

KUKJE GALLERY | PRESS RELEASE

Ahn Kyuchul Solo Exhibition *Twelve Questions* at Kukje Gallery Busan

Press Conference: August 22, 2025 (Fri.), 12pm

Exhibition Dates: August 22–October 19, 2025

Venue: Kukje Gallery Busan

Kukje Gallery is pleased to present Ahn Kyuchul's *Twelve Questions*, a solo exhibition on view at the gallery's Busan space from August 22 to October 19, 2025. Ahn's last exhibition at the same venue in 2021 marked the conclusion of his long teaching career and the beginning of a new chapter, fully devoting himself to his artistic practice. *Twelve Questions* highlights Ahn's creative path after this turning point, offering an opportunity to reflect on the passage of time and the artist's sustained rhythm of work and contemplation.

Over the course of the past four years, the artist has maintained his own rhythm: steadily producing work, preparing exhibitions, and writing every day. At the same time, Ahn has been engaging with a broader audience by showcasing variations of the existing series in multiple exhibitions, including *How To Archive* (2023), a group exhibition at Gyeongnam Art Museum, featuring an extensive presentation of drawings created during his studies in Germany in the 1990s; and *Architecture Becomes Art* (2023) at the Cheongju Museum of Art, presenting *56 Rooms* (2023), a new version of his renowned *Room* series, draped in white cloth. Beginning each day with writing on paper has been Ahn's morning ritual. After publishing *The Other Side of Things* (2021), which coincided with his previous Busan exhibition, he has continued to shape a solid artistic world of his own, working across both art-making and writing, with later publications *Ahn Kyuchul: Questions* (2024) and *The One Who Speaks of Shadows* (2025).

In 2024 alone, Ahn presented over fifty new works across two solo exhibitions and two institutional group shows. Among them, *Ahn Kyuchul: Questions—Landscape Without Horizon* at Space ISU in Seoul featured paintings and text-based works that exemplified his method, defining his practice as a series of questions about the world and life. Later that year, *Ahn Kyuchul Multiplied* at Amado Art Space in Seoul was a solo show conceived as a group exhibition, presenting twelve different versions of the artist, each offering distinct gestures and voices to challenge the notion of a fixed identity of an artist. Among these varied selves of the artist—a writer, a painter, and a joker, yet they ultimately converge into a single figure: Ahn Kyuchul as a “questioning being.” Yet that *one* identity is never fixed; it constantly disperses and reconfigures itself. Across the two solo exhibitions held just three months apart, the artist revealed a quiet yet resolute journey that involved venturing into unfamiliar terrain, embracing moments of failure and frustration, and relentlessly pushing beyond the limits of his own existence.

Twelve Questions at Kukje Gallery Busan brings together key works from these two exhibitions, offering a concentrated lens of Ahn's recent practice. Works on view include *Tilted Seascapes* (2024), three paintings of tilted horizon; *Aphorism in Foreign Languages* (2024), featuring sentences written in indecipherable foreign scripts; *Walking Man* (2024), his first animation; and *Falling Chair – Homage to Pina* (2024), a single-channel video documenting a performance by Ahn himself. Also on view are works less familiar than his large-scale installations, yet revealing another dimension of his practice, such as performance photographs and a series of bronze sculptures from the 1990s exploring the subject of houses.

Ahn mentions, “Rather than becoming a peculiar or eccentric artist, I want to become an artist who simply does what is given—like how the sun rises when morning comes. Perhaps, by living that way, I might come to

be a truly special artist.”¹ For Ahn, art is not achieved through grand declarations or fleeting inspiration. Instead, it slowly emerges from the unconscious rhythm of repetition—through daily observation, writing, and questioning. The phrase “what is given,” as Ahn describes it, refers to an artistic attitude embedded in the cadence of everyday life. Through such constancy and sincerity, he believes that something truly exceptional may arise—not by chance, but through time and patience.

Thus, *Twelve Questions* embodies the artist’s enduring ethos—quietly revealing the contours of Ahn’s forty-year journey as someone who has lived by questioning. It is also an invitation to follow the traces of contemplation left behind by the many Ahn Kyuchuls, and to listen closely, one question at a time, in quiet reflection.

About the Artist

Ahn Kyuchul (b. 1955, Korea) was born in Seoul and graduated from Seoul National University in 1977 with a BFA in Sculpture. From 1980 to 1987, he worked as a journalist for *Art Quarterly* and joined the artists’ collective *Reality and Utterance* in 1985. In 1987, he moved to France to continue his studies, later relocating to Germany in 1988 to study at the Staatliche Akademie der Bildenden Künste Stuttgart. After returning to Korea in 1995, he served as a professor at the School of Visual Arts, Korea National University of Arts, from 1997 to 2020.

Major solo exhibitions include *Ahn Kyuchul Multiplied* at Amado Art Space, Seoul (2024); *Ahn Kyuchul: Questions—Landscape without Horizon* at Space ISU, Seoul (2024); *5 Houses and 30 Doors – Imaginative Artist Ahn Kyuchul* at the National Asian Culture Center, Gwangju (2023); *Invisible Land of Love* at the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul (2015); *All and but Nothing* at HITE Collection, Seoul (2014); and *Forty-Nine Rooms* at Rodin Gallery, Samsung Museum of Art, Seoul (2004).

Ahn has also participated in numerous group exhibitions at major institutions and biennales, including *Drawing, Portraying the Philosophy of Life* at Seoul Olympic Museum of Art, Seoul (2024); *Memory, Stare, Wish* at Gyeonggi Museum of Modern Art, Ansan (2024); *How to Archive* at Gyeongnam Art Museum, Changwon (2023); *Architecture Becomes Art* at Cheongju Museum of Art (2023); *On Collecting Time* at Nam June Paik Art Center, Yongin (2023); *Beyond The Scene* at Total Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul (2022); *Seven Moons* at Clayarch Gimhae Museum (2021); *The Better Man 1948-2020: Pick Your Representative for the National Assembly* at Ilmin Museum of Art, Seoul (2020); and *A Cross-Section of Modern Korean Sculpture* at Seosomun Shrine History Museum, Seoul (2019).

¹ Ahn Kyuchul, *Ahn Kyuchul: Questions* (Seoul: Workroom Press, 2024), 213.



Ahn Kyuchul (b. 1955)

Aphorism in Foreign Languages

2024

Oil on canvas

12 pieces, each 41 x 53 cm

Courtesy of Space ISU

Image provided by Kukje Gallery



Ahn Kyuchul (b. 1955)

Tilted Seascapes

2024

Oil on canvas

65.1 x 91 cm

Courtesy of Space ISU

Image provided by Kukje Gallery



Ahn Kyuchul (b. 1955)

Only Others Save Us

2024

Crystal beads, gemstone beads, wire, steel

150 x 130 x 3 cm

Courtesy of Amado Art Space

Image provided by Kukje Gallery



Ahn Kyuchul (b. 1955)

Two chairs

2024

Steel, wood, motor, controller

200 x 200 x 118 cm

Courtesy of Amado Art Space

Image provided by Kukje Gallery



Ahn Kyuchul (b. 1955)

Falling chair – Homage to Pina

2024

Single-channel video, black and white, sound

8 min. 48 sec.

Courtesy of Amado Art Space

Image provided by Kukje Gallery



Ahn Kyuchul (b. 1955)

Honesty-remembering him

2024

Wood, acrylic panel, LED light

35.5 x 55 x 9.5 cm

Courtesy of Amado Art Space

Image provided by Kukje Gallery

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