisible forces: his touch activates what he calls "the living composition of the empty spaces." These compositions become distilled in Lee's *Correspondance* series, which consist of a few black brushstrokes rhythmically placed on large white canvases.

Throughout the 1970s, Lee increasingly limited his choice of sculptural materials to steel plates and stones, conceptualizing the materials as connected opposites: the factory-rolled steel is the stone's distant, abstract product. To Lee, the stone in its natural state belongs to an unknown world of "externality" or "the other" that exists beyond the self. Arranging the plates and stones in precise

relationships—leaning against the wall or each other, or lying on the floor—the *Relatum* works revolve around the spatiotemporal relationship between the viewer, the components, and their surroundings.

Dialogue Series and Site-Specific Installations (2006–)

Annex Level 7 presents six paintings from Lee's recent *Dialogue* series, including a two-panel folding screen. Lee paints these works with the canvas laid on the floor, marking their white surfaces with one, two, or three squarish strokes of gray-black oil paint mixed with mineral pigment. He sees emptiness not in a negative sense but as a powerful field of contact and interrelationship brought about by minimal interventions. In the same gallery, Lee creates a site-specific installation, placing a single, broad, viscous stroke of paint on each of three adjacent walls of an empty room. *Dialogue—space* (2011) sets up a rhythm that exposes and enlivens the emptiness of the space, creating what Lee calls "an open site of power in which things and space interact vividly."

Exhibition Catalogue

The exhibition is accompanied by a richly illustrated 200-page catalogue surveying the artist's sculptures, paintings, installations, and works on paper from the 1960s to the present as well as the artist's writings, with an anthology of critical and theoretical works that includes seminal essays on contemporary art published in English for the first time. The catalogue offers new perspectives on Post-Minimalism as a transnational phenomenon and positions Lee's sources and practices within complex cultural, social, and political histories, spanning the mid-twentieth century to the present. This volume includes an essay by Alexandra Munroe; a meditation on Lee's poetics by Tatehata Akira, a poet, critic, and President of Kyoto City University of the Arts; and a narrative chronology of the artist's life and work compiled by Tokyo-based scholar Mika Yoshitake. Priced at \$45 in a hardcover edition, the exhibition catalogue can be purchased at the Guggenheim Store or online at guggenheimstore.org.

Education and Public Programs

For complete information about the range of public programs presented in conjunction with *Lee Ufan: Marking Infinity*, please visit guggenheim.org/education. Highlights include:

Artist Talk

Conversation with Lee Ufan

Fri, June 24, 6:30 pm

Artist Lee Ufan in conversation with Alexandra Munroe, Samsung Senior Curator, Asian Art, Guggenheim Museum and curator of *Lee Ufan: Marking Infinity*, and Lóránd Hegyi, Director, Musée d'Art Moderne de Saint-Etienne Métropole. The conversation will explore Lee's aesthetics within the context of international contemporary art movements, the political meaning of his practice of "restraint" and "not-making," and his expectations for his first U.S. museum exhibition. Cash bar reception immediately follows.

\$10, \$7 members, free for students (limited availability). For tickets, visit guggenheim.org/publicprograms, or call the Box Office at 212 423 3587.

Film Screenings

ANPO: ART X War

Fri, July 1–Sept 23 (except July 15), 1 and 3 pm

“ANPO” refers to the 1960 U.S.-Japan Mutual Cooperation and Security Treaty, which permits the continued presence of U.S. military bases in Japan. A wide range of Japanese artists resisted, creating a rich archive of works that includes many long hidden from view. This film reveals the extraordinary passion behind this treasure trove of paintings, photographs, anime, and documentary and narrative films. 89 min.

A Q&A with director Linda Hoaglund will take place Sept 9 in the New Media Theatre following the 3 pm screening.

Free with museum admission. For more information, visit guggenheim.org/filmscreenings.

New Commission

On Vanishing

Choreography by Jonah Bokaer

Thurs, July 14, 6 and 8 pm

Award-winning dance and media artist Jonah Bokaer creates and performs new site-specific choreography on the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum’s rotunda floor in response to *Lee Ufan: Marking Infinity*. Referencing the artist’s multidisciplinary use of space, *On Vanishing* unfolds over 40 minutes and presents an accumulation of changes in the bodies of five performers of diverse backgrounds. Through movement and gesture, dimensions of space grow and expand over time, while other dimensions decline. In his first-ever choreographic dialogue with sculpture, Bokaer poses the question “How does the body erase itself, to prefer matter against presence?” Loren Kiyoshi Dempster contributes music with a rare live performance of John Cage’s *One⁸* (1991) for solo cello.

\$30 general, \$25 members, \$10 students. Admission is limited and will involve floor seating or standing on museum ramps.

For tickets, visit guggenheim.org/publicprograms, or call the Box Office at 212 423 3587. Please contact publicprograms@guggenheim.org if you require any special accommodations.

Family Tour

Lee Ufan: Marking Infinity for Families

Sun, July 17, 10:30 am–12 pm

Ages 5–10

A family-oriented exploration of *Lee Ufan: Marking Infinity* will incorporate conversation and creative hands-on gallery activities.

\$15 per family, \$10 members, free for Family Members and Cool Culture families. Museum admission included. To register, e-mail familyprograms@guggenheim.org or call 212 423 3587, Mon–Fri, 1–5 pm.

Gallery Program

The Art of Encounter: Readings

Tue, July 26, 6:30 pm

Poets, critics, artists, and philosophers read excerpts from Lee Ufan’s writings on aesthetics and philosophy in the museum galleries. In English.

\$10, \$7 members, free for students (limited availability). For tickets, visit guggenheim.org/publicprograms, or call the Box Office at 212 423 3587.

Symposium

States of Emergency: Objects as Agency, ca. 1970

Fri, Sept 16, 12 pm

Organized by David Joselit, Yale University, and Alexandra Munroe, Samsung Senior Curator, Asian Art, Guggenheim Museum, this daylong symposium asks how the proclamation of the “end” of the art object, a statement that was made in a startling number of locations around the world circa 1970, demonstrated the end of both aesthetic and political modernity and the advent of a decentered globalism characterized more by crisis than by revolution. Reception follows.

\$15, \$10 members, \$5 students. For tickets, visit guggenheim.org/publicprograms, or call the Box Office at 212 423 3587.

Related Program

The Writings of Lee Ufan

The Korea Society

950 Third Avenue (at 57th Street)

Mon–Fri, June 28–Aug 15, 10 am–5 pm

“These words are refreshing because of their transparent resonance and vivid liveliness.”—Lee Ufan

Lee is the author of seventeen books; he has written seminal essays on contemporary art, Asian culture, and democracy that add a powerful voice to our current cultural discourse. This exhibition presents Lee’s poetry, criticism, and essays through original manuscripts and sketchbooks, first editions, photographs, an original installation, and brushes from Lee’s studio.

About the Asian Art Initiative

In 2006, the Guggenheim Museum became the first international modern and contemporary art museum in the West to establish a curatorial position for Asian art. *Lee Ufan: Marking Infinity* represents the fourth exhibition in New York to be realized under the curatorial direction of the Asian art initiative, following the award-winning *Cai Guo-Qiang: I Want to Believe* (2008), *The Third Mind: American Artists Contemplate Asia, 1860–1989* (2009), and *The Deutsche Bank Series at the Guggenheim: Anish Kapoor* (2009). Central to the museum’s Asian art activities is the formation, in 2007, of the Asian Art Council, a group of museum directors, scholars, curators, and artists who serve as a curatorial think tank, mapping the intellectual course of modern and contemporary Asian art and debating key issues pertinent to its curatorial practice.

About the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation

Founded in 1937, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation is dedicated to promoting the understanding and appreciation of art, primarily of the modern and contemporary periods, through exhibitions, education programs, research initiatives, and publications. Currently the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation owns and operates the Guggenheim Museum on Fifth Avenue in New York and the Peggy Guggenheim Collection on the Grand Canal in Venice, and provides programming and management for the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao. The Deutsche Guggenheim in Berlin is the result of a collaboration, begun in 1997, between the Guggenheim Foundation and Deutsche Bank. The Guggenheim Abu Dhabi, a museum of modern and contemporary art designed by Frank Gehry on Saadiyat Island, adjacent to the main island of Abu Dhabi city, the capital of the United Arab Emirates, is currently in progress. More information about the foundation can be found at guggenheim.org.

VISITOR INFORMATION

Admission: Adults \$18, students/seniors (65+) \$15, members and children under 12 free. Admission includes an audio tour of the exhibition.

Museum Hours: Sun–Wed, 10 am–5:45 pm; Fri, 10 am–5:45 pm; Sat, 10 am–7:45 pm; closed Thurs. On Saturdays, beginning at 5:45 pm, the museum hosts Pay What You Wish. For general information, call 212 423 3500 or visit guggenheim.org.

For publicity images go to guggenheim.org/new-york/press-room/press-images

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(Updated from March 29)

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT

Betsy Ennis, Director, Media & Public Relations

Lauren Van Natten, Senior Publicist

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum

212 423 3840

pressoffice@guggenheim.org