

Press Release

Suh Seung-Won

March 7 (Sat) - April 11 (Sat), 2026

Tokyo Gallery + BTAP | Tokyo

Tokyo Gallery + BTAP is pleased to announce an exhibition by Suh Seung-Won, opening Saturday, March 7, 2026. This retrospective marks the first comprehensive showcase in Japan of Suh's artistic career stretching over some six decades, spanning his early works dating from the 1960s through to his latest pieces from 2025.

Born in Seoul, Suh Seung-Won (1941–) graduated from Hongik University in Korea in 1964. He served as a professor at the university's College of Fine Arts from 1974 to 2007 and continues to create works from his base in Seoul. He was a founding member of the Origin Group that was established in the early 1960s, and was also involved in the formation of the A.G. (Korean Avant-Garde Association). Suh played a role in the subsequent development of the *Dansaekhwa* monochrome painting movement, building and refining his own unique mode of abstract expression while bearing witness to several major turning points in Korean contemporary art.

During the 1960s, the “Informel” movement that had dominated the Korean art scene, reflecting the post-Korean War sense of exhaustion and passion for regeneration, also came to be known as “hot abstraction.” In contrast to this particular trend led by artists like Park Seo-Bo, Suh presented a restrained kind of “cold abstraction.” Building on a base of geometric abstraction that was rooted in order, Suh reinterpreted Western art trends through Korean sensibilities with regard to tranquility, negative space, and introspection, and established his own intellectual framework.

At the core of Suh's artistic world is the experience of the traditional Korean *hanok* house. The structure of *hanok* doors became the fundamental compositional unit in his work: the rectangle. Furthermore, light filtering through traditional Korean *hanji* paper differs from direct light through glass — it is a soft, diffused indirect light. In his pursuit of geometric abstraction from the 1960s through the 1980s, Suh focused on this unique light, eventually shifting the core of his practice toward its expression. His depiction of the shimmering light seeping through *shoji* screens developed into his signature style. While Suh's early works are sometimes interpreted as reflections of the inorganic landscapes associated with the onward march of urbanization, they are in fact fundamentally rooted in the lyrical memories of his time spent in *hanok* houses.

This exhibition presents approximately thirteen representative works, spanning his early woodblock prints of the 1960s through to his latest pieces from 2025. It traces the evolution of Suh's art, from early prints to his recent “Simultaneity” series where light and form merge, including works from the landmark 1975 exhibition “Five Hinsek ‘White’: 5 Korean Artists,” which left a monumental mark on the history of Korean contemporary art.

A reception in the presence of the artist, who will be visiting Japan on this occasion, will be held on Friday, March 13. We hope you will take this opportunity to attend.

Press inquiries

E-mail: info@tokyo-gallery.com / Website: www.tokyo-gallery.com

Opening Hours | (Tue-Sat) 12:00-18:00

Closed | Sun, Mon, Holidays

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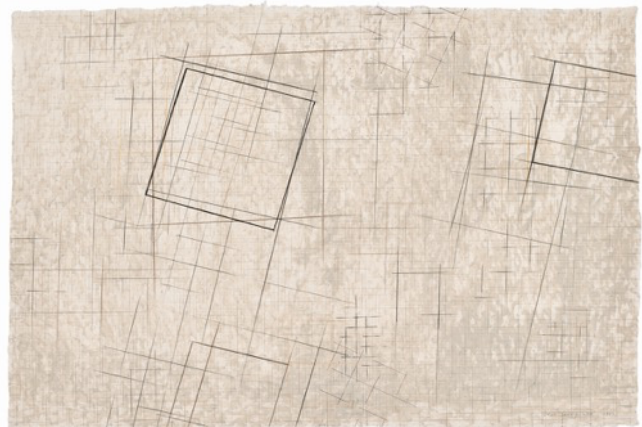
Simultaneity74-7 (1974), oil on canvas, 129.6 × 96.7 cm



Simultaneity 93-715 (1993), acrylic on canvas, 91 × 116.8 cm



Wood-C (1968), Woodcut, 36 × 28 cm



Simultaneity 83-122 (1983), Ink, pencil on Korean paper, 63 × 94 cm