

## Debora ando print workshop

### NY based artist Kakyong Lee talks to Debora Ando about drypoints and animation

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Kakyong Lee is an artist born in Waegwan, South Korea ( 1975) based in Brooklyn, NY. Lee works with moving images, print, drawing, and installation. She received a BFA and MFA from Hong-Ik University, Seoul and Purchase College, NY (MFA) and has been invited to many group shows worldwide such as at the Drawing Center, the Lower East Side Print Shop, the Museum of Modern Art, the Queens Museum, New York, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Mass MoCA, Kunsthalle Bremen in Germany, and the Seoul Arts Center in Korea.



“Hana’s Bike”, 2014: drypoints in sequence ready for the next stage.

Lee’s animations are laborious and sensitive translations of moving images (video footage of everyday life) into the graphic language of drypoint on Plexi (perspex). As for instance, for the work “Hana’s Bike”, 2014, she did an edition of 327 prints (in an edition of 1) for 1 minute of animation. Kakyong Lee uses the same plate throughout so at the end of the process a single sheet of Plexi accumulates the whole sequence of the animation.



**Debora Ando:** All your animations have great sensory appeal. Traces, lines, textures and sound are key elements in them. Is there a hierarchy or sense of priority of those elements that you follow when planning your work? How do you organize them?

**Kakyong Lee:** I'm interested in movement of layers in everydayness. Things are hidden by other layers, but are still here and living with me. At first I collect video footage, and trace each line of sequencing layers on the same paper or plexi. Then, I expect to see the accumulated lines and traces on the medium. The footage sound and traces are very important elements to support that the layer from everydayness that I record is a fact, non-fiction, or documentary and the lines and textures are consequentially aesthetical elements that I prefer to create in the process.

**DA:** One can make an analogy between the intaglio process and the repetitive nature of the everyday life, growing and degrading in cycles. This can clearly be seen in your animations where the breakdown of footage is worked with a remarkable human quality. How do you construct this relation between medium and poetic?

**KL:** I like the fragile quality of drypoint on plexi encountering with the strong pressure of steel cylinder of an etching press. And the two mediums would be a good example to support my

interest. As each line of sequence is incised on plexi and pressed, and the next line is scratched over the past and pressed again, gradually the accumulated past is degraded by the characteristic of the technique, which allows time inside the screen to flow, but not disappear. I like to play with the basic premise of everydayness, which falls as soon as it rises and repeats in the same space with only difference in time.



At Ryan Lee Gallery: prints are displayed alongside animations.

**DA:** Your work holds the approach of a sensitive anthropological study seeking to locate identity in the social environment. It is investigative yet meditative, personal at the same time that it establishes an immediate connection with the viewer who promptly identifies him/herself with the (not necessarily antagonistic) construction and erasing of actions that constitutes our daily life. What's common to many cultures?

**KL:** I appreciate your thoughtful and philanthropic description on my work. I don't know exactly what's common to many cultures. Born in South Korea, and I have lived in Brooklyn, NY. When I first moved in NYC 2001 I had a culture shock for a couple of years, then gradually I have felt that I lived the same quality of mundane life I had in Seoul. In terms of my work, it's personal, direct, and private since I'm recording and reconstructing my surrounding, and probably the viewers feel some degree of personal connection?

**DA:** Everyday journeys are marked by rhythms in parcels of repetition. Most of them take place in collective realms which makes me think that each individual pace is an instrument of negotiation. The ways you elect to relate to your surroundings is a natural consequence of the perception of your environment?

**KL:** Yes. My surroundings are not only the space I perceive and understand my environment,

**but also as I mentioned in the first answer, I focus on hidden layers in my surroundings, in other words, non-historical moment. As most of history we know was selected and written by the ruling side, most of the news we watch and listen to is also chosen for many reasons. There are many not-priority layers and facts hidden by other layers, and passed by me without notion, but all of the layers construct my presence and will affect the next presence. This mundane moment is boring, and repetitive, but it's part of my presence, so equally important to me.**

Check out her website to see more animations, drawings and print:

<http://www.kakyounglee.com/>

Photos: Yoonmi Nam (from Printerest)