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Korean Ceramic Artists Spotlighted at Gladstone Gallery in Seoul

“Irreverent Forms” Represents Artists Working Across Three Generations

In a new group exhibition in Seoul, Gladstone brings together Korean artists across three generations who defy the tradition of ceramics: Hun-Chung Lee, Juree Kim, and Dan Kim. Through clay—the most elemental artistic material—each artist embraces imperfection, fosters a spirit of experimentation, and explores ideas of inclusivity. *Irreverent Forms* is on view November 20, 2025, through January 3, 2026. Building on Gladstone’s previous exhibitions of ceramics across its global program, the show further deepens the gallery’s engagement with the Korean arts landscape.

The artists in *Irreverent Forms* embrace the inherent chance, fracture, and cyclical nature of ceramics to contemplate destruction and repair, and ultimately the “recovery” of art and society. Their works reveal what finished objects so often conceal: the vulnerability of matter, accentuated through the processes of making the kiln’s unpredictable transformations, the erosions of water, and the moments when cracks and flows appear. This approach defies the ideals of ceramics, which have historically embodied a sense of completeness: the poised curves of a moon jar, the upright silhouette, and the hardened surface tempered in fire have long stood as emblems of ceramic “perfection.” Instead, they transform the rhetoric of imperfection into a language of renewal through the poetics of the working process.

A multidisciplinary artist who works beyond the limits of clay, Hun-Chung Lee draws on motifs from furniture to architecture as a means of breaking away from perfect symmetry. Among his works on view is *Untitled* (2023), found on the lower level, which presents a single channel video displaying a clay moon jar slowly disintegrating in water, becoming a metaphor for the delicate cycles of human life.

Through clay sculptures and installations, artist Juree Kim explores the dualities of existence and transforms natural processes into metaphorical and geographic signifiers. Her *Clay Tablet* series, on view on the lower level, evokes both the linguistic origins of ancient Sumerian clay tablets and the physical laws of the Earth itself, through dispersed clay fragments eroded and scattered by water that are then pressed together with Kim’s hands. When fired at 1,250 degrees, each tablet becomes a trace of time and energy, leaving space for someone in the future to form their own interpretation. Additionally, Kim’s *Hwigyeong* series captures the vanishing landscapes of Seoul’s neighborhoods, reshaped by urban redevelopment through sturdy, miniature unfired clay sculptures—recalling those built during Korea’s rapid economic growth of the 1980s.

Dan Kim’s works reflect his practice of embracing the fragility of ceramics—treating them as generative materials that can produce unfamiliar surfaces. Among his works featured in the exhibition, found on the ground floor, is *Persona #2* (2021), a broken

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moon jar that becomes a constellation of fragments, reconstructing dignity through fragility, thus challenging the ethics of a singular 'normality' constructed within Korean society.

About the Artists

Hun-Chung Lee (이헌정) (b. 1967, Seoul, Korea) integrates traditional ceramic techniques with modern sculptural language. His work explores the materiality of clay, glaze, and fire, embracing the role of chance and the transformative effects of yohen (窯變, kiln changes). Lee's works highlight the fluidity of glaze and the traces left by firing, showcasing a dynamic interplay between the artist's intention and the forces of nature. Merging ceramics, installation, design, and architecture while embracing the element of chance inherent in traditional ceramic techniques, Lee poses fundamental questions about the nature of beauty. Under the recurring theme of "journey," Lee's work examines how form, process, material, and experience shape our perception of aesthetics.

Lee earned his BFA and MFA in Ceramic Sculpture from Hongik University, Seoul (1991, 1995), and an MFA in Sculpture from the San Francisco Art Institute (1996). He later completed doctoral coursework in architecture at Gachon University, Korea (2008). Lee has presented numerous solo and group exhibitions in Korea and abroad, including Park Ryu Sook Gallery, Seoul (2024, 2020); Storage by Hyundai Card, Seoul (2023); R & Company, New York (2022); Paradise-Zip, Seoul (2021); Arario Museum, Seoul (2021). His works are held in major public collections such as the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea; the Leeum Museum of Art; and the Archie Bray Foundation.

Juree Kim (김주리) (b. 1980, Seoul, South Korea) explores the dualities of existence—materiality and ephemerality, permanence and transience through sculptures made with clay, water, air, and light. Over the past fifteen years she has gained international recognition for her *Evanescent Landscape – Hwigyeong* series, in which architectural structures sculpted with unfired clay are slowly dissolved in water poured at its base, reflecting on time's passage and the vulnerability of the built environment. Kim further creates immersive mixed-media installations that invite multi-sensory encounters with shifting physical and social landscapes. Transforming natural processes into metaphorical and geographic signifiers, her work constructs temporal and spatial "stages" that reveal cycles of change and the impermanence of human presence.

Kim earned her BFA in Sculpture from Kyung Hee University, Seoul (2004). Kim has held numerous solo exhibitions including, MO BY CAN Foundation, Seoul (2025); Space Aefter, Seoul (2024); This is not a church, Seoul (2022); and Songeun Art Space, Seoul (2020). Recent group exhibitions include Art Space BOAN1942 (2025), *The Shape of Time: Korean Art after 1989* at the Philadelphia Museum of Art (2023), which traveled to Minneapolis Institute of Art (2024); Buk-Seoul Museum of Art, Seoul (2022); and the Victoria and Albert Museum, London (2017). Her work is represented in numerous collections worldwide, including the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Art Bank of the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea, Songeun Art and Cultural Foundation, and Henan Museum, China.

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Dan Kim (김대운) (b. 1992, Seoul, South Korea) works primarily with clay and glaze, creating fractured, sculptures that challenge traditional ceramic conventions. His practice involves assembling shards and fragments through intuitive, additive processes that emphasize irregular rhythms, twisted planes, and layered geometries of forms and colors. Rather than masking imperfection, Kim embraces the inherent fragility of ceramics—broken scraps, dried surfaces, flowing pigments, and structural cracks—as generative material to produce unfamiliar and unexpected surfaces. His recent works incorporate mixed media to expand on themes of gender, inclusivity, and diversity, introducing intentional ruptures within formal balance—not simply to disrupt, but to challenge dominant cultural narratives. For Kim, the act of collecting marginalized elements becomes an inclusive gesture, offering harmony through fragmentation and creating a decisively queer aesthetic.

Kim earned his BFA from the School of Art & Design at Alfred University, New York State College of Ceramics. His recent solo exhibitions include *Coucoul*, Nendo Galerie, Marseille (2024) and BULGASARI, GCS Creative Studio, Seoul (2023). Kim has participated in several group exhibitions, including Gallery Kiche, Seoul (2025); Frieze House Seoul (2025); Noblesse Collection, Seoul (2025); Fanfare, Amsterdam (2024); and Pageroom8, Seoul (2024). Kim is one of the founding members of the Daeju Collective, an interdisciplinary platform bridging art, music, dance, and performance. He has participated in Villa Arson Residency (2022) and the LH Project Residency (2020) programme.

About Gladstone Gallery

Gladstone Gallery is known for its commitment to artists whose prescient approaches and experimental practices have defined the contours of contemporary art. The gallery has long been an active partner in the cultivation of iconoclastic careers, fostering a roster of artists recognized for their ground-breaking contributions. Headquartered in New York and including outposts in both Brussels and Seoul, Gladstone's impact extends globally, enabling both the presentation of new bodies of work, and an amplification of the international reach of its artists. Alongside its work with contemporary artists, the gallery is steward to the legacies of pivotal historical artists and serves as an advocate for the enduring power of art. Gladstone is led by a team of partners who spearhead its long-term vision and program, building on the values of its founder Barbara Gladstone.

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