

PRESS RELEASE

KIMSOOJA - *Thread Routes - Chapter III*

30 April – 13 June

Axel Vervoordt Gallery
Vlaeykensgang- Oude Koornmarkt 16
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OPENING: 30 APRIL, 6 to 9 PM, in presence of the artist

ARTIST TALK at M HKA: 30 APRIL, 7pm, auditorium (moderated by Johan Pas)



Axel Vervoordt Gallery is pleased to announce Kimsooja's first exhibition in our gallery in Antwerp presenting her most recent film and installation *Thread Routes - Chapter III*. This film and installation will make its Belgium premiere. The screening will be accompanied for the first time with a new experimental video that depicts the lightwaves of the film, as well as an installation of Indian block printing-table covers that the artist collected for this exhibition.

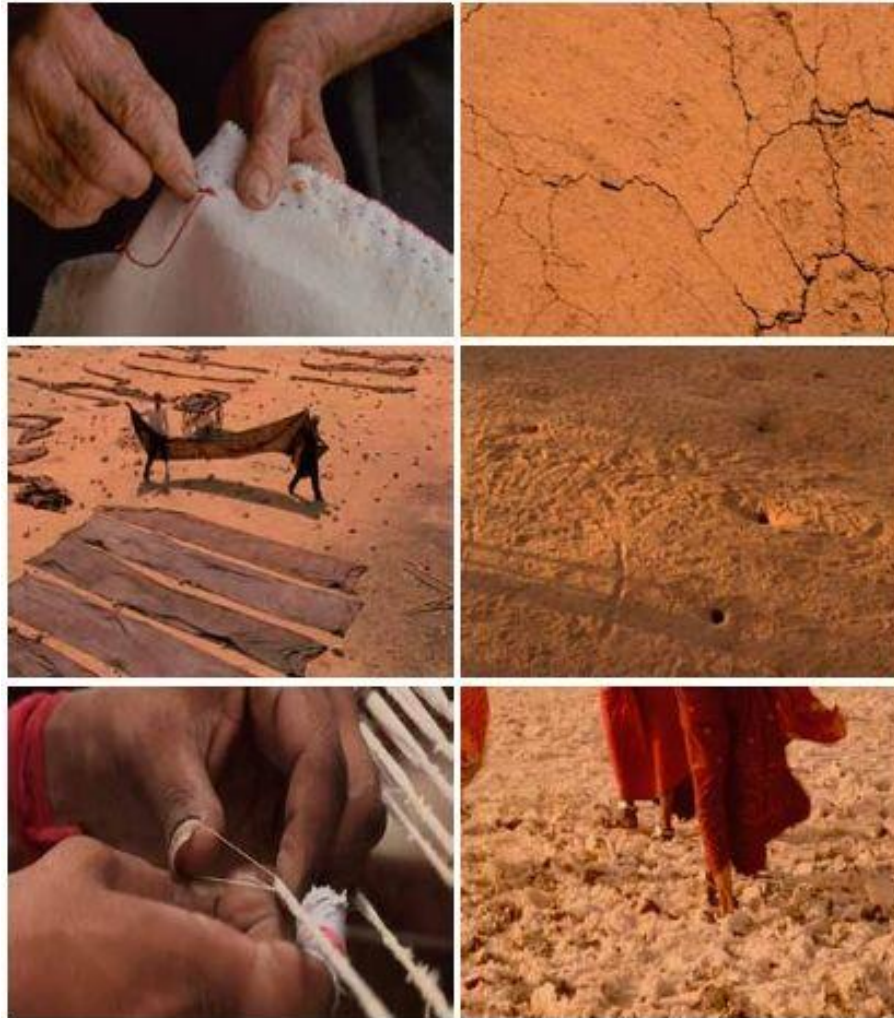
Thread Routes: Chapter III (2010–) is the third installment of the six-chapter film series produced by multidisciplinary conceptual artist Kimsooja (°1957, Daegu, Korea). The films were shot in different continents and reveal the artist gazing at the intimate link between each region's textile culture and its people, gender relations, architecture, nature and agriculture. These non-narrative films invite the viewer into a realm that explores the boundaries of poetry and visual anthropology.

Thread Routes: Chapter III was filmed in India in 2012. It features traditional dyeing, knitting, embroidery, block printing, and tattooing; the archeological sites and the temporary dwellings belonging to nomadic communities in the state of Gujarat; as well as two landmarks of Indian architecture: the Queen's Stepwell and the Modhera Sun Temple, near the city of Ahmedabad.

For this exhibition at Axel Vervoordt Gallery, Kimsooja has collected the under layers of the block print tables where Indian workers have repeatedly stamped patterns of indigo ink. These textiles bear the marks of repetitive labor and their patterns exposing an intricate layer of ink that ties to the artist's early experiments with painting. The intimate relationship between these acts of labor and the patterns of the fabrics parallels the carved stones of archeological sites filmed in *Thread Routes- Chapter III*, and also recall Kimsooja's previous laundry installations and film-work shot in Mumbai called "Mumbai: A Laundry Field." The sound track of the film's protagonists in the act of printing and stamping echoes throughout the installation, where the light data of the film is digitally woven in a new experimental video piece composed of spectral lightwaves.

Thread Routes reveals how the artist gazes at the world: unfolding visual patterns that intimately tie humans to their land. Kimsooja investigates questions relating to the human condition such as nomadism, migration, interpersonal relationships, and women's role in society. She also engages her audience with a reflection on the relations of aesthetics and global politics through a system of beliefs that defies mobility and the act of *making*. All these themes are present in her multidisciplinary art practice, which includes performance, video, photography, drawing, sculpture, and site-specific installations, that are all linked towards their relational use of light and sound.

Works in the exhibition



Thread Routes - Chapter III, 2012

16 mm film transferred to HD Format - 5.1 sound, 17:35

1/6 + 1AP





9 Indian block printing bed-covers (from Thread Routes – Chapter III), 2012
Ink on cotton
Variable sizes (ca. 300 x 120 cm)

Biography

Kimsooja (1957-) is an internationally-acclaimed conceptual and multidisciplinary artist. She was born in Daegu, Korea, a city known for its textile industry. She currently lives and works in New York.

After studying painting in Seoul, she had a residency at a lithography studio at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-arts in Paris(1984-1985) and at P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center in New York (1992-1993). In the early 1980s her artistic practice started focusing on sewn work, which later evolved into the performance *A Needle Woman* in 1999. As a continuation of her previous works, *Thread Routes* is an epic poem and performance that weaves humanity, nature, and cosmogony.

Since her first solo exhibition in Seoul (1988), Kimsooja's work has been shown in numerous venues and museums around the world, including solo exhibitions at P.S.1/ MOMA in New York; the Plateau, Samsung Museum of Art, Seoul; the Hirshhorn Museum, Washington D.C; Kunsthalle Bern; Kunsthalle Wien; Kunstmuseum Lichtenstein; the Contemporary Art Museum, Lyon; Museum Kunstpalast Düsseldorf; PAC, Milan; The National Museum of Contemporary Art, Athens; the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia in Madrid; The National Museum of Contemporary Art, Korea; and most recently the Vancouver Art Gallery and most recently at The Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao. Kimsooja represented Korea at the 24th Sao Paulo Biennale and the Korean Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale. She also participated in the 48th, 49th, 51st, and 52rd Venice Biennale and over thirty major international biennials and triennials.

Acclaim and awards for her work include *Best Show of the Year 2000* for Kimsooja-*A Needle Woman Who Weaves the World*, Plateau Samsung Museum of Art in Seoul; Artist of the American Art Award, granted by the Whitney Museum of American Art in 2002; Anonymous Was A Woman Foundation Award, in 2002; the Visual Arts Grant from New York's Foundation for Contemporary Art in 2007; and the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship in 2014, and most recently the Ho-Am Prize given by The Ho-Am Samsung Foundation in 2015.

Kimsooja at the Venice Biennial in 2013



In 2013, Kimsooja was invited to represent the Republic of Korea at the Venice Biennial. The exhibition was entitled *To Breathe: Bottari* and was curated by Seungduk Kim.

Kimsooja wrapped the metal skeleton of the Korean pavilion in several skins to shape it into a consistent body, a large scale experiential generator – ‘bottari’ means ‘bundle’ in Korean. Diffraction grating films covered the glass windows (walls and roof) and aluminium mirror panels were stuck on the floor and fixed to the ceiling. As a result, a translucent web of light diffracted into rainbow colours speeded up through an infinity of reflections. *“I tried to transform the entire pavilion into ‘A Bottari of Light and Sound, Darkness and Soundlessness’ that inhales and exhales, as if the architecture itself were my body. (...) The light waves and the sound waves together with my humming and the inhaling and exhaling of my own breath, question the moment of life and death.”* An anechoic chamber occupied the brick pavilion on the South side, “a counterpoint of the ‘unknown’ and ‘unseen’ for the visual knowledge of infinite reflection in the main space”.

