

## *Distancing*

Kei Imazu, Juree Kim, Nosik Lim, Maria Taniguchi

Curated by Hannah Kim, Director of Exhibitions at Thaddaeus Ropac Seoul

24 February—2 May 2026  
Seoul Fort Hill



Kei Imazu, *Hearth and Wreck*, 2026.  
Oil on canvas. 200 × 135 cm (78.74 × 53.135 in)..  
© Kei Imazu. Photo: Jeon Byung Cheol.

*Distancing* brings together new works by four artists – **Kei Imazu, Juree Kim, Nosik Lim** and **Maria Taniguchi** – whose practices explore how images and matter come into focus over time. Since the opening of the gallery in 2021, Thaddaeus Ropac Seoul has sought to foster encounters between the Korean art scene and the wider international context – through exhibitions such as *Myths of Our Time* (2023) and *Nostalgics on Realities* (2024), which explored global contemporary sensibilities by presenting works created primarily by Korean artists. Extending this trajectory into a

broader dialogue across Asia, *Distancing* proposes a mode of looking that privileges distance and duration. Here, observing from afar and dwelling in stillness does not obscure perception, but recalibrates focus. Rather than resisting instantaneity, the exhibition traces the point at which sensation catches up with us: when that which escapes immediate grasp begins to settle through distance and time.

Across painting and sculpture, the artists on show approach this recalibration through distinct formal



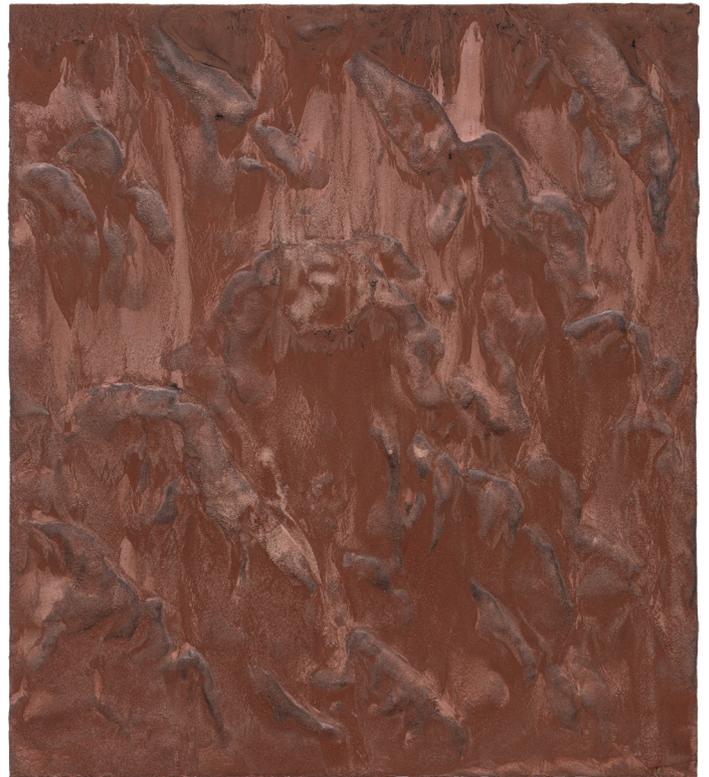
Maria Taniguchi, *Untitled*, 2025.  
Acrylic and pencil on canvas. 228 × 114 cm (89.76 × 44.88 in)..  
© Maria Taniguchi. Photo: Jeon Byung Cheol.

and material strategies – repetition, the slow transformation of clay, layered opacity and the juxtaposition of disparate image-worlds.

Encountered at the threshold of the exhibition, **Maria Taniguchi's** paintings capture this attitude in its most distilled form. Composed of repeated brick-like units, her canvases foreground the accumulation of time and form over any specific narrative by layering labour and bodily interventions onto the canvas. As the work builds, its surface shifts almost imperceptibly; fine irregularities, shallow ridges and slight misalignments register traces of the body and time in equal measure. With their consistent scale and format, and their minimally varied fields of colour, the works resist rapid reading, instead inviting a durational way of looking based on modularity and sequence.

Taniguchi has developed these brick paintings since 2008. While each canvas is unique, these works nonetheless seem to extend from one surface to

the next like a body unfolding – not yet fully formed and perpetually in progress. In *Untitled* (2025), time reveals itself in the everyday measure of repeated action, each brick a testament to an act carried out meticulously under the same conditions. Rather than operating as a metaphor for meditation or self-reflection, the work relies on a set of rules while refusing total control over outcomes: a stable framework open to chance and minute deviation. Repetition becomes a way of suspending prediction; of keeping meaning from immediate resolution and allowing perception to form at its own pace.



Juree Kim, *desert 07\_BdCpAC*, 2026.  
Brick dust, ceramic powder, ash, coal, mixed media.  
183 × 161 × 8cm (72.05 × 63.39 × 3.15 in)..  
© Juree Kim. Photo: Jeon Byung Cheol.

While Taniguchi's work attunes the viewer's body and gaze, **Juree Kim's** practice pushes this sensibility into the realm of materiality and physicality. Sculpted primarily with clay, Kim's works embody elemental cycles of creation, accumulation and disintegration. *Wet Matter\_202602* (2026) occupies the gallery's central space, functioning as a core to the exhibition. The work resists fixity, instead continually responding to the shifting light, temperature and humidity of its habitat. Kim has long used earth as her primary medium, proposing that the notions of creation and

disappearance, saturation and desiccation, operate within a single continuum rather than a dialectic. Fated to dissolve once the exhibition ends, the sculpture absorbs its surroundings.

While *Wet Matter\_202602* momentarily suspends earth in the present, Kim's painting series *desert* explores the processes that follow. As moisture drains away from the works, fissures appear; surfaces split; strata fracture and break. *desert* retains the inscriptions left by time, when fertile ground dries and cracks. It becomes a locus of return and transformation: how human traces fold back into the earth, changing form through cycles of use, collapse and sedimentation. Gathering urban remnants – discarded bricks and broken fragments of earth – Kim crushes, grinds and layers them anew.



Nosik Lim, *Yeoju - Landscape 49*, 2026.  
Oil on canvas. 250 × 205 cm (98.49 × 80.71 in).  
© Lim Nosik. Photo: Jeon Byung Cheol.

**Nosik Lim's** paintings conjure the elusive sensations encountered at the start of the exhibition. Corporeal and botanical forms do not appear in sharp relief; rather, they diffuse through the faint pink and blue pastel-hued canvas, lingering like afterimages of

memory. Lim's principal focus is the depiction of coexistence. After delineating his subjects, he builds a translucent layer of oil pastel onto the surface of the canvas. In this process, forms overlap and permeate one another, creating intimate juxtapositions. While Lim's earlier paintings remained softly blurred, these new works suggest a step closer to a sense of narrative, as forms begin to materialise with a stronger sense of presence, allowing new stories to emerge. Various elements press against and seep into one another on the canvas, maintaining a precarious balance between legibility and illegibility.

At the final turn of the exhibition, **Kei Imazu's** paintings carry the carefully calibrated distance of the preceding works into a different register – one that is shaped by time, history and the body. Imazu's images do not cohere into a single moment. They arrive, as uncanny, superimposed fragments extracted from disparate conditions and narratives. In *Hearth and Wreck* (2026), the image does not assert itself as a stable element. It drifts, overlaps and collects beneath the surface. Painting on a semi-translucent cotton support, Imazu leaves the canvas stretcher faintly visible as though to expose the work's internal scaffolding. In *She Who Treads* (2026), by contrast, the surface is fully opaque. Moving between these modalities, denoting erosion, dissolution and abrasion, Imazu's paintings ask how memory persists, materially, in the present. Her work keeps multiple temporalities active on a single surface.

Themes emerge, overlap and commingle through the exhibition, as viewers are invited not simply to encounter the works, but to consider the conditions under which the act of seeing takes place. *Distancing* considers the possibilities of a slowed state of perception, the residual sensations that remain long after an image has been 'understood', or indeed long before it coheres in the mind's eye. Together, the work of these four artists proposes a shift in the very experience of art, countering the contemporary desire for speed and instantaneity with perceptual encounters that require gradual processes of attunement, recalibration and recurrence.

## About the artist



**Kei Imazu** (b. 1980, Japan; lives and works in Indonesia) works across painting, sculpture, installation and digital processes, examining how images – circulating at high speed in the contemporary visual world – are reconfigured through history, mythology and mediation. Drawing on fragments gathered from disparate sources, she composes canvases through juxtaposition and layering, allowing multiple temporalities and narratives to remain active within a single pictorial field. In this way, she considers history not as a linear sequence of events, but as a stratified condition in which memory accumulates with the present. Mythic and folkloric motifs operate as contested images, re-read and re-situated under contemporary conditions.

Imazu recently presented the large-scale solo exhibition *The Sea is Barely Wrinkled* at Museum MACAN, Jakarta (2025), and has participated in exhibitions including the Bangkok Art Biennale (2024), documenta 15, Kassel (2022), the Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (2019), and the Yokohama Museum of Art (2019).



**Juree Kim** (b. 1980, Korea) works primarily with earth, developing time-based installations, sculptures and works on paper that follow the material's natural cycles from saturation to desiccation. In her practice, clay is approached less as a stable sculptural medium than as an unpredictable substance that shifts in response to its surrounding conditions. Through such sedimentary transformations, Kim considers how time becomes legible in matter. Grounded in an ongoing interest in changing environments, her work considers how first-hand experiences and geographic conditions manifest in material and form.

Kim has presented solo exhibitions at CAN Foundation, Seoul (2025), TINC, Seoul (2022) and SongEun Art Space, Seoul (2020), and has participated in exhibitions at the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea, Seoul (2026), the Philadelphia Museum of Art (2023), the National Gallery of Modern and Contemporary Art, Rome (2022) and Buk-Seoul Museum of Art, Seoul (2022).

## About the artist



**Nosik Lim** (b. 1989, Korea) builds paintings from incidents and sensations drawn from his surroundings, tracing relational states that emerge at the threshold between the visible and the barely perceptible. Working with oil pastel layered over painted images, he modulates the surface by softening edges and recalibrating distance – less through erasure than through a deliberate blurring of boundaries. Forms overlap and jostle against one another, sustaining a precarious balance that generates tension within the pictorial field. Lim positions the canvas as a site where external reality and internal perception converge.

Lim has presented solo exhibitions at Willing N' Dealing, Seoul (2025), Kumho Museum of Art, Seoul (2023) and Project Space Sarubia, Seoul (2023). He received the Heo Baek-ryeon Art Prize (Gwangju Culture & Arts Awards, 2025), was shortlisted among the final 20 artists for the 23rd SongEun Art Award (2023), and has been recognised as a SeMA Emerging Artist (2024), a Kumho Young Artist (2022) and an OCI Young Creatives artist (2015).



**Maria Taniguchi** (b. 1981, Philippines) works across painting, sculpture, video and installation, developing structures through repetition and the accumulation of labour. Her practice treats geometric frameworks not as fixed schemas but as operating matrices – stable systems that admit minute deviations over time. Placing the organisation of the surface at the centre of her practice, Taniguchi directs her attention to how an image is built rather than to narrative resolution. Repetition functions as method: forms emerge gradually through incremental action, allowing their processual and durational dimension to remain legible in the final work.

Taniguchi received the Hugo Boss Asia Art Award (2015), and recently presented the solo exhibition *maria taniguchi: body of work* at MCAD, Manila (2024). She has participated in exhibitions at Singapore Art Museum (2024), the 60th Venice Biennale (2024), KADIST, San Francisco (2024), Taipei Fine Arts Museum (2021) and the 12th Gwangju Biennale (2018).

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