MARINARO 86 Walker Street, Floor 4
New York, NY 10013

Sung Jang

Shape of Land

Exhibition dates: October 30 – December 12, 2026
Reception for the artist: Friday, October 30, 6-8 pm

Marinaro is pleased to present *Shape of Land*, an exhibition of sculptures and wall works by Sung Jang that explore the relationship between the natural world and human perception. Bringing together works from his *Given* and *Shape of Land* series, the exhibition considers how we encounter, interpret, and assign meaning to the physical landscape.

In his sculptural series *Given*, Jang pairs naturally occurring stones with carefully constructed wooden supports that respond to their individual shapes and contours. Rather than altering the stones themselves, he allows their existing forms to guide the final compositions. Drawing on traditional Korean approaches to nature that emphasize coexistence rather than domination, Jang favors minimal intervention, positioning himself as a collaborator with the natural world. The resulting sculptures exist somewhere between functional objects and autonomous artworks, recalling furniture while retaining the irregularity and physical presence of their original materials.

Through this process, Jang considers how subtle interventions can transform our understanding of an object without fundamentally changing its form. The wooden structures accommodate and emphasize the stones' distinctive characteristics, creating a dialogue between organic forms and deliberate construction. What was once part of the natural landscape takes on a new identity, blurring the boundary between the natural and the designed.

This relationship between nature and human interpretation extends into Jang's *Shape of Land* wall works, which explore how landscapes are reconstructed through memory, cultural knowledge, and imagination. Drawing inspiration from traditional Korean cartography, particularly *Cheonhado* (천하도, 天下圖), or "Map of All Under Heaven," a circular world map produced during Korea's Joseon dynasty, Jang considers historical representations of geography in which observed territories coexist with imagined places. These maps offer a parallel to the ways we construct our own understanding of the world, piecing together fragmented memories and experiences into landscapes that may feel familiar despite their geographical inaccuracies.

Growing up in Korea, Jang recalls memorizing the mountain ranges of the Korean peninsula, an early experience that informed his understanding of geography as both a physical and cultural construct. Working with Korean ink, sand, and acrylic medium on linen, Jang creates textured surfaces that suggest aerial landscapes, mountain ranges, and territorial boundaries. His compositions shift between recognizable topographies and abstraction, resisting identification with any particular location. Rather than depicting existing places, the works consider how our understanding of landscape is shaped by personal experience and collective memory.

Together, the pieces reveal landscape as both material reality and imaginative construction. The sculptures attend to the particularity of stones and the forms they already possess, while the wall works translate remembered and inherited geographies into unstable, layered images. Moving between preservation and transformation, Jang's works ask how perception gives shape to the world—and how, in turn, the world continues to shape what we are able to imagine.

Sung Jang holds a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a Master's degree in Design from Domus Academy in Milan. He began his design career at Samsung Design Milano before joining the faculty of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago's Designed Objects program. Since 2013, Jang has served as Assistant Professor and Director of Undergraduate Studies in Industrial Design at the University of Illinois Chicago School of Design.

Jang has collaborated with international brands including Louis Vuitton, Guzzini, and Roche Bobois. His work has been presented at institutions and exhibitions worldwide, including the Venice Biennale, Design Miami, the Victoria and Albert Museum, Volume Gallery, The Armory Show, and Chamber NYC.