

KDK(Dokyun Kim)

Heekyung Kim

KDK's recent series, *S.F.* centers on an "urban architecture" motif where the artist found abstract beauty in the strict and minimal modern architecture subjects. The style of objectivism photography serves as an effective means of artistic expression and depiction of the artist. Virtual reality, deadpan aesthetic and abstraction are all features of KDK's works. The impressions of virtual reality that appear in the works come not only from the impressions of the iron and glass surface of modern edifices but also from computer generated image manipulation. KDK's works are very artificial type of photography. Even though we stand in front of his works and see detailed images, it is hard to discern whether the image is real or computer generated or if the space itself exists or is imaginary. Moreover, while the artist takes photographs of urban architecture, he attempts to do so with a completely neutral attitude to distance himself and his influences from the object. The simple contrasts between light and dark or the repeated grids on the outer wall of minimalist buildings all work to create the abstraction and are what make the German style different from plain representation of architectural images.

Above all, the images are related to the geometric beauty discovered from urban architecture. While his works do use modern structure as its subject, the images focus more on the hard edges and color abstractions. The interior and exterior of the architectures all lose their individuality as structures and can be identified as patterns. The artist chooses an angle which is more "pictorial" amongst the variable angles found in architecture and takes this angle to compose the work. The work, produced in this way, is closer to a color image that shows composition and pattern of the space rather than traditional architectural photography.

From his three black and white series of Korean tombs to the color image revelations of the beautiful geometric colors of minimalist buildings and images capturing the essence of speed, the artist's works are diverse. His work is rooted in traditional Korean culture yet also combines with the features of the Dusseldorf style of photography. The distinctive features of the two countries and the experiences he acquires in these places are reflected in images of the architectural pieces and other subjects.

His recent works show the similarities and distinctions that co-exist between KDK's work and the photographic works spawned from the "Becher school." Points in common with the "Becher school" are the concepts of typology and serial photos that take objects of contemporary society and culture positioning them in a neutral way. Otherwise, the point in distinction between his works and the works of the Bechers is his use of architectural edifices, especially the minimal

shapes and design of modern architecture. The Bechers were also strict in their use of daylight and neutral facades, whereas the artist recently seems to be moving away from the purely neutral themes in his recent works and differs in his use of light. The artist focuses on specific portion of the structure so the viewer is unable to presume the whole structure. Moreover, these works were taken at night when the natural light has all but disappeared. Works of KDK are lit not from the light of the sun but by the illumination emanating from the insides and outsides of structures. The artist's photographs taken under this artificial light can be seen unfamiliar at first yet soon the viewer is drawn to their beautiful colors and abstractions getting lost in some point between reality and fiction.