

# ART DIVERSIONS

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## **Kwang Jean Park's Solo Show at Andrew Bae Gallery Merges Nature, Balance and Harmony**

*BY AMY ON 09 APRIL 2016 IN CHICAGO*

*A beautiful and thoughtful exhibition at Andrew Bae Gallery offers a refreshing way to think about nature.*



“2013.15.” Oil on canvas, 72 x 59 inches. 2013. Image: courtesy of Andrew Bae Gallery.

“2013.15” is one of the first pieces of art you see upon entering Kwang Jean Park’s solo show, “Dansaekhwa: Korean Contemporary” at Andrew Bae Gallery in Chicago. This large, earth-toned oil painting has a gentle wave-like motif. Its oscillating movements are soothing; your mind’s eye imagines the lines rolling beyond the confines of the canvas. The show’s abstract works and the gallery’s peaceful atmosphere encourage study and reflection. It’s an apt environment to contemplate the artist’s work, which Andrew Bae, the gallery’s director, describes as a fusion of “Asian ideas and philosophies about nature.”

“2013.15” sets the tone for what follows. It’s part of an aesthetically beautiful exhibition evoking careful consideration to human relations with nature, but in a refreshing way. In part this is because harmony and balance emanate throughout each artwork and the curation. The show also champions personal interpretation, underscored by abstract representations of nature and numerical titles. Bae says “your imagination is your limitation.”



“2013.04.” Mixed media on paper, 44 x 30 inches. 2013. Image: courtesy of Andrew Bae Gallery.

Each artwork offers a similar aim, but the show is far from redundant; the visual representations vary as does the experience. Whereas “2013.15” suggests calmness, “2013.04” radiates with energy. At first blush, the dance of color and line making up this image recalls Jackson Pollock’s drip paintings. But Kwang does something different here. Dots of color come together to form a dense circular shape. You see and feel the central pull. At the same time, individual dots and lines of color extend to the confines of the canvas, like confetti.



Gallery shot. Mixed media artworks on the left; collaged artworks on the right. Image: courtesy of Andrew Bae Gallery.

The works that pack the biggest punch are the four mixed media paintings set on the floor, leaning against a wall. The technique and representation are similar to 2013.04, but the impact is greater with four such images placed side-by-side: vigor enematates, and the zeal is palpable. The repetition also intensifies a central theme of the show: understanding our universe. “[The universe] looks chaotic at first sight, but there is a certain law and order,” Andrew explains. He’s right. The multitude of dots and lines seem disorganized, but there is “a certain harmony.” That is, fragments come together to form a whole—restoring peace and balance.

Contrast these paintings with four collaged images directly across on another wall. The organization is immediately apparent. The mostly geometric shapes imply order and stability. The juxtaposition between these two series is most thrilling: suggesting two ways to view the world and ourselves.

“Dansaekhwa: Korean Contemporary” seems to celebrate the world we have and our relationship to it. The exhibition’s messages are not overt. You must take time to think, sense and understand. Imagine the dynamics of the earth working in unison; consider the meditative

qualities nature offers; feel yourself at peace. The result is a thoughtful experience needed in today's chaotic world.

"Dansaekhwa: Korean Contemporary" is on show at Andrew Bae Gallery until April 16, 2016.