

LISSON

LEE UFAN



BIOGRAPHY

Painter, sculptor, writer and philosopher Lee Ufan came to prominence in the late 1960s as one of the major theoretical and practical proponents of the avant-garde Mono-ha (Object School) group. The Mono-ha school of thought was Japan's first contemporary art movement to gain international recognition. It rejected Western notions of representation, focusing on the relationships of materials and perceptions rather than on expression or intervention. The artists of Mono-ha present works made of raw physical materials that have barely been manipulated. In 1991 Lee Ufan began his series of Correspondance paintings, which consist of just one or two grey-blue brushstrokes, made of a mixture of oil and crushed stone pigment, applied onto a large white surface. His sculptural series Relatum is equally minimal: each work is comprised of one or more light-colored round stones and dark, rectangular iron plates. The dialectical relationship between brushstroke and canvas is mimicked in the relationship between stone and iron plate. In Ufan's installations space is at the same time untouched and engaged, at the confines between doing and non-doing. The relationship between painted / unpainted and occupied / empty space lies at the heart of Lee Ufan's practice.

Lee Ufan was born on June 24th, 1936, in Kyongnam, South Korea. He studied calligraphy, poetry and painting at the College of Kyongnam and the University of Seoul. His work has been shown at Dia Beacon, Beacon, USA (long term view); the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia (2024); the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, Netherlands (2024); the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, Netherlands (2024); Hamburger Bahnhof – Nationalgalerie der Gegenwart, Germany (2023); National Art Center, Tokyo, Japan (2022); Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Park,

Washington, USA (2019-2020); Pompidou Metz, Metz, France (2019); Serpentine Galleries, London, UK (2018); Couvent de la Tourette, Eveux, France (2017); Centre de Création Contemporaine Olivier Debré, Tours, France (2017); Château La Coste, Le Puy-Sainte-Réparate, France (2016); Palace of Versailles, Versailles, France (2014); Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY, USA (2011), Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, Brussels, Belgium (2009); the Yokohama Museum of Art, Yokohama, Japan (2005); the Musée d'Art Moderne de Saint-Etienne Métropole, Rhône-Alpes, France (2005); the Samsung Museum of Modern Art, Seoul, South Korea (2003); Kunstmuseum Bonn, Germany (2001); the Galerie Nationale du Jeu de Paume, Paris, France (1997); and the National Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul, South Korea (1994). He was awarded the Praemium Imperiale for painting in 2001 and the UNESCO Prize in 2000. In 2010 the Lee Ufan Museum, designed by Tadao Ando, opened at Benesse Art Site, Naoshima, Japan; and in 2022 Foundation Lee Ufan opened in Arles, France.