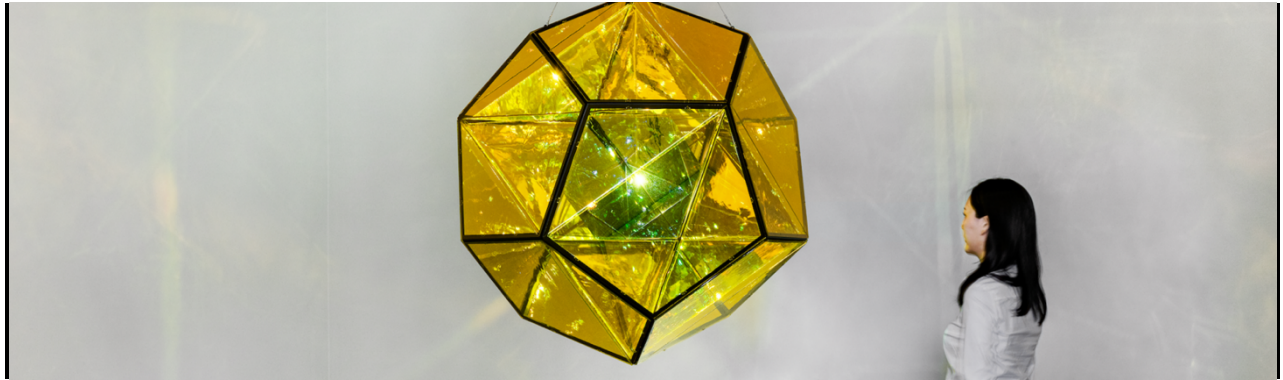


# FRIEZE

Jessica Silverman: "The Art of Nature at Frieze Seoul 2023"

By FRIEZE SEOUL

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Olafur Eliasson, *Your polyamorous sphere*, 2022, coloured glass (yellow, blue), colour-effect filter glass (green), stainless steel, paint (black), LED light, aluminium, 1.2 m. Courtesy the artist and PKM Gallery

**Natural forms and responses to the environment are front and centre at Frieze Seoul this year. We look at the artists, including Olafur Eliasson and Woody De Othello, bringing the cosmos to the fair**

As the climate crisis remains at the forefront of everyone's minds, one of the stand-out themes at **Frieze Seoul 2023** from artists around the world is nature: depicting it, working with its materials and considering our relationship – good and bad – with it. This year it's seen across different approaches, genres and media, and in both historical and contemporary art. Here is our natural selection.

Jessica Silverman presents an immersive solo installation of ceramic sculptures and paintings by **Woody De Othello**. Born in 1991 in Miami to a family of Haitian descent, Othello is recognized as an eminent ceramicist by museums across America, but this presentation is his first in Asia. With bright orange walls and maroon carpet, the booth explores the domestic, anthropomorphic and surreal. Four new paintings full of plants, clocks and windows to the outside world play with natural and artificial light sources suggesting shifting intellectual perspectives and emotional states. In the centre of the room, freestanding ceramic sculptures are displayed on hand-carved wooden bases. New to Othello's practice, his woodwork is as intuitive as his work with clay. Together with ceramic clocks that hang on the walls in small groupings, Othello's presentation engages time across disparate epochs, cultural lenses and artistic mediums.

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Woody De Othello, *Ibeji*, 2022, ceramic, glaze, paint and redwood, overall dimensions 145 × 48 × 52 cm. Courtesy of the artist and Jessica Silverman

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Lawrie Shabibi's (*Focus*) solo booth features recent work from Hamra Abbas, including a new iteration of her large-scale series "Mountain". For several years Abbas been experimenting with marble inlay (known as *pietra dura*) dragging this traditional practice from its historical function into new aesthetic forms. The works reference Mogul architecture and its use of garden motifs, where idyllic images of landscapes epitomize paradise and perfection, immortality and mortality: an earthly utopia in which humans coexist with nature in perfect harmony. Abbas unearths the symbolic significance of natural imagery in relation to architecture and the interplay of the two.



Hamra Abbas, *Mountain 3*, 2022, marble, five vertical freestanding panels, overall dimension 72 x 120 cm. Courtesy the artist and Lawrie Shabibi. Photo: Ismail Noor of Seeing Things

The subject of a solo show from Yutaka Kikutake Gallery (*Focus*), Yuko Mohri's approach to installation and sculpture focuses on phenomena that constantly change according to different environmental conditions, such as light and temperature. The booth features site-specific works including *I/O*, and new work *Decomposition*. *Decomposition* uses the fluctuating resistance generated by water in fruit to create a composition translated by a synthesizer into an unstable harmony. As the fruit dries over time, its resistance grows, and the pitch rises. With a wink at the tradition of still-life, Mohri suggests a sounding image that questions the relationship between "stillness" and "liveness", revealing that what might seem inanimate is full of life.

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Yuko Mohri, *Decomposition*, 2023, seasonal fruits, wooden pedestal, computer, audio, speaker. Courtesy the artist and Yutaka Kikutake Gallery

Hakgojae Gallery (*Frieze Masters*) presents a group exhibition of multi-generational artists including Ryu Kyung Chai (1920-1995), who dedicated his life to the exploration of natural phenomena in various forms. He depicts the emotions evoked by weather and the air in a lyrical abstract style and through the years his approach becomes ever-more concise as he concentrates on visualizing light on his canvases.



Ryu Kyung-Chai, *Celebration 91-4*, 1991, oil on canvas, 1.3 × 1.3 m. Courtesy Hakgojae Gallery

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In Kohei Nawa's video installation *Tornscape* (2019–), part of a presentation by SCAI THE BATHHOUSE, fluids with different properties twist and turn together in a virtual landscape that covers an entire wall. Its transformations are driven by a digital simulation that incorporates factors such as wind speed and the mass and coefficient of the friction of particles. Generated by a unique algorithm, it never repeats the same pattern. Despite all this cutting-edge technology, the work is inspired by *Hojoki* (*An Account of My Hut*) by Japanese writer Kamo no Chomei (1155–1216), which describes the disasters and epidemics that afflicted Kyoto around 800 years ago.



Kohei Nawa, *Tornscape* (2021). Installation photo: Nobutada Omote. Courtesy SCAI THE BATHHOUSE

Gana Art (*Frieze Masters*) showcases "*Traces of Life*", a curated presentation of five renowned Korean and Japanese artists. The show introduces their early works, which encompass a variety of mediums including drawing, painting, sculpture and installation that are linked with the fundamental energy of life and nature. Featured as part of the selection, artist Shim Moon-seup's sculptures are made with organic materials to explore the interaction of nature and humans.

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Shim Moon-Seup, 메타포 (Metaphor), 1996, wood, steel, 105 × 33 × 172 cm. Courtesy Gana Art. © ShimMoonSeup

PKM Gallery presents masterpieces by three painters who pioneered the development of Korean art, along with works by five contemporary artists. The presentation includes Yoo Youngkuk (1916–2002), whose use of primary colours captures the vibrant seasons and natural landscapes of Korea. The work finds a thematic echo in a piece by Olafur Eliasson, which nests Platonic solids inside one another to encourage us to look at the beauty of natural forms and our perceptive blindspots.

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Seundja Rhee (1918–2009), a solo presentation by Gallery Hyundai (*Frieze Masters*), is celebrated in Korea and France but largely unknown elsewhere. Passionate, experimental and determined, Rhee left Korea in 1951 to forge a career in Paris, where she absorbed modernism, pursuing her own lyrical abstract language of geometric signs and symbols that transcend time and borders. Her works visualize a poetic and musical vision of the world, universe and life. As Gallery Hyundai says, "She started from the bottom, the earth, and steadily grew up and out to encompass the cosmos."



Seundja Rhee, *Timeless*, 1976, acrylic on panel, wood 1.6 × 1.3 m. Courtesy Seundja Rhee Foundation

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