



Light Architect

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Korean-born artist Jeongmoon Choi challenges what the two-dimensionality of lines by creating three-dimensional space using glowing thread. In the process, Choi builds surreal worlds built on geometrical light installations.

As a child, Choi had always been drawn to creating and painting, and pursued the medium single-mindedly taking up painting for both her Bachelor's and Master's degree in Fine Art at Sung-Shin University. But only when she moved to Germany did she discover a different kind of canvas and paint in the form of UV light and space. "UV Light brings the spaces in a constant change of inside and outside in relation to each other and shows the paradoxical dual nature of space perception," says the artist.

Choi first began to incorporate thread onto canvas, creating intricate patterns, while at the same time giving depth to a piece. Eventually, her experiments transcended the canvas and expanded into entire rooms that immersed the visitor into a strangely digital-like world, handmade by Choi. Glowing threads refract from corners and bounce off the ceiling, like multiple laser beams fired off at once. The result? Illusion realized.

Below, now-full time artist Choi tells Surface Asia about the jobs she took on to support her art, her influences and where she sees her work moving in the future.

How did you discover art making?

I was always creating and painting from when I was a child. My environment and my family soon realized my passion and supported me. It was always clear to me that I would become an artist.

When did you realise that that's what you were going to pursue for the rest of your life?

There was a phase in my life when I was not sure if I could carry on with my art. Getting over that phase was what created even more certainty within myself to pursue a career as an artist.

Did your art always support you?

My art could not support me from the start, so I always had to have jobs on the side. I used to work as an art instructor, tour guide, translator and even had part time jobs in museums. At the moment I am in the fortunate situation to be able to full-time develop my artwork.

How do visitors usually react to your rooms of light?

Visitors are initially confused; at the first look of the room they lose orientation. After a moment, they are based, and try to find all offered perspectives and experiences. Oftentimes the visitors are put in a meditative state, and feel very relaxed and at peace. They tend to spend a long time in the room within the installation, naturally changing perspectives, thus interacting with it from many angles. This is a common reaction from the viewer, and this is most interesting to me.

Where do you do most of your work?

My working time is divided evenly between computer, atelier and on site.

Who influences or inspires you?

I like to think of myself as an individual artist without many influences, but of course some relations to other artists' works are apparent, though not intended. For instance, I like Fred Sandback's work. Our works have many similarities: he built minimalistic sculptures with thread and I am creating free drawings in space with thread. And as Sandback once described his work also applies to mine: "...a drawing or a sculpture which one can inhabit".

In the future, what projects would you still like to tackle?

I am fascinated by the idea of also developing installations in exterior space, exploring the possibilities of public installations.

What do you think are the biggest lessons you've learned while artmaking?

Follow your inspiration, develop your vision, never give up and most importantly: enjoy it!

Choi's latest public installation, "lines up . a recollection" is on view in at alternative art space MMX in Berlin until February 28. Find more of her work at jeongmoon.de/de/index.html