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Artist of the year creates an awkward place to rest

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Visitors to the National Museum of Contemporary Art will notice the gigantic new piece of art in the museum's main hall.

Park Ki-won, the National Museum of Contemporary Art's artist of the year for 2010, covered the entire main hall with vinyl sheets colored in various shades of green oil paint.

The work, titled "Scenery," is a part of the exhibition "Artist of the Year 2010 Kiwon Park: Who's Afraid of Museums?"

"It is a small difference but could change the way people think. I intended to induce the situation between reality and unreality. Besides, green is one of my favorite colors," Park said at a press meeting last week.

Born in Cheongju, North Chungcheong Province in 1964, Park started his career as a Western-style painter. He became more acknowledged in the mid-1990s, however, when he switched to installation works that emphasized the exhibition space rather than the work itself.

The National Museum of Contemporary Art started the artist-of-the-year program in 1995. Selected artists so far include Jeon Su-cheon, No Sang-gyun, Jeong Yeon-doo and Suh Yong-sun.

Park's exhibit, however, leaves something to be desired.

Because the main hall on the first floor is an atrium built through three floors, visitors in the hall can see how the walls on the upper two floors are left bare in a dull gray color. It limits the immersion into the unexpected greenery in the museum.

In the second exhibition room, Park built "Airwalls" with 250 air tubes and also created "Dim," something like a miniature mountain range with heaps of thin steel wires.

Although wires are supposed to be rather cold and uncomfortable, they appear soft and comfy like hay when piled up under light.

"I think the best exhibition is where visitors can come and rest. That is why I moved this bush-like

work indoors,” said Park.

Ironically, though, visitors are only allowed to touch some of the wire heaps.

The exhibition runs through May 30 at the National Museum of Contemporary Art in Gwacheon, Gyeonggi Province. Admission is 3,000 won. For more information, call (02) 2188-6000 or visit www.moca.go.kr

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