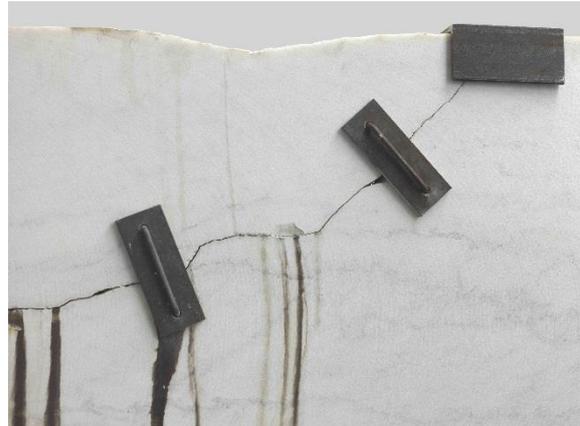


Michael Joo*Radiohalo*

Blain|Southern
4 Hanover Square
London, W1S 1BP

10 February – 9 April 2016
Private View: 9 April 6 – 8pm



Michael Joo, *Prologue (Montclair Danby Vein Cut)*, 2014-2015
Courtesy of the artist and Blain|Southern

Blain|Southern announces *Radiohalo*, a major solo exhibition of new artworks by acclaimed New York-based artist Michael Joo. A conceptual artist who works across a variety of media, Joo is interested in themes of energy, nature, technology, history and perception, which he explores through narratives of places, people and objects.

His non-linear, almost cyclical approach results in work that is a documentation of process. Whether chemically treated, silver-coated or photo-based, Joo uses several recurring methodologies, and has been working with silver nitrate for over a decade. His interest lies in the way the human eye perceives the compound but also in the physical, performative nature of its application to other materials. Recently, by combining the chemical with a sensitised epoxy ink, Joo has created a new series of 'caloric paintings', several of which are included in the exhibition.

The 'caloric paintings' pick up a consistent thread from earlier works, such as *The Saltiness of Greatness* (1992), where Joo meticulously calculated the amount of energy that historical figures consumed during a lifetime. Here he gauges the number of calories individuals would expend performing various actions. Combining a range of techniques associated with painting, photography, print-making and sculpture, the caloric values are transferred to canvas. By assigning a numerical value to a quantifiable action, the artist questions if there is any significance in this method of categorisation.

Standing at three metres, a marble slab mounted on a steel frame, *Prologue (Montclair Danby Vein Cut)* (2014-2015), is an imposing new sculpture. It continues the artist's interest in Cameron's Line, a tectonic boundary in the US defined by a subterranean belt of marble. The sculpture acts like a billboard or marker, in which a landscape of time, compression and process is reflected in the strata that run through it. Treated with silver nitrate on one side, the refractive surface works as an alternate plane that provides a different perspective, a window to elsewhere – creating a dialectic which is both spatial and temporal.

Throughout the exhibition, Joo demonstrates how acts of creation, life and energy thrive at borders and intersections. A group of sculptures cast from endangered cranes' legs speak further of his meditations on boundaries, whether geological, physical or socially constructed. The sculptures have been used by the artist to make marks on the gallery wall by dragging their graphite embedded legs down its length. The marks' fleeting physicality relate to the fragility of a population living in politically contested territory, not bound by borders defined by human agency; and how the incursion of physical space is defined in contemporary culture.

The exhibition is accompanied by a comprehensive 120 page publication detailing Joo's recent significant, ongoing bodies of work. It includes an essay by Miwon Kwon, Professor & Chair of Art History at UCLA and a conversation between Michael Joo and artist Julie Mehretu, alongside whom he exhibited at Sharjah Biennale 2015. Further solo exhibitions in 2016 include the Smithsonian, Washington, DC and SCAD Museum of Art, Savannah, Georgia. Joo's work will also be part of EVA International - Ireland's Biennial of Contemporary Art which opens on 16 April 2016.

In 2001 Joo represented South Korea at the 49th Venice Biennale together with Do-Ho-Suh. He has participated in numerous international biennial exhibitions and in 2006, was awarded both the grand prize of the 6th Gwangju Biennale, Seoul; and the United States Artists Fellowship, which recognises America's most accomplished and innovative artists. His work is in numerous public and private collections, including FNAC, Paris; Guggenheim Museum, New York; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Samsung Centre for Art and Culture, Seoul and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

For further information on the exhibition, please contact Laura Callendar at Blain|Southern

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Notes to Editors:

About Blain|Southern

Blain|Southern is a contemporary and modern art gallery based in London and Berlin. The gallery represents an international roster of contemporary artists and is the world-wide representative of The Estate of Lynn Chadwick.

The gallery's recent exhibitions include Ali Banisadr, Abdoulaye Konate, Nasan Tur, Francesco Clemente, Francois Morellet, Wim Wenders, Kishio Suga and Bill Viola.