



Woo Kukwon

Born in 1976, Seoul, South Korea
Lives and works in Seoul, South Korea

At first glance, Woo Kukwon's canvas appears like a scene from a fairy tale. The most distinctive features of his work are the childlike imagery painted in vibrant colors and the thick *matière*. The artist employs any tool necessary to create the desired texture, whether it be a brush, pencil, or even his fingers. However, upon closer inspection, his work is not purely bright and cheerful.

While the initial impression exudes liveliness, this gradually fades as one examines the details and the surrounding environment of the characters in the artwork. His cynical phrases further immerse the audience in contemplation. He leaves interpretation entirely up to the viewer, and as his nickname, "the Korean Basquiat," suggests, his exhibitions have made him one of the most sought-after artists among collectors.

Woo Kukwon often features adorable children and animals in his paintings while deliberately omitting a clear point of view or explanation. His friendly, fairy tale-like images allow viewers of all ages to engage effortlessly with his works. As soon as they encounter his paintings, they are drawn into a game of questioning and seeking answers within the artwork itself.

His works include witty yet profound statements such as "I hate mornings." or "The more I know about people, the more I like my dog." These lines elicit a bittersweet but sincere smile, keeping viewers in front of his paintings for extended periods. The contrast between the bright and harmonious finished image and the chaotic, serious text invites repeated engagement with the work.

The imaginary world of Woo Kukwon is boundless and unrestricted. Unconventional colors feel familiar, and the sight of a girl and an animal sleeping together blends naturally within the canvas. As he once stated, "My work starts from frank emotions such as happiness, joy, jolliness, anger, hate, jealousy, envy, weakness, frustration, etc. Almost like a child who spends half a day happily just by wiggling his toes."

His works are part of major institutional collections, including the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea; Kolon Group; Ilshin Cultural Foundation; and Maeil Dairies. In 2022, he held his first solo exhibition in France at 313 Art Project Paris.

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EDUCATION

2003 Tokyo Designer Gakuin College, Tokyo, Japan

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2025 Il Blackk Humor Delle Fiabe, Casa Museo Andersen, Roma Italy
Dior Lady Art, House of Dior, Seoul
- 2024 My Universe, Tang Contemporary, Seoul
- 2023 Once Upon Her Time, Tang Contemporary, Beijing
- 2022 Killing Me Softly, 313 Art Project, Paris
Carnival, , Tang Contemporary, HongKong
- 2021 I'm Your Father, Noblesse Collection, Seoul
It's The Hard Knock Life, Gallery BK, Seoul
- 2020 Jeremiah was a Bullfrog, Lotte Gallery Avenuel, Seoul
- 2019 Third Time Lucky, Gallery BK, Seoul
- 2018 Querencia, Pyo Gallery, Seoul
Art Plage, Lotte Gallery Jamsil, Seoul
- 2017 Keep Breathing, Gallery IT, Tokyo, Japan
Redeemed, BK Gallery, Seoul
- 2016 Star Man, Salon de H, Seoul
Say Something, Delpino, The Gallery D, Gangwondo
Middle of Nowhere, Salon de H, Seoul
- 2015 Keep Breathing, Salon de H, Seoul
- 2014 Woo Kukwon Solo Exhibition, Lee Eugene Gallery, Seoul
- 2012 *13 Stories, Salon de H, Seoul*
- 2010 *Wake Up, Gallery Banditrasos, Seoul*
- 2009 The Rainbow Connection, Insa Art Center, Seoul

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2022 Deux Peintres, 313 Art Project, Seoul
- 2021 The Forties: Alluring Moments, Gallery Joeun, Seoul
- 2020 Brave New Gaze, Vision, Gaze, and Start, Atelier Aki, Seoul
Age of 40s, You were enchanted, Gallery Joeun, Seoul
'Dialogue', Atelier Aki, Seoul
- 2019 The Forest, Gallery Joeun, Seoul
- 2018 Gallery Joeun, Seoul
海 2nd, Gallery Joeun, Seoul
- 2015 Story Shower, Two Person Exhibition, Space K, Seoul
Spring Art Shopping, Lotte Gallery, Seoul

- 2014 Draw, LIG Art Space, Seoul
Tails, Two Person Exhibition, Gallery Kiche, Seoul, Korea
- 2013 Korea Tomorrow, Image Installation, Hangaram Art Museum, Seoul Arts Center, Seoul
Black Bridge, TV 12 Gallery, Seoul
- 2012 Red, Take Out Drawing, Seoul
11 Artists with Macallan, Artside, Seoul
Untitled, TV12 Gallery, Seoul
- 2011 Untitled, Gallery MK2, Beijing, China
Moa Invite, Museum of Art, Seoul National University, Seoul
- 2010 Lyrical Memory, Gallery CurioMook, Seoul
32nd JoongAng Fine Arts, Seoul Arts Center, Seoul
Imagine paradise, Hyundai Department Store, Seoul
- 2009 Intermix, Gallery Gana, Seoul
New Portrait, Gallery Bandi, Seoul

AWARDS & RESIDENCY

- 2011 Col Art Residency, Beijing, China
- 2010 JoongAng Fine Arts Prize

PUBLIC COLLECTION

Art Bank, National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea
 Maeil Dairies, Co., Ltd., Seoul
 Seoul National University Museum of Art, Seoul
 Ilshin Cultural Foundation, Seoul
 Jeonnamilbo, Gwangju
 Kolon Corporation, Gwacheon
 Tsutaya Culture Convenience Club Co. Ltd., Japan