

Hong Kong

ARTFORUM

Margaret Lee

DUDELL'S

1 Duddell Street, Central, Level 3, Shanghai Tang Mansion

March 21–June 21

Margaret Lee's first solo show in Asia doubles as the Dallas Museum of Art's inaugural off-site project. The commissioned series encompasses photography, painting, drawing, and sculpture, and reflects the artist's interest in challenging historic structures of identity and power. Ten watercolors in *Untitled* (all works 2016), in particular, reveal a fascination with calligraphic gesture and distillation of form that is traditionally linked to Western male artists such as Jackson Pollock and Yves Klein. Lee's works borrow from Abstract Expressionism and Minimalism and also rely on the concept of the readymade. They are a deliberate mix of high and low culture and the fine and decorative arts. Given the wide scope of Lee's preoccupations and the challenge of exhibiting in an unorthodox restaurant environment, the show is realized successfully with both focus and wit.

A sequence of cropped photographs, *Untitled (Seven Views)*, neatly summarize the project. They include images of a portrait of George Washington, part of a Jasper Johns painting, and a black-and-white detail of the shower in Lee's Dallas hotel room, a space with which the artist became obsessed. The first two are the only color images on view, in somewhat ironic deference to the nation's first president and to the great painter.

Who Do You Think You Are (Sink), a sculptural tableau, introduces motifs that recur throughout her conceptually concise exhibition. It consists of a large photograph of Brancusi's *Beginning of the World*, ca. 1920, printed on metal and displayed alongside a high-end bathroom sink. Inside the sink are a plaster-cast cabbage and eggplant—stand-ins for genitalia that comment on shame and the sanitization of sex, and what the artist calls "human-ness."



Margaret Lee, *W.D.U.T.U.R. #5*, 2016, photograph and acrylic paint, 28 x 42".

— Samantha Kuok Leese