

YA-CHU KANG

Dirt Carpet No.15

April 24 – April 25, 2023

VIP preview: Monday, April 24, 2 – 6 pm

Interactive event reception: Tuesday, April 25, 10:30 am – 1 pm

THE IW Gallery, Brooklyn, New York

THE IW GALLERY is excited to announce its first artist in residence, **Ya-chu Kang (Taipei, Taiwan)**, a multidisciplinary mix-media artist. With **Dirt Carpet**, Kang presents the latest iteration of her Cotton Research Project Chapter 6 - White Gold. Initially making its debut as "Chapter 1 - Everything about Cotton is about Cotton," at her 2018 MOCA Taipei survey exhibition, the series of historical facts and stories that span multiple centuries represents the cotton industry and the local culture associated with cotton, with different elements crossing each other in time and space.

The important history that Kang points to in White Gold is reflectively. In 1793, Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin, which quickly separated cotton seeds and enhanced production efficiency. Thereafter, the southern United States became a cotton-growing kingdom. A large number of slaves were brought from Africa, until the outbreak of the Civil War. In this context, using ginning as a metaphor of separating of fiber and seeds evokes the concept of international relations between Taiwan, China, and the USA.

In this exhibition, White Gold recurs as a key throughout the new Dirt Carpet. Its patterns are arranged with the forms of seeds, ginning machine, a shuttle, transportation, a metal steel frame, and other shapes. Those images are responding to each other, as the border and boundary, the soft cotton fiber and the smoke and Pacific Ocean, the metal structures on the sand beach in Kinmen toward to mainland China, etc. The white sand material used in the work echoes the idea of white cotton, the border of land and sea, freedom, and ethnicity. Textile as a global language: cotton was grown around the world, and textile represents the connection and relationship between cities, countries, and generations. White Gold reveals itself as a landscape of the cotton empire for the unveiling, reckoning with, and dissecting of globalization and free trade.

During the Interactive event of the "Dirt Carpet", the artist will invite audience members to go into the carpet area. The intervention of visitors to tread on the carpet will change the original order of the pattern, while the process of it can respond to the cycle of the universe and the circle of life. "Dirt Carpet", which has been exhibited in Thailand, Turkey, Portugal, Britain, Hong Kong, Poland, and Taiwan, is presented in distinctive patterns and powdery materials based on cultural differences and various concepts researched by the artist. Through the exhibition, the artist intends not only to reveal both the implication of the creation and visual expression, but, also, to engage the audience in a new experience.

The residency presentation is supported by the cultural exchange project between Siao-Long Cultural Park, Taiwan and COPE NYC, USA.

ARTIST BIO

Ya-chu Kang (b.1980, Taipei, Taiwan) is a multidisciplinary artist working with various media. Her practice focuses on questioning the circumstances of the relationship between human, natural and social issues. Kang conducts her art and research base on textile cultural history and contemporary social behavioral appearance.

She discusses the relationship between workmanship skill and physical labour, life condition and migration possibility, economic trade, and social structure. How does the modernity today influence tradition, economy systemic, and natural environment? Her travel and residency experience have implicitly shaped her perception. The themes often reflect on the boundary, life, and process. This allows her to explore the possibilities of self-awareness and sustainability states within each project. Her production is multimedia, encompassing textiles, painting, photography and video that result in sculpture installation, site-specific environmental art and cultural research projects.

Kang is a recipient of 2007 Freeman Fellowship Program of Vermont Studio Center in USA, 2008 Asian Cultural Council Fellowship Program, 2014 Lung Yingtai Cultural Foundation Fellowship Program and various AIR Fellowship for her cultural research traveling around the world. She has participated with various community public projects and art education. She is currently researching textile culture in many locations and countries. She has shown nationally and internationally since 2006, in Japan, Europe, North America and South Asia, and has researched textile culture in Japan, Peru, Thailand, and India. Her work is held in Museum collections including Jyvaskyla Art Museum, Taiwan Art Bank as well as private collections. She had published the books called "Textile Map - 1, 2 and 3".

IN OCTOBER 2021, DIRECTOR VIDA SABBAGHI FOUNDED THE IW GALLERY, INSPIRED BY COPE NYC'S 'AN INCLUSIVE WORLD PROJECT'. IT OPERATES AS A PARTNERSHIP GALLERY WORKING WITH LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CREATIVES AROUND THE WORLD.
