



Artspace



ARTSPACE PROJECT WALL

Yoonmi Nam: Blizz

H&R Block Artspace

Kansas City Art Institute

BLIZZ

As an individual and an artist, Yoonmi Nam defies neat, clear-cut classification. Born in Seoul, South Korea, Nam has studied in Korea, Canada, the US, and Japan, and is currently a professor of printmaking at the University of Kansas; yet she does not think of herself as an immigrant. Reflecting her identity as a transnational creative, her artwork effectively juxtaposes seemingly disparate elements, both formal and conceptual, in dynamic, dialogic engagement.

Part of an ongoing series of lithographs entitled *Arranged Flowers* which began in 2012, *Blizz* (2018), depicts cut flowers arranged in disposable, single-use containers. The images featured in this series, including *Blizz*, are replete with apparent, unresolved dualities: east/west, traditional/contemporary, permanent/ephemeral, natural/manufacture; that reflect the hybridity of Asian American experiences and challenge the viewer to consider the dynamism of contemporary human existence.

Blizz and similar works convey the artist's interest in how we come to understand the world through how it is depicted. Commenting on her choice of subject matter, Nam explains, "I am attracted to the beauty, irony, and artistry of flower arrangements. The flowers, once cut from their roots, have only a short remaining time to live and then will quickly wither and die. But before they do, they are elegantly and elaborately arranged, as if time will stand still for them."¹ This ephemerality is particularly evident through the peony flowers featured in *Blizz*, given the floral species' acute sensitivity to the

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July 2022

End Notes

¹ Yoonmi Nam. “Arranged Flowers & the Four Seasons: Prints Inspired by East Asian Still Life Traditions,” 2021 International Mokuhanga Conference. Nara, Japan.

² Ibid. p. 4.

³ Nam, Yoonmi. Interview. Conducted by Eleanor Lim-Midyett June 10, 2022.

⁴ Ibid., p. 2.



Yoonmi Nam is a celebrated artist and professor of printmaking at the University of Kansas. Born in Seoul, South Korea, Nam received her MFA degree from the Rhode Island School of Design and BFA degree from Hong-Ik University in Seoul, Korea. Her work is in the collections of the Rhode Island School of Design Museum, RI; Spencer Museum of Art, KS; and the Hawai'i State Art Museum, HI; among others, and she has shown work in over 20 solo exhibitions and 180 group exhibitions both nationally and internationally.

Eleanor Lim-Midyett, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Liberal Arts at the Kansas City Art Institute, is an accomplished scholar in the field of Chinese humanities and culture. Lim-Midyett's deepening interest in contemporary artists and the vibrant regional art ecosystem has led to dynamic partnerships and the creation of public programs and meaningful conversations about contemporary art and culture. She received a B.A. degree in English literature from Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., and earned M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in East Asian languages and literature with a Concentration in Modern Chinese Fiction from Yale University.

Cover Image

Blixxx, 2018, lithograph; courtesy of the artist and the H&R Block Artspace; Yoonmi Nam photo by Alec Smith; Eleanor Lim-Midyett photo courtesy of KCAI.



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