

Sui Park at The Garage Art Center



has already shown in 130 exhibitions internationally, and her work has been written up in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *Hyperallergic*.

Because of her background in design, Park has a particularly good feeling not only for the organic shapes for her sculptures, but also for the overall placement of the work. In the gallery, the sculptures have been placed slightly to the left of the space. They are small in height, roughly two feet high, although in the back on the left, there is a cactus-like form that rises above the group. The colors of the works, determined by the colors of the ties, range from orange-pink, white, green, and purple; their shape is mostly conical, although a few demonstrate a division into two upper parts. Clearly, Park maintains a close interest in nature; her work, though, exemplifies an organic abstraction that is relatively new—not to mention the use of the cable ties, which are fully contemporary and also likely a comment on recycling consumer materials. In the entirety of the exhibition, Park's audience senses a slightly comic arrangement of forms, which look like cartoon caricatures of small mountains. The cable ties have been worked out to make patterns on the surface of the sculpture, or to extend beyond the work in question. The decisions by Park give the environment a technical variance, evident in the works themselves.

Two of the three hanging sculptures are entirely white, while one, a kind of half moon, is yellow with purple knobs. They animate the upper space. Park is as much an environmental artist as she is a maker of individual sculptures. While she is of Korean origin, her work belongs to what has become an international abstract idiom. The creation of the sculptures with ties adds an ecological awareness to the show, particularly compelling in the environs of New York City. This work may stem in part from the artist's experience as a student at two well-known American art schools, where she would have been trained in developing a non-objective idiom. So Park participates in a design and an abstraction that is understood and practiced in urban centers worldwide. New York's remarkable diversity of backgrounds among artists currently making art has led to a commonality of intention, and, sometimes, even the sharing of formal attributes. While Park's work cannot be easily compared to other artists, her organic abstraction makes it possible for her to take place among the broad array of artists working non-objectively. So her installation at The Garage Center, despite the distance of the space from downtown New York City, where so many galleries are found, maintains good contact with an urban vernacular. This ties her to New York City's wide range of styles, mostly in abstraction.

People are saying in the city that the artworld is decentralizing; Lee's space is a good example, and there is another space, owned by Koreans, that has set up in Long Island City, not known for its concentration of galleries. Park's show, fully accomplished, indicates that the great numbers of artists residing in New York City are creating a real need for spaces that offer people the chance to show. The Garage Art Center is in fact removed from the central artworld milieu in the city, but it is a good space for artists to show. There will come a time when sculptors such as Park will be visited in neighborhoods far from downtown New York City with enthusiasm. Sometimes the best places are not easily accessible. Park, whose work evidences a sharp understanding of present art practice, asks us to experience her work on its own terms, rather than decide according to the placement of the site. In any case, The Garage Art Center, small but elegant, offers enough room for serious artists to show their art. Park is one of these artists. We are grateful for her talented efforts, as well as Lee's determination to keep a space for gifted painters and sculptors to show.

Jonathan Goodman