

VILLEPIN



Myonghi Kang  
*requiem*

Renzo Piano Pavilion  
13 October 2024 - 5 January 2025

Château La Coste is delighted to receive the renowned artist Myonghi Kang for her return to France, after years of absence. This homecoming, rich in significance, marks a return to her roots, a region that inspired her artistic journey since she first settled there in 1972, captivated by the light and landscapes that Paul Cézanne immortalized.

In 1994, Kang opened a studio in Touraine, fostering a dialogue between her native South Korea, specifically Jeju Island, and France, a country she deeply cherishes. Her artistic explorations have taken her across the globe, from the vast Gobi Desert to the breathtaking landscapes of Patagonia, merging diverse cultures and experiences into her work.

At Château La Coste, Kang will present a poignant exhibition titled “Requiem,” commemorating a fading world through the lens of her artistry. The pavilion designed by Renzo Piano provides a stunning backdrop, where natural light harmonizes with her creations, reinforcing the deep connection between her art and the environment.

Curated by Villepin Art, the exhibition features twelve paintings and eighteen watercolors, tracing Kang’s extraordinary journey from figuration to poetic abstraction. Each piece serves as a meditation on the universe, reflecting her belief that painting transcends mere artistic endeavor; it is a spiritual act connecting her to the world’s vital forces.

Kang’s art is a testament to her lifelong quest for truth, light, and harmony. Her canvases are living entities, often left unfinished for years as she revisits them to refine colors and lines until they resonate with their intended form. This process embodies the essence of nature itself—ever-changing and evolving.

With her keen awareness of the threats facing both humanity and the natural world, Kang’s recent works echo her concerns about erosion, disappearance, and the destructive forces of modernity. Each painting becomes an act of resistance, a means of preserving beauty and vitality against the ravages of time.

Myonghi Kang’s return to Provence invites us to rediscover the sacred relationship between mankind and nature. Her paintings serve as sanctuaries, where viewers can reconnect with the cycle of life and embrace the beauty, truth, and harmony that guide us toward a better future.

Join us at Château La Coste to experience this extraordinary exhibition, a celebration of life, art, and the indomitable spirit of nature.



Myonghi Kang, *Requiem*, 2024, oil on canvas, 340 x 288 cm

# MYONGHI KANG: A REQUIEM FOR LIFE

BY DOMINIQUE DE VILLEPIN

Following many years of absence, Myonghi Kang is returning to France, specifically Provence – a locale that owes nothing to chance – and indeed Château La Coste. It signifies a return to her starting point, a region in which she, seized by the light and landscape of Paul Cézanne, settled back in 1972. It was only more than twenty years later, in 1994, that she opened a studio in her Touraine mansion, aiming to further the dialogue among South Korea's Jeju Island, where she resides most of the time; France, with which she harbors deep affinities; and the world in all its vastness, whose boundaries she never ceases to explore, from the Gobi Desert to Patagonia. Such roaming across two continents, between two cultures, shapes an imagination by which here and elsewhere merge into one, as each landscape becomes a meditation on the universe. She could not have chosen a more beautiful setting for this “requiem”, in memory of a fading world, than the pavilion created by Renzo Piano, a space where natural light, captured by the large bay windows, resonates with the artist's work, reinforcing this communion with nature, one which she wishes to sing and share through her work. Across seventeen paintings and fifteen watercolors, she offers a path akin to the numerous stations that retrace her extraordinary journey, from figuration to such poetic abstraction that remains anchored in reality at all times, set in the nature that surrounds her, as well as what she venerates.

For her, painting is not simply an artistic activity, but a spiritual act, a way to connect to the vital forces of the world, and to transcribe them onto canvas. From one work to another, the continuity of her artistic quest is affirmed via a celebration of life. She has traveled the globe, marked by exile, battles, as well as a tireless search for truth, light, shapes, and colors in perpetual metamorphoses; the capture of which must, therefore, always be started anew every morning, with the same enthusiasm and humility, seeking the very moments when nature reveals its secrets. Abound with adventures, such life experience is reflected in each of the paintings, in which time becomes an integral part of creation. It is not uncommon for her to leave a canvas unfinished for years, returning to it several times to adjust a color or line, until the work finds its definitive form. Reminiscent of life and nature itself, the canvas is in perpetual transformation, evolving to ultimately reach the point of perfect harmony in-between the eye, the heart, and the hand of the artist. Guided by invisible forces, the paintbrush swirls, flutters, and corrects, accompanied by the light and energy of the locale. Myonghi does not merely paint landscapes; she captures the quintessence of nature, transcribing it into a pictorial symphony that evokes life in all its forms.

Her gaze draws on a millennium-old tradition, by which art is regarded as a response to the ephemeral, a way to preserve the fleeting beauty of the world, against the ravages of passing time. Her work invites us to rediscover the sacred links between mankind and nature, which we seem to have forgotten. Each painting is an open window on this intimate and living relationship, a reminder that nature is no simple décor, but a vibrant entity with which man must relearn to dialogue. Wherever the artist sets up her easel, be it at the center of wind-whipped deserts, under the blinding light of glaciers, or along the jagged shores of the South China Sea, she waits patiently for revelation to emerge, and for

15  
*Jardin nord* (2002 Printemps)  
Watercolor on paper, 23 x 31 cm

16  
*Jardin nord* (2002 Printemps)  
Watercolor on paper, 23 x 31 cm

17  
*Jardin nord* (2002 Été)  
Watercolor on paper, 55 x 75 cm

18  
*Jardin nord* (2003 Septembre)  
Watercolor on paper, 30 x 40 cm

19  
*Jardin nord* (2003)  
Watercolor on paper, 24 x 32 cm

20  
*Jardin nord* (2003 Printemps)  
Watercolor on paper, 36 x 51 cm

21  
*Jardin nord* (2003 Juin, Juillet, Août)  
Watercolor on paper, 36 x 51 cm

22  
*Jardin nord* (2003, 9, Juin)  
Watercolor on paper, 36 x 51 cm

23  
*Jardin nord* (2004, 27, Mai)  
Watercolor on paper, 33.5 x 39 cm

24  
*Jardin nord* (2004)  
Watercolor on paper, 28 x 38 cm

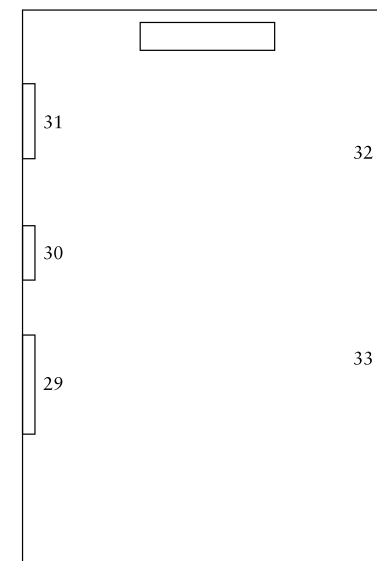
25  
*Jardin nord* (2008)  
Watercolor on paper, 30.5 x 40.4 cm

26  
*Jardin nord* (2006 Été, Automne)  
Watercolor on paper, 35.5 x 50 cm

27  
*Jardin nord* (2007, Juin, 5)  
Watercolor on paper, 29.5 x 39.5 cm

28  
*Jardin nord* (2008 Novembre)  
Watercolor on paper, 31 x 41 cm

## AUBERGE BOUTIQUE



29  
(1999) *Tsagannur, Mongolia*  
Oil on canvas, 130 x 89 cm

30  
(1981 - 1983) *Composition des Jours*  
Oil on canvas, 146 x 150 cm

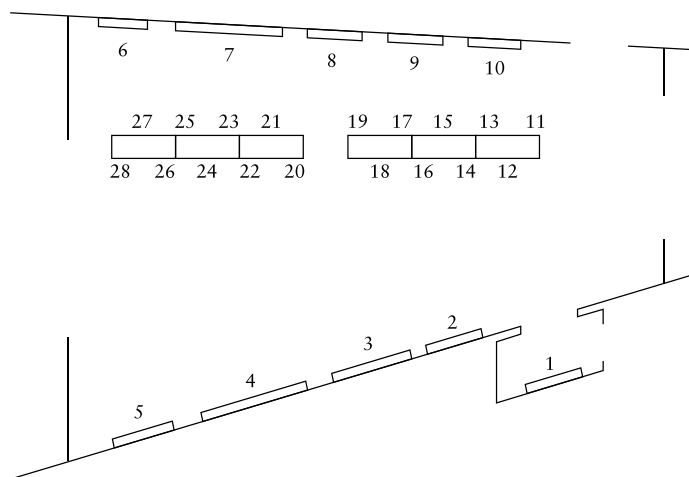
31  
(1981 - 1982) *Jours*  
Oil on canvas, 150 x 150 cm

32  
(2023) *Prunier*  
Oil on canvas, 80 x 200 cm

33  
(2021) *Deoksu Village*  
Oil on canvas, 112 x 194 cm

All pieces displayed are works of Myonghi Kang

## RENZO PIANO PAVILION



1  
(1984) *L'ete nu de gugidong*  
Oil on canvas, 112 x 145 cm

2  
(2023) 蜀葵 *Rose trémière*  
Oil on canvas, 97 x 146 cm

3  
(1999) *Atelier*  
Oil on canvas, 130 x 163 cm

4  
(2015) 中庭 *La cour b*  
Oil on canvas, 340 x 280 cm

5  
(2015) *Pommier*  
Oil on canvas, 160 x 160 cm

6  
(2012) *Cerisier foudroyé*  
Oil on canvas, 150 x 117 cm

7  
(2024) *Requiem*  
Oil on canvas, 340 x 288 cm

8  
(2024) *Mur du voisin II*  
Oil on canvas, 130 x 145 cm

9  
(2018) *Syria, contre-jour*  
Oil on canvas, 195 x 113 cm

10  
(2014) *Visitation III*  
Oil on canvas, 112 x 145 cm

11  
*Jardin nord* (2000 Été)  
Watercolor on paper, 36 x 51 cm

12  
*Jardin nord* (2001 Été)  
Watercolor on paper, 36 x 51 cm

13  
*Jardin nord* (2002)  
Watercolor on paper, 27 x 37 cm

14  
*Jardin nord* (2002 Été)  
Watercolor on paper, 18 x 27 cm

nature to reveal its shrouded secret, always in search of the essence of the locales, indeed what makes them unique and eternally beautiful. It is an art of total commitment, for which Myonghi refuses to compromise, instead seeking to capture the vital energy of the world via an alchemy of colors, shapes, and lights. Her approach is not a simple repetition of forms, but a conquest of uncharted artistic territories, combining ancient wisdom and modern audacity to reconnect with such a sanctity that is often buried or missing.

As if emerging from the depths, little by little, life springs forth, rustles, envelops, and bewitches us: the ripple of streams, the rustling of wings, the shivering of mist, and the sigh in the heart of groves and forests. In this natural symphony, each painting becomes a miniature world, in which each detail is a note in the aggregate melody. Creation comes to life, and dialogue is established; with the magic of her paintbrush, Myonghi reminds us of the first vocation of art: to restore the lost unity of the world, without which there could be no life, no understanding, and no human reconciliation.

For her, art is a beneficial force of reparation, a path of healing via sacrifice and asceticism, a way of taming violence and fear to give beauty its rightful place, and to let the grace of a line, touch, or stain on the canvas metamorphose into fruits, flowers, and birds. At the end of a painstaking work of condensation and decantation, she wishes to reconnect with this initial presence, thwarting the traps of opposites, tearing away from the constraints of time, matter, or space, by way of a unique embrace and imprint on the canvas.

Such anxiety is evident in her recent works, in which colors and shapes seem to fight against erasure, instead seeking to preserve a trace, a living memory in a constantly changing world. Myonghi's art thus asserts itself as a testimony, a fight against the commonplace, enslavement, and death. Each painting becomes an act of resistance, a means by which to preserve the beauty and vitality of the world, in the face of the destructive forces of time and history.

In all fairness, Myonghi offers not only a celebration of nature, but also a true reinvention of the world, a space where mankind and the divine, the visible and the invisible, could meet and reconcile. She wishes to convince us that, despite the threats weighing on our planet, there remains a possibility of renewal and rebirth. Her paintings are sanctuaries, in which everyone can rediscover their place in the great cycle of life, and where beauty, truth, and harmony are the guides towards a better future. Each touch and gesture become a prayer, recognition, and affirmation of the essential beauty that surrounds us.



Myonghi Kang in Jeju, 2021

## ABOUT MYONGHI KANG

Myonghi Kang's (b. 1947, Daegu, South Korea) vibrant cosmic paintings project a pure sensibility without boundaries. Through her canvases, the artist expresses a view of the natural world that vacillates between emptiness and profusion in myriad manifestations of colors, marks, and shapes. Myonghi has divided her time between South Korea and France for much of her life. She studied Fine Arts at the College of Fine Arts, Seoul National University. Myonghi immigrated to France in 1972. After a few years in the French capital, she started painting the urban street scenes of Paris and the surrounding nature when she moved to Quai de la Loire in the 1980s. After Myonghi started exhibiting her ethereal paintings, she befriended renowned artists, poets, and writers, including Zao Wou-Ki, Piotr Kowalski, Gilles Aillaud, Alain Jouffroy, and Dominique de Villepin. Her works gained widespread recognition in the late 1980s following several international solo exhibitions and poetry recitals, including shows at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris (1986), the National Museum of Contemporary Art in Seoul (1989), and Beijing Art Museum of Imperial City in China (2011). In 1981, she and her husband Setaik were the founders of the Musée de Séoul in Seoul, the first museum of art in South Korea. The artist also participated in the exhibition and symposium *Devant, le futur*, as part of the World Expo held in Daejeon, South Korea in 1993.

## ABOUT VILLEPIN

Shaped by Dominique and Arthur de Villepin's passion for art, Villepin is a new gallery model created by collectors for collectors. Founded in 2019 in Hong Kong, Villepin specializes in selecting important artists, estates, and foundations, advocating their work through carefully curated exhibitions while bridging them with the leading collectors and institutions in the Asia-Pacific region and worldwide. Beyond its gallery walls, Villepin also acts as a curator for exhibitions in museums and institutions. Each exhibition at Villepin is based on in-depth scholarship and offers a unique experience to immerse visitors in the life and art of each artist. Previous exhibitions have also produced special bilingual publications that include original essays and curatorial research.

As curator and advisor to a close community of collectors, artists presented by Villepin include Zao Wou-Ki, Myonghi Kang, Anselm Kiefer, Francis Bacon, George Condo, Pierre Soulages, Georges Mathieu, and Hans Hartung among others. Villepin is focused on education and promoting the scholarship of its artists through intimate salons and collaborations with leading institutions, foundations, universities, and museums. Through their extensive experience in building close friendships with artists, the father-son partnership aims to share their expertise, encourage dialogue, and support collectors in building long lasting relationships with artists, who are at the heart of Villepin's initiatives.

## ABOUT CHATEAU LA COSTE

Situated in one of France's oldest wine-growing regions, between the historic town of Aix-en-Provence and the Luberon National Park, Château La Coste is a vineyard where wine, art and architecture coexist in harmony. Since it opened to the public in 2011, Château La Coste has invited visitors to discover over forty major works of contemporary art installed outdoors and in five galleries spread across its 200 hectares of natural surroundings. Every year, artists and architects are invited to visit the estate and discover the unique beauty of this Provencal landscape, with its famous cypress trees, parasol pines, olive groves and centuries-old oaks. They are given the freedom to create a specific work in an area of the site that inspires them, so that Château La Coste continues to evolve as new projects and facilities are developed.

### Exhibition Details:

Pavillon Renzo Piano, Château La Coste, Aix-en-Provence, France

13 October 2024 - 5 January 2025

Opening hours: Everyday from 12pm to 5pm

### Press Contact

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