



SUI PARK
GARDEN OF HUMANS

This catalogue coincides with *Sui Park: Garden of Humans*, an exhibition organized by The Art Gallery at Kingsborough Community College, CUNY. The exhibition was on view from March 9 - April 8, 2016.

The Art Gallery at Kingsborough Community College
City University of New York
Brian E. Hack, Gallery Director
Jose Arenas, Art Department Chair
www.kccgallery.org

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All images courtesy of Sui Park.

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Cover: Sui Park, *Presence* (detail), 2015. Cable ties, size varies.

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THE ART GALLERY AT KINGSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK



Sui Park

Sui Park is a New York-based artist and interior architect born in Seoul, Korea. She recently had a two-person solo exhibition at the Denise Bibro Fine Art Gallery in Chelsea, New York (October 2014), and has participated in over 30 group exhibitions, including the recent exhibition *Presence* at Governors Island Art Fair (2015).

Sui Park received a MDes in Interior Architecture at Rhode Island School of Design in 2013, and a BFA in Environmental Design at Maryland Institute College of Art in 2011. Sui Park also holds MFA and BFA degrees in Fiber Art from Ewha Womans University, Seoul, Korea.

The Art Gallery at Kingsborough Community College is delighted to present Sui Park's *Garden of Humans*. We invite viewers to learn more about her work from her website, www.suipark.com.

Left: Sui Park, *Blue Print*, 2014, cable ties, dimensions vary.
Photograph courtesy of the artist.

Forms in Flux: The Art of Sui Park

Inherent to all works of art is an underlying process of transformation, an alchemy-like transmutation of raw materials into aesthetic objects. Woven cotton and pestled pigments furnish the matter from which arise meticulously-painted masterpieces; quarried marble, itself metamorphosed by heat and pressure over millions of years, is painstakingly carved into soul-stirring statuary; and emulsion-coated paper is bathed in chemicals to reveal quickly-captured moments of photographic insight. Even conceptual art involves the transformation of ideas, altering our neural preconceptions in ways that fire our synapses in surprising directions. Born of transformation, art has in

turn the power to transform us by reshaping our view of the world and of our place within it.

The art of Sui Park exemplifies this transformative process. Her materials of choice—mass-produced plastic cable ties—are relatively innocuous utilitarian objects that serve their purpose, binding computer wires or power cords together, exceptionally well. Form follows function with a simplicity of design almost biological in its perfection. In the hands of Sui Park, however, these black and white ties are woven into biomorphic, cellular objects that transcend their intended use and belie their industrially-produced origins. Nature replaces, or at best co-exists with or responds to, the manufactured world. For instance, Park's *Mostly Cloudy* (2015, Fig. 1), included in the cur-

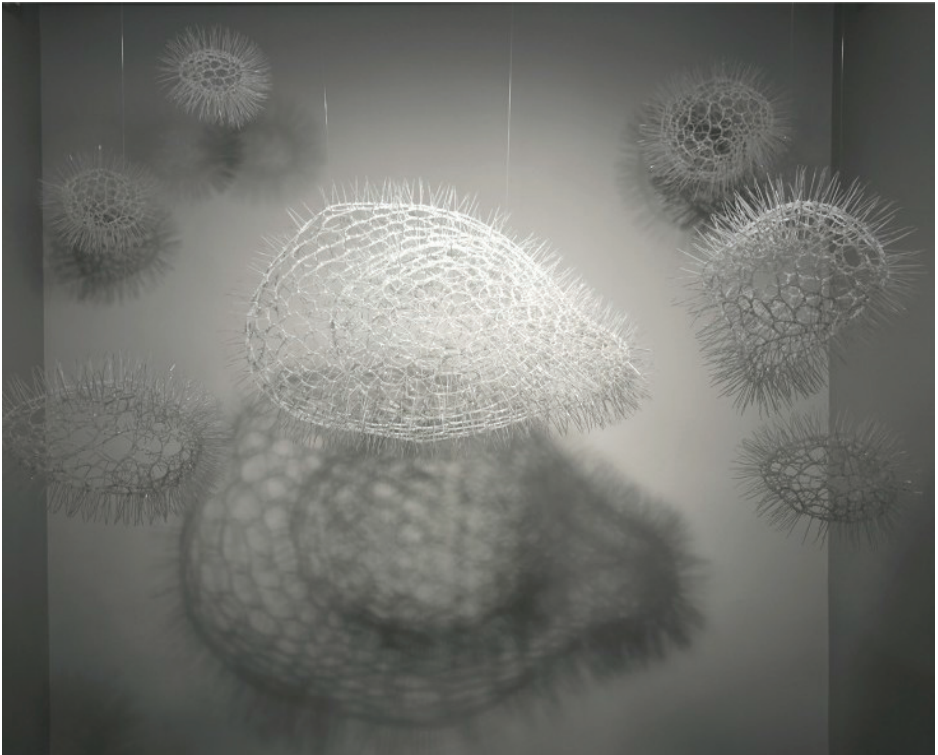


Fig. 1. Sui Park, *Mostly Cloudy*, 2015. Cable ties, dimensions vary. Installation view from Edison Price Lighting Gallery, Long Island City, New York. Photograph courtesy of the artist.

rent exhibition, is a sea of cellular forms that are neither in the *micro* realm of single-celled organisms nor in the *macro* realm of clouds, but are entities that hover, quite literally, in a spatial and metaphoric realm of their own.

Particularly striking is the dichotomy between the mass-produced material and the handcrafted result. Park has adapted basket weaving, one of the oldest of art practices (and one with a long tradition in Park's native Korea), for the Internet age. It should be mentioned that cable ties may have another connotation for the viewer—the zip ties used by law enforcement in demonstrations or public riots. Park's work, on the surface more poetic than political, nevertheless could be interpreted with these associations in mind. Even here, however, those connections are

quickly transformed into other, less oppressive and more meditative possibilities.

While likely unintentional, her sculptural objects evoke the illustrations of microscopic radiolaria and diatoms by the nineteenth-century German zoologist Ernst Heinrich Haeckel (1834-1919). Haeckel's artfully-composed mineral skeletons (Fig. 2), published in his popular *Kunstformen der Natur* (*Artforms in Nature*, 1899-1904), were bestowed with a decorative appearance that would influence a number of designers and architects of the art nouveau period. Haeckel's intent was not only to exhaustively document the rich variety of such organisms but also to suggest the inner spirit of living things; this unifying force was a main tenet of Monism, his quasi-scientific, quasi-spiritual philosophy that maintained

that all matter is eternally in flux. Sui Park's sculptures offer a similar hint at the transformation of matter, of the shift from the non-organic to the organic, from one designed purpose to another entirely different in scope and scale.

There is lyricism in this mutability of forms which speaks to our own purpose in the modern world. The transition from *Homo sapiens* to *Homo consumptor* has in many ways orphaned us from the appreciation and understanding of Nature; tethered to our devices, we often miss the many nuanced lessons of the natural world. As a reflection of, and response to, that world, art reminds us that we are not only in nature but also of it. We are ourselves in flux, ever in a state of transformation.

Brian E. Hack, Ph.D.
Gallery Director

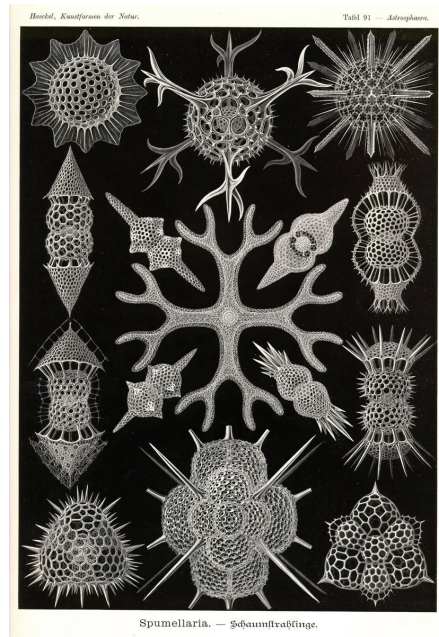


Fig. 2. Ernst Haeckel, *Spumellaria*, from *Kunstformen der Natur* (*Art Forms in Nature*), 1900.

Artist Statement

My work involves creating three-dimensional flexible, organic forms of a comfortable ambiance that are yet dynamic and possibly mystical or illusionary. They are an abstract representation of objects or concepts that recreates our surroundings. They can be interpreted in various ways, including landscapes, living organisms, social ideas or values, anything that we accept as given that they exist.

Garden of Humans attempts to introduce and visualize the wondrous beauty of our mother nature with mass-produced artificial materials, in particular cable ties. While visualizing nature with artificial materials may suggest irony, it adds to representing seemingly static yet dynamic mystical features of remarkable nature.

Sui Park

Exhibition Checklist

Flow

2016

Cable ties, dimensions vary.

Presence

2015

Cable ties, dimensions vary.

Mostly Cloudy

2015

Cable ties, dimensions vary.

Thought Bubbles

2014

Cable ties

Thought 1: 5' x 5.4' x 2'

Thought 2: 4.6' x 3.9' x 2'

Blue Print

2014

Cable ties, dimensions vary.

Her Contour

2014

Cable ties

15' x 8' x 1'

Wiggling Series

2014-2016

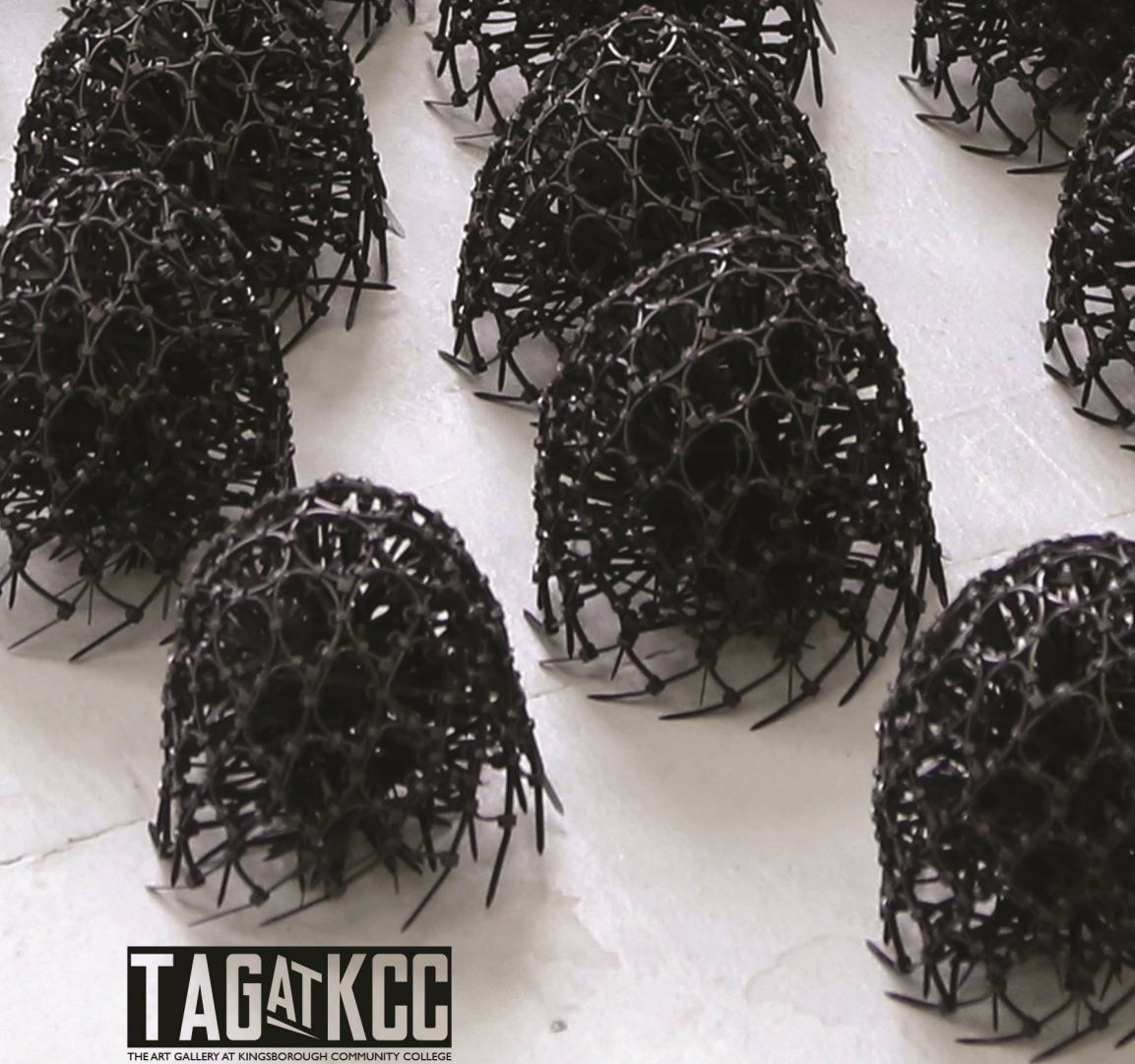
Cable ties, dimensions vary.

Small sumi ink drawings

2014, 2015, 2016

Approximately 100 pieces,

3 1/2" x 5"



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