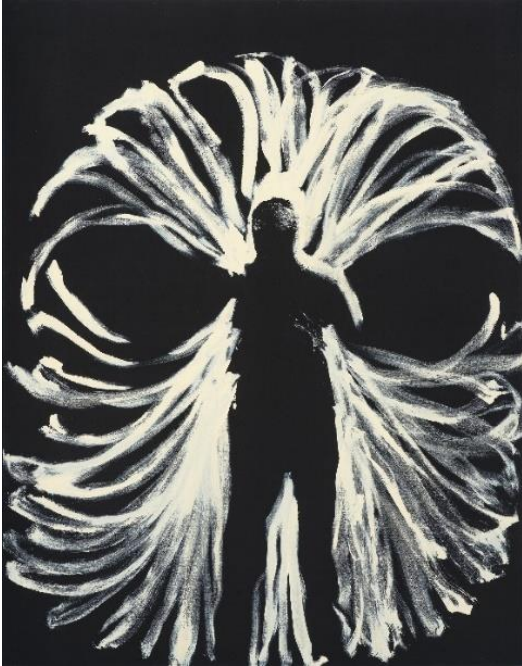


## Lee Kun-Yong

August 28 – November 6, 2024  
Quai des Bergues, 15-17  
Geneva



Lee Kun-Yong, *Bodyscape 76-2-2017* (2017)

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Pace is pleased to announce an exhibition of pioneering Korean performance artist and painter Lee Kun-Yong at its gallery in Geneva. The exhibition will include paintings and drawings that are emblematic of the spectrum of Lee's practice, as well as photographs documenting a 1976 performance. Running from August 28 to November 6, this exhibition marks the artist's first-ever presentation in Switzerland.

Lee Kun-Yong is widely regarded as one of Korea's most influential experimental artists. His practice, which spans performance, sculpture, installation, and video, has been instrumental in shaping the trajectory of contemporary art in Korea and beyond. Emerging in the 1960s and 1970s, Lee was at the forefront of the avant-garde movement in South Korea. Alongside contemporaries such as Ha Chong-Hyun, Jung Kangja, and Kim Kulim, Lee helped to cultivate a distinct Korean dialect within the broader context of Conceptual art. This movement did not merely replicate Western trends but developed a unique voice rooted in the sociopolitical landscape of the time. His work challenges the conventional boundaries of art by emphasizing the physicality of the artist's body as a medium of expression.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Lee was a key figure in the Space and Time (ST) movement, which sought to explore the relationship between art and the physical presence of the artist. This movement, characterized by its focus on the experiential and temporal aspects of art, represented a radical departure from traditional art forms. Lee's involvement in ST was marked by his innovative use of the body to create art, often through performances that highlighted the transient nature of human actions and their impact on the surrounding environment.

“My art is not special,” Lee has said. “It’s not unique. It’s about communicating with things that are close to us. So, if the audience looks into it deeply, we’ll be able to find things that relate to us both.” This approach has led him to create art that is both deeply personal and universally resonant. Lee’s practice often involves making marks on canvases with simple bodily actions, capturing the essence of human movement and its inherent limitations. The exhibition at Pace will feature seven paintings and four works on paper from Lee’s seminal series *Bodyscape* series (also known as his *The Method of Drawing* series). These works exemplify Lee’s innovative use of the body in creating art. Filled with traces of his movements, the canvases are vibrant and alive, reflecting his belief that art is about communicating with things close to us. Photographs from a 1976 performance will also be on view.

Earlier this year, Lee was featured in *Only the Young: Experimental Art in South Korea, 1960s-1970s*, a major exhibition that travelled from the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Seoul to the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, and The Hammer Museum in Los Angeles. In August 2023, the artist also performed *Snail’s Gallop* (1979/2023), at Pace’s flagship gallery in New York. Documentation of this event can be found on Pace’s [Journal](#).

To celebrate the opening of Lee’s exhibition in Geneva, renowned Swiss performance artist and curator John Armleder will present a talk discussing the exhibition and Lee’s wider performance practice. With a career spanning five decades, Armleder is recognized for the variety of his work, which combines Fluxus spirit and abstract painting, ready-made, sculpture, performance, and installation.

**Lee Kun-Yong** (b. 1942, Sariwon, Korea) is known for his performances that reimagine the ways that the body and its movements can be understood across time. The artist cultivated his highly experimental practice during the 1970s, when martial law and authoritarianism presented a major affront to civil rights and freedom of expression in South Korea. Lee earned a BFA from Hongik University in Seoul in 1967 and an MA in art education from Keimyung University in Daegu in 1982. He is considered a key figure of the Korean Avant-Garde group (AG group) as well as a founding member of the Space and Time (ST) movement. Notable group exhibitions he has participated in include the Paris Biennale in 1973; the Bienal de São Paulo in 1979; the Gwangju Biennale in 2000 and 2023; and the Busan Biennale in 2014 and 2016. In 2023, the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul presented *Only the Young: Experimental Art in South Korea, 1960s-1970s*, which traveled to the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (2023–2024) and Hammer Museum, University of California, Los Angeles (2024). One of the artist’s most famous bodies of work is *Bodyscape*, in which he approaches his canvases from different angles and uses painting to record the motions of his body. Today, Lee continues to work on series he began in the early years of his career. Much of his ongoing performance work engages with the relationships between his body, his chosen artistic medium, and viewers of his work. The artist lives and works in Seoul.

**Pace** is a leading international art gallery representing some of the most influential artists and estates of the 20th and 21st centuries, founded by Arne Glimcher in 1960. Holding decades-long relationships with Alexander Calder, Jean Dubuffet, Agnes Martin, Louise Nevelson, and Mark Rothko, Pace has a unique history that can be traced to its early support of artists central to the Abstract Expressionist and Light and Space movements. Now in its seventh decade, the gallery continues to nurture its longstanding relationships with its legacy artists and estates while also making an investment in the careers of contemporary artists, including Torkwase Dyson, Loie Hollowell, Robert Nava, Adam Pendleton, and Marina Perez Simão.

Under the current leadership of CEO Marc Glimcher and President Samantha Rubell, Pace has established itself as a collaborative force in the art world, partnering with other galleries and nonprofit organizations around the world in recent years. The gallery advances its mission to support its artists and share their visionary work with audiences and collectors around the world through a robust global program anchored by its exhibitions of both 20th century and contemporary art and scholarly projects from its imprint Pace Publishing, which produces books introducing new voices to the art historical canon. This artist-first ethos also extends to public installations, philanthropic events, performances, and other interdisciplinary programming presented by Pace.



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