

Form Line and Light

The Work of
Shinoda Tōkō and
Park Kwang Jean

December 1–February 24, 2001
Spencer Museum of Art

Park
Kwang Jean



Park Kwang Jean was born in Korea in 1957. She graduated from the College of Fine Arts of Ewha

Women's University in 1979, received an M.F.A. from the same university in 1981, and completed post-graduate work at Tama Art University in Tokyo, Japan. She has taught at Sukmyung University, Ewha Women's University and Hansung University in Seoul.

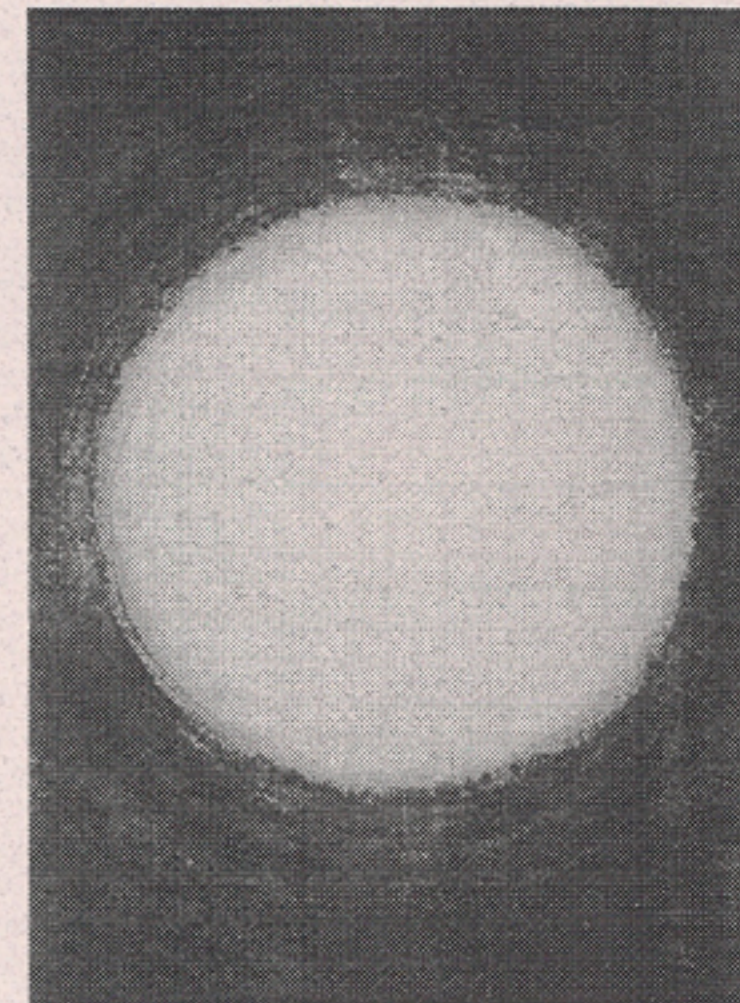
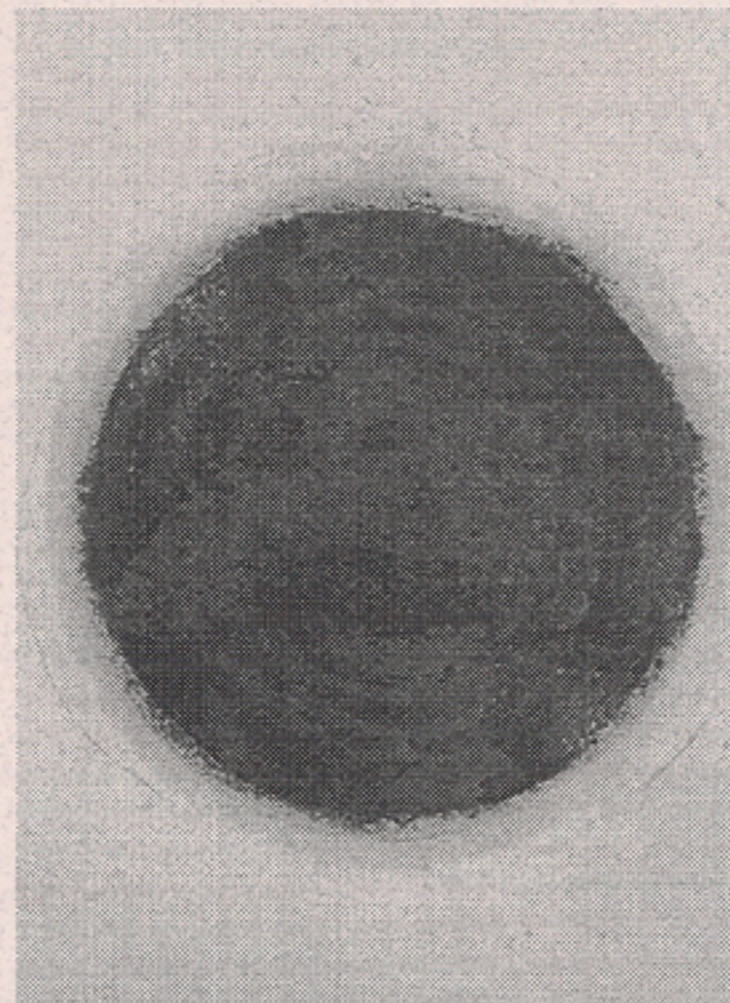
She is a member of the Korean Contemporary Printmakers Association and the Korean Fine Arts Association. Park has exhibited extensively within Korea and has participated in group exhibitions in Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Switzerland, Germany, Hungary, France, Taiwan, Yugoslavia, Brazil, and the United States. This is her first two-person (or solo) museum exhibition outside Korea.

Park works in long series, often taking a decade or more to explore a single theme. Her first series, in the 1980s, explored the conception of light as an event in time, especially as it hid and revealed the urban spaces of Seoul, Korea, where she lived and worked. She described her work at that time: *"Interested in the many conditions created when light and matter meet, I have produced a new kind of space...a subjective space...lines and empty void... What to discard and what to reveal ...the connotations of down pouring light."*

In 1989 Park's work began to open and shifted to include interest in darkness as well as light and—more comprehensively—in the dialectic of complements that in Asian philosophy is epitomized by the Daoist concept of *yin* and *yang*. Of this work, Park has written: *"[I am] dealing with the contrast of the yin and yang but nonetheless instilling the yin within the yang and encompassing the yang within the yin to harmonize such elements as black and white, lines and curves, full and empty... and such diverse properties within one space."*

Park's work is deceptively simple. At first glance, one sees familiar abstract geometric shapes such as a black circle on a white ground paired with a white circle on a black ground. A closer look reveals layers of technical, visual, and conceptual complexity as shapes and colors intermesh. In order to achieve the effects that she wants, Park has adapted and combined techniques of printing, drawing and painting. She often prepares the handmade paper in advance with stone powder and gesso, adds multiple layers of a woodblock image (from blocks she carves herself) and then re-enters the print with brush, pigment and pencil to further deepen and enrich the image. Her print editions are thus very small and no two prints are ever exactly alike.

Quotations are from Park Kwang Jean's journal writings as quoted in *Park Kwang Jean*, text by Korean art critic Kim Bokyung (Tobai International: Chicago, 1998).



Park Kwang Jean (Korea, born 1957), *Yin and Yang* 9903 & 9904, woodblock and drawing. Spencer Museum of Art: Gift of the Friends of the Art Museum, 200.25 & .26.