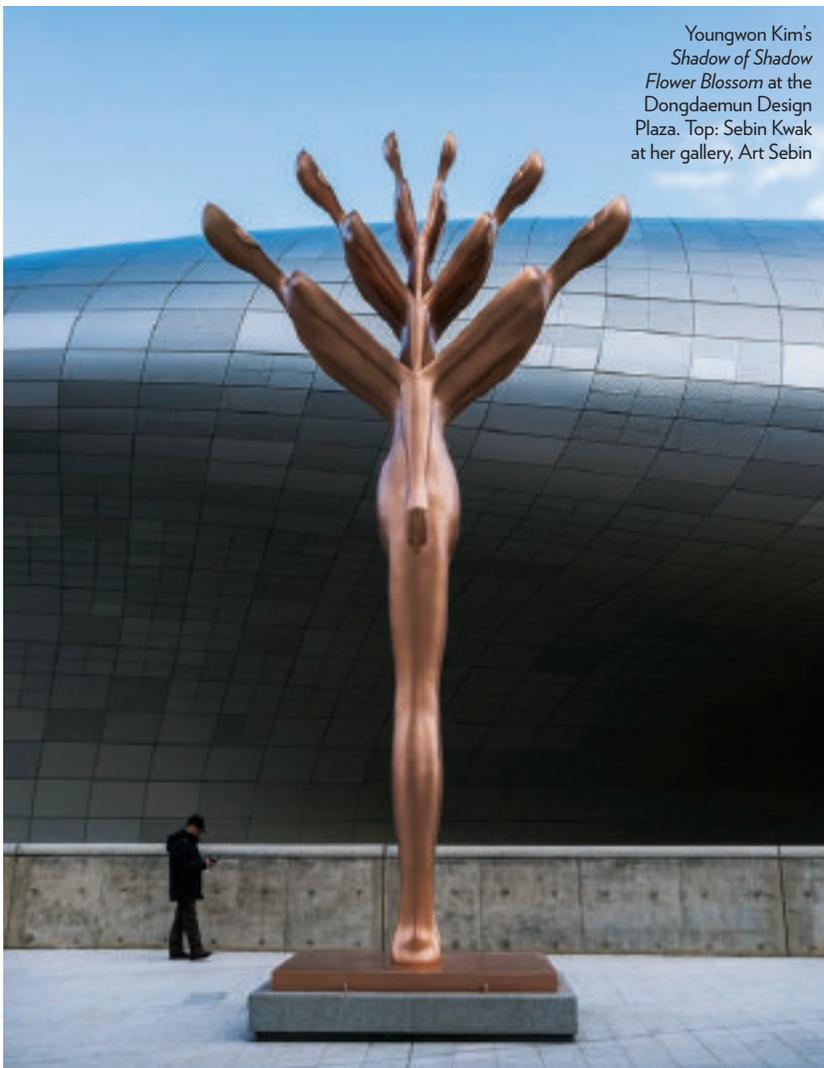


대중을 위한 미술



(ART FOR THE PEOPLE)

“There’s too much emphasis on personal connections and academic pedigrees in Korea’s art world,” says Sebin Kwak. The gallerist bucked convention when she chose to steer clear of fashionable areas like Bukchon, opting instead to open Art Sebin in a former camping equipment store at the entrance of Bukhansan National Park. Here, in her eight-month-old gallery, the native Seoulite champions homegrown artists such as Young-Jin Choi, whose photographs portray the otherworldly beauty of western Korea and the changing skyline of Seoul.



Youngwon Kim's *Shadow of Shadow Flower Blossom* at the Dongdaemun Design Plaza. Top: Sebin Kwak at her gallery, Art Sebin

“Art shouldn’t be limited to the insiders,” Kwak says. “You don’t stay on a pedestal. You go where the people are.”

Her white-walled glass box has become an improbable attraction in the foothills of the city’s premier national park, with its Buddhist temples and panoramic views. But the idea seems to have caught on: After a coffee shop next door closed, another art gallery took its

“ART SHOULDN’T BE LIMITED TO THE INSIDERS.”

place, laying the foundations for what is growing into a miniature cultural district.

Seoul’s art world used to be the domain of the chaebol, billionaire conglomerates like Hyundai, who endowed prestige projects with large sums of money. Today, the buzziest work is being done at upstart institutions like Art Sebin and the artist compound Mullae-dong.

This popularization comes at a time when South Korean art is finally getting its due on the world stage. Aside from acclaimed installation artists such as Do Ho Suh and Haegue Yang, dealers have seen a surge in the popularity of Dansaekhwa, or monochrome paintings. This genre from the 1970s has been rediscovered at auctions, with veteran artists like Cho Yong-Ik suddenly exhibiting in international galleries. >