

LEE UFAN GUIDE

IN 1936, LEE UFAN WAS BORN IN THE MOUNTAINS OF GYEONGSANGNAM-DO IN SOUTHERN KOREA.

HE LEARNED DRAWING AND CALLIGRAPHY AS A CHILD. HE ESPECIALLY PRACTICED THE BASICS : DRAWING DOTS AND LINES.



HE WENT TO JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN BUSAN. THEN THE KOREAN WAR BROKE OUT.

HE READ A LOT OF BOOKS.

HE JOINED THE SCHOOL BIOLOGY CLUB AND COLLECTED PLANT SAMPLES.

SOMETIMES HE LISTENED TO RECORDS AT HIS NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE ...

WOW!! WHEN YOU SPIN THE RECORD, SOUND COMES OUT. THIS IS AMAZING ...

HE WENT TO HIGH SCHOOL IN SEOUL. THERE HE FORMED A READING CLUB.

ENTERED A LITERARY CONTEST

GOT EVEN DEEPER INTO BOOKS

IN 1956, HE ENTERED SEOUL NATIONAL UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS.



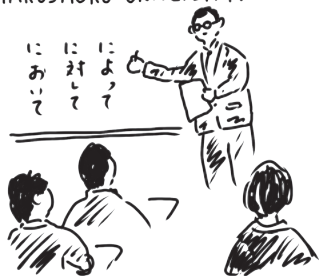
HIS UNCLE LIVED IN YOKOHAMA, JAPAN. ONE SUMMER VACATION HE SNUCK ABOARD A BOAT TO BRING HIS UNCLE HERBAL MEDICINE.



THERE WERE LOTS OF AMAZING THINGS TO SEE.



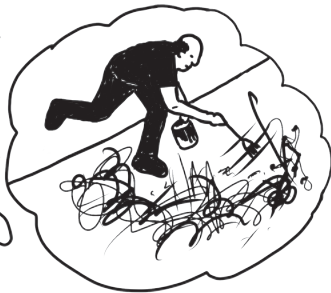
ON HIS UNCLE'S ADVICE, HE DECIDED TO STAY IN JAPAN AND STUDY JAPANESE AT TAKUSHOKU UNIVERSITY.



HE ENTERED THE DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY AT NIHON UNIVERSITY. HE STUDIED THE PHILOSOPHER HEIDEGGER.



WHEN VISITING HIS TEACHER'S HOUSE, HE SAW AMERICAN MAGAZINES AND WAS AMAZED BY THE PAINTINGS OF JACKSON POLLOCK AND MARK TOBEY.



AFTER GRADUATING, HE TOOK PART IN THEATER



AND STUDIED JAPANESE PAINTING.



LIKE MANY OTHERS, IN THE EARLY 1960s HE WAS DEEPLY INVOLVED IN OPPOSING THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH KOREA, AND IN THE MOVEMENT FOR UNIFICATION OF NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA.



AT THAT TIME, MANY YOUNG PEOPLE WORLDWIDE WERE INVOLVED IN POLITICAL AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, AND A GREAT WAVE OF CHANGE WAS SWEEPING OVER THE WORLD.



THESE WERE TIMES FILLED WITH THE ENERGY OF YOUNG PEOPLE TRYING TO BREAK FREE FROM A SENSE OF FRUSTRATION. LEE BECAME MORE INTERESTED IN VISUAL ART.



IN 1966, HE GOT INVOLVED IN RUNNING GALLERY SHINJUKU, AND MET ISHIKO JUNZO AFTER THAT.



HE BECAME INTERESTED IN MYSTERIOUS ILLUSIONS AT AN EXHIBITION BY THE GROUP GENSHOKU HELD IN AT THAT TIME.



THE GAP BETWEEN REALITY AND ILLUSION WAS TRICKY...



MULTIPLE LAYERS OF SHADOW

INFLUENCED BY TAKAMATSU JIRO AND SEKINE NOBUO, WHO ALSO WORKED WITH TRICKS AND OPTICAL ILLUSIONS, LEE EXPERIMENTED FOR ABOUT A YEAR



Takamatsu Jiro, Shadow

WITH WORKS ON CANVAS THAT CREATE WITH FLUORESCENT PAINT, AS WELL AS TRYING TO CREATE A FLAT VERSION OF A MOEBIUS STRIP.



Sekine Nobuo, Phase No.5, 1968



Lee Ufan, Fourth Structure A, 1968

AUTUMN 1968 HE SAW SEKINE NOBUO'S PHASE-MOTHER EARTH, AND WAS EXCITED TO WITNESS A MOMENT WHEN ILLUSION AND REALITY CONNECT.

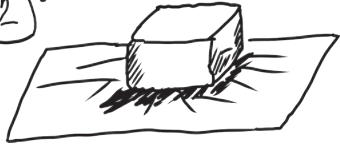


PART OF THE EARTH HAS BEEN PULLED OUT AND PLACED ON THE GROUND.

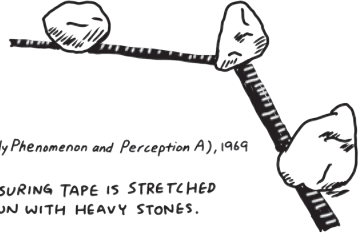
AROUND 1968, HE BEGAN EXPERIMENTING WITH THREE-DIMENSIONAL ART.



DID SOMEONE DROP A STONE?



Relatum (formerly Phenomenon and Perception B), 1968

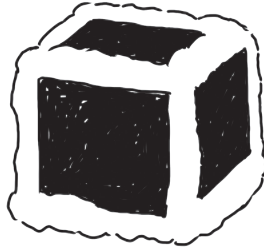


Relatum (formerly Phenomenon and Perception A), 1969

RUBBER MEASURING TAPE IS STRETCHED AND HELD DOWN WITH HEAVY STONES.



THE TAPE IS STRETCHED AND DOESN'T MEASURE CORRECTLY...



SOFT COTTON AND HARD IRON PLATES?



Relatum (formerly System A), 1969

AROUND 1969, HE GRADUALLY BEGAN LIMITING THE NUMBER OF MATERIALS HE COMBINED, SUCH AS STONES AND STEEL PLATES.

PROCESSED STEEL PLATE AND NATURAL STONE



Relatum - Silence, 1969

STEEL IS MADE FROM IRON, MADE BY MELTING A STONE CALLED IRON ORE, SO YOU COULD SAY STONE AND IRON HAVE A PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP.

1969 LEE RECEIVED THE BIJUTSU SHUPPAN-SHA ART CRITICISM AWARD FOR HIS ESSAY "FROM OBJECT TO BEING." IN 1971, HE PUBLISHED DEAI O MOTOMETE (IN SEARCH OF ENCOUNTER). HE WAS ACTIVE AS A WRITER AS WELL AS AN ARTIST.



1971 LEE PARTICIPATED IN THE 7th PARIS BIENNALE, AND MET EUROPEAN ARTISTS.



DANIEL BUREN



CLAUDE VIALLAT

ON HIS FIRST WORLD TRIP, HE TRAVELED FOR THREE MONTHS TO GREECE, ITALY, AND THE US.



HE SAW MANY THINGS AND MADE MANY DISCOVERIES.



YVES KLEIN



LUCIO FONTANA

HE WAS PARTICULARLY STRUCK BY A VISIT TO THE BARNETT NEWMAN EXHIBITION AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART IN NEW YORK.



WOWWWW!

THESE ARE MORE MATERIAL SPACES THAN PAINTINGS.

IT'S LIKE A VAST SPACE COMING OUT AT YOU.

HE DECIDED TO TACKLE PAINTING AGAIN.

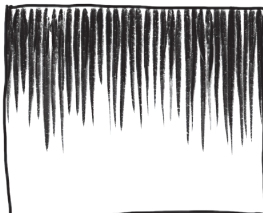


LET'S TRY LIFE-SIZE PAINTINGS WHERE THE BODY MEETS THE PAINT DIRECTLY!

HE MADE WORKS WHERE POINTS AND LINES REPEAT. DARK POINTS AND LINES GRADUALLY FADE OUT UNTIL THE CYCLE BEGINS AGAIN.



From Point, 1973
Iwaki City Art Museum



From Line, 1997
The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

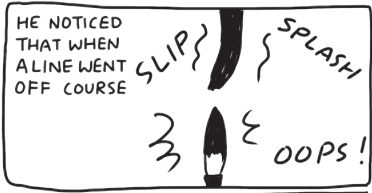
POINTS AND LINES COULD ONLY BE PAINTED ONCE, AND SHOWED HIS BREATH, RHYTHM, AND CONDITION. THERE WAS NO ROOM FOR FAILURE



IN THE MID-1970S, HE BEGAN SPENDING MORE TIME WORKING IN EUROPE. HE WENT BACK AND FORTH, WHILE ALSO TEACHING AT TAMA ART UNIVERSITY IN JAPAN.



IN THE EARLY 1980S, WHEN HE TRIED TO WORK WITH A PAINTBRUSH, HE BEGAN BREAKING OUT IN A COLD SWEAT, HIS HANDS SHOOK AND HE COULD NOT PAINT. HE HAD PUSHED HIMSELF TOO HARD.



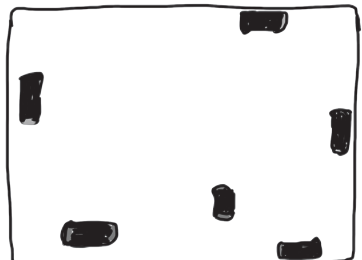
HE BECAME MORE AWARE OF SPACE BETWEEN POINTS AND LINES, AND IN THE 1980S AND 1990S HE MOVED AWAY FROM STRICT RULES. POINTS AND LINES WERE SCATTERED. HIS INTEREST IN THE UNPAINTED PARTS GREW, AND THE NUMBER OF POINTS AND LINES GREW SMALLER AND SMALLER.

CHAOS



From Wind, 1985
Toyota Municipal Museum of Art

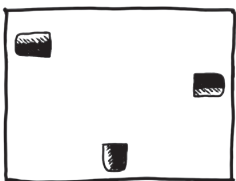
SIMPLICITY



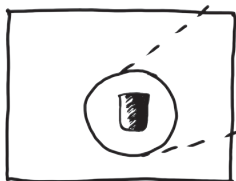
Correspondance, 1992
The Museum of Modern Art, Kamakura & Hayama

THEN, IN 2000, PAINTINGS COMPOSED OF JUST ONE OR TWO POINTS APPEARED. SMALL ELEMENTS CHANGED THE AIR AROUND THEM.

THE PICTURE AND THE SPACE RESONATE TOGETHER.



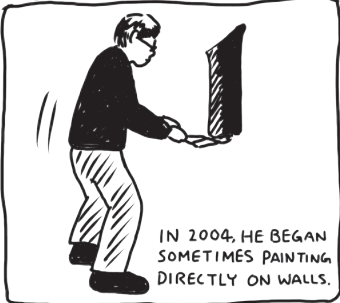
Dialogue, 2009
Lee ufan Museum/Fukutake Foundation

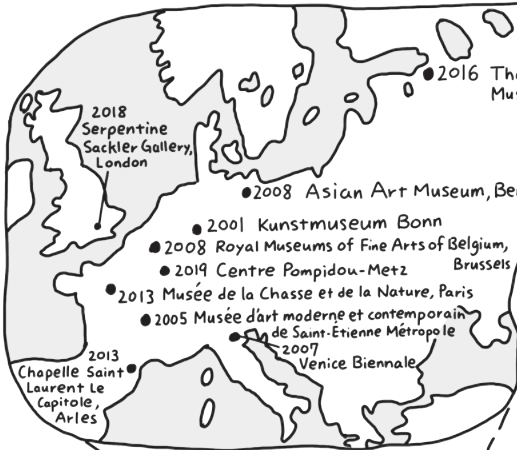


Response, 2021



SOMETHING IS DIFFERENT FROM USUAL.





AROUND 2000, HE BEGAN HAVING MANY MAJOR SOLO EXHIBITIONS AROUND THE WORLD.



IN 2001, HE WAS AWARDED THE PRAEMIUM IMPERIALE, PAINTING, AND HAS RECEIVED MANY OTHER AWARDS.

HIS BOOK *YOHAKU NO GEIJUTSU (THE ART OF MARGINS)*, PUBLISHED IN 2000, HAS BEEN TRANSLATED AND PUBLISHED WORLDWIDE.



THE LEE UFAN MUSEUM OPENED IN 2010 IN NAOSHIMA, KAGAWA PREFERREDURE.



AN EXTRAORDINARY SPACE



2022 LEE UFAN ARLES OPENED IN FRANCE



WORKS OF ART LOOK DIFFERENT IN DIFFERENT LOCATIONS.

2014: CHATEAU DE VERSAILLES, FRANCE



2021: ALYSCAMPS, FRANCE



HIS OWN MUSEUM
LEE'S WORK HAVE BEEN INSTALLED AT
IN MANY DIFFERENT KINDS OF SPACES..
MUSEUM

AND NOW, HIS FIRST MAJOR RETROSPECTIVE EXHIBITION IN JAPAN IN 17 YEARS IS HERE IN THIS MUSEUM, IN THESE SPACES.

EVEN IF SELF IS FINITE, THE INFINITE APPEARS IN OUR RELATION TO THE WORLD AROUND. ARTISTIC EXPRESSION IS A REVELATION OF AN INFINITE DIMENSION.



LEE UFAN

PLEASE REMEMBER IN THE GALLERY

TO PROTECT THE ART AND MAKE EVERYONE FEEL COMFORTABLE, THERE ARE SOME MUSEUM RULES.



Lee Ufan Guide

Tokyo venue: The National Art Center, Tokyo Special Exhibition Gallery 1E

August 10 - November 7, 2022

Closed: Tuesdays

7-22-2 Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-8558

Inquiries: (+81)47-316-2772 (Hello Dial)

Website: <https://www.nact.jp/english/>

Hyogo venue: Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art

December 13, 2022 - February 12, 2023

Closed: Mondays

1-1-1 Wakinohama Kaigandori, Chuo-ku, Kobe, Hyogo 651-0073

Inquiries: (+81)078-262-1011

Website: <https://www.artm.pref.hyogo.jp/>

Organized by: The National Art Center, Tokyo; Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art;

The Asahi Shimbun; Japan Arts Council; Agency for Cultural Affairs

With the cooperation of: SCAI THE BATHHOUSE

Exhibition website: <https://LeeUFan.exhibit.jp/english>

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THE NATIONAL ART CENTER, TOKYO

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FY 2022 Japan Cultural Expo Project