

SANG A HAN

BLACK FLAME

Curated by Maria Vittoria Baravelli

23 May – 13 September, 2024

GALLERIA FUMAGALLI
Via Bonaventura Cavalieri 6, Milano

From **23 May to 13 September 2024** Galleria Fumagalli presents **BLACK FLAME**, the first solo exhibition at the venue by artist Sang A Han (Seoul, South Korea, 1987), represented exclusively in Italy since 2023.

For her first international exhibition, **Sang A Han** presents a selection of sculptures made of stitched cotton fabric, stuffed and painted with **Meok** (Korean ink). Sang A Han reinterprets in a personal, creative and contemporary way the oriental technique of ink painting, as well as the heritage of **sewing** and **embroidery**, which are practices traditionally linked to female domestic labor as well as oriental art.

BLACK FLAME is the title that the artist has chosen to introduce her work with: the black of the *Meok*, by slowly and unevenly permeating the fibers of the fabric, renders a profusion of warm nuances like a flame which, rising toward the sky, reveals thousands of undefined tones.

*«Embroidery has always been an ancient guardian of **memory**. It tells silent and intimate stories of past generations sewing fragments of time with patience and mastery»* explains the curator **Maria Vittoria Baravelli** *«Sang A Han takes up traditional oriental painting and Korean craftsmanship to create a contemporary and performative creative language. Through the use of the Meok, brushes, needles, threads and cotton fabric, she creates soft sculptures that refer to nature, body and dreams. She weaves her fragmented life as a woman, artist and mother by intertwining moments that she cuts out and then sews together. She creates works from which a magic lyricism emerges, a sinuous line that links the body to the place of desire, mystery and dreams, and draws a delicate border between the natural and anatomical landscape.»*

Sang A Han chooses to use cotton fabric instead of paper.

«The way the ink seeps and spreads into fabric resembles the process of my body transforming experiences into memories; my work starts from memories, not those that are immediately etched in the brain, rather the feelings that slowly penetrate the fibers of my body.» And she adds: *«I believe that the scale of my works is significant. I create large-scale sculptures to free them from a practice that is considered a “minor task”.»*

Sang A Han's work rereads daily experiences and personal feelings in a figurative and symbolic language – often **sensual and dreamlike**. She investigates intimate but universal emotions often using religious symbols such as the Buddhist gestures of *mudras* – for example joined hand palms – expressed by none other than Sang A Han, woman and mother.

A sense of **profound and ancestral spirituality**, the search for natural harmony and connection with the whole arise from the artist's slow gesture – a gesture becoming a painted trace which, then, turns into an indissoluble bond through the succession of the stitching points.

Sang A Han was born in 1987 in Seoul, South Korea, where she lives and works.

She studied oriental and particularly Korean painting during high school, college and graduate school. She developed a profound respect for traditional arts and materials, approaching ink painting on paper first. Then, she explored painting with *Meok* (Korean ink) on cotton fabric. Influenced by the Korean tradition, her main references are the Sansuhwa, the landscape paintings of the Joseon era (15th-19th century), and the Gwaneum-do, the paintings of Buddhist icons that reflect the desire for blessing. While in the past painting was practiced mainly by male artists, Sang A Han affirms her contemporary female artist status through the reinterpretation of traditional aesthetics and techniques.

In 2013 she debuted with her solo exhibition "Adaptation" at the Seongnam Cube Art Museum in Seongnam, and in 2022 the prominent Korean institution OCI Museum of Art in Seoul held the presentation "Pointed Mind". Her works have been included in group exhibitions in the following institutions: Daejeon Museum of Art, Daejeon (2023); Seoul National University Museum of Art, Seoul (2022); Gangneung Arts Center, Gangneung (2018); Asia Culture Center, Gwangju (2018); Gyeonggi Museum of Modern Art, Ansan (2016); Seongnam Cube Art Museum, Seongnam (2015); Seoul Calligraphy Art Museum - Seoul Arts Center, Seoul (2014); Hanwon Museum of Art, Seoul (2014); Seongnam Cube Art Museum, Seongnam (2012).

Sang A Han will be present during the opening reception on 23 May 2024.

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Opening hours

Monday to Friday, 1-7 pm

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