

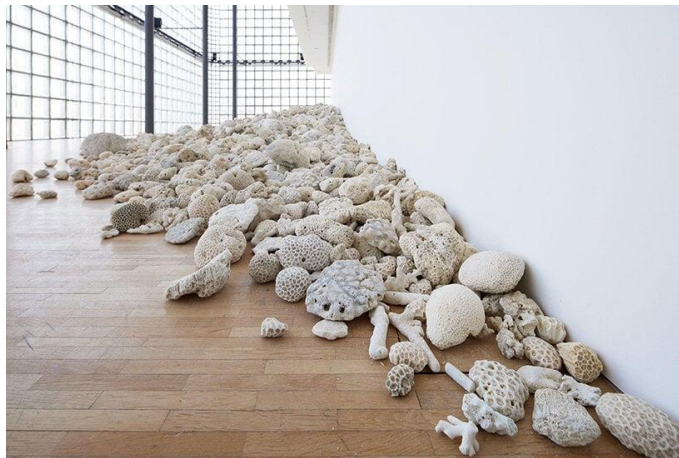
jaeun choi's retrospective at ginza maison hermès forum examines the frailty of ecosystems

October 25, 2023 | By Lea Zeitoun

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A TWO-PART EXHIBITION AT GINZA MAISON HERMÈS FORUM

As part of DESIGNART Tokyo 2023, designboom's media partner, the Fondation d'entreprise Hermès draws the year to a close with Ecology: Dialogue on Circulations, a two-part exhibition at the Ginza Maison Hermès Forum that examines ecological practices in art: a retrospective in autumn 2023 followed by a group show in the first semester of 2024. South Korean artist Jaeun Choi was invited to lead the autumn program with her very own retrospective, La Vita Nuova. Together with the 2024 exhibition, Choi was invited to look at the efforts to address global climate change and other pressing ecological crises confronting humanity. These efforts have raised questions about how to balance ecological, economic, social, and political demands — pushing the Forum to ask: How can these issues be explored through art, today and in the future? The answer is in conceiving ecology as a state of circulating energy, introducing artists who consider fleeting human lives and things adrift within the global environment from the perspective of our relationship with nature.



exhibition view La Vita Nuova by Jaeun Choi, 2023 © Nacása & Partners Inc.

image courtesy Fondation d'entreprise Hermès

LA VITA NUOVA BY JAE EUN CHOI – EXAMINING ECOLOGY IN ART

The solo exhibition of La Vita Nuova by Fondation d'entreprise Hermès looks back on Jae Eun Choi's 40-year career and her continuous dialogue with ecology and nature. Born in 1953 in Seoul, South Korea, Choi moved to Japan to study at the Sogetsu school of ikebana — commonly known as the Japanese art of flower arrangement. She went on to work as an assistant to Hiroshi Teshigahara, the third-generation master of the Sogetsu school; in the process, the artist learned the surface aspects of the art, as well as its spatial concepts and cosmic view. From the 1980s onward, she has produced artwork around life cycle and time themes. Weaving together old and new works, this exhibition introduces Jae Eun Choi's art as reconstructing the ideal of coexistence with nature while she grapples with ecosystems essential to life. Her works sound the alarm for our emergency while remaining quietly poetic, as she seeks hope through the ideal of coexistence with nature in the space between life's potential for violence and beauty. The retrospective at Ginza Maison Hermès Forum will be on view until October 28, 2023, as part of DESIGNART Tokyo 2023.



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In 1986, Jae-eun Choi presented an installation, *Earth*, in the 'Heaven' sculpture garden designed by Isamu Noguchi at Sogetsu Plaza in Tokyo. In 1993, she designed the Recycle Art Pavilion for the Korean government at Expo '93 (Taejeon, Korea). She participated in several international art exhibitions — namely the 1991 São Paulo Art Biennial, the 46th Venice Biennale in 1995, where she represented Japan, and the 2016 Venice Biennale of Architecture. In 2000, she produced the documentary film 'On The Way,' which was featured at film festivals worldwide. She has pursued long-term projects in the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), the 'Dreaming of Earth Project' (2015-ongoing), and 'The Nature Rules' (2020-2022). Solo exhibitions include 'The Nature Rules: Dreaming of Earth Project' at Hara Museum (Tokyo, 2019), 'The House that continuously circulates, Convent of St Agnes of Bohemia' (National Gallery Prague, 2014), 'Forests of Ashoka' (Hara Museum, 2010), and 'Lucy and Her Time' (Samsung Rodin Museum, Seoul, 2007).



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project info:

name: La Vita Nuova

location: Ginza Maison Hermès Forum, Tokyo

artist: Jaeun Choi

commissioned by: Fondation d'entreprise Hermès | @fondationhermes

part of: Ecology: Dialogue on Circulations

program: DESIGNART tokyo 2023 | @designart_tokyo

viewingdates: October 14-28, 2023