

PRESS RELEASE



# JOSEPH KIEFFER *TANJI*

Joseph Kieffer, excerpt from the visual archive of the artist-in-residence, Seoul, 2022 © Courtesy of the artist

EXHIBITION | 01.10.22—11.12.22 | OPENING: 30.09.22 > 18:30

# JOSEPH KIEFFER

## TANJI



Joseph Kieffer, excerpt from the visual archive of the artist-in-residency, Seoul, 2022 © Courtesy of the artist

## About the exhibition

As part of his artist residency at SeMA NANJI in Seoul, Joseph Kieffer attentively observed and explored his new work environment. Between Dongdaemun Market, the business district and the historical centre, he collected materials, shapes, colours and images that inspired him and formed his first Korean impressions.

Among the urban, social and cultural phenomena he discovered, Kieffer was struck above all by the country's urban planning and the density of the tanji, the modern tower blocks characteristic of Korean cities. From the 1960s onwards, *apate tanji*, or apartment complexes (apate being a Korean transcription of the English word 'apartment' and tanji meaning 'surrounded land'), mostly located in the areas between the city centre and the mountains, were developed at a large scale in response to the industrial growth and demographic expansion of the country.

Kieffer has appropriated these functional infrastructures, changing their status and 'softening' them up by transforming them into sculptures made of multicoloured pearls that can be activated with music.

Drawing on han and jeong, two concepts specific to Korean culture that could be likened to the Western ideas of melancholy and benevolence, Kieffer describes the ambivalence and contradictions of a society that oscillates between tradition and modernity, pain and resilience.

This exhibition brings together the artist's research and the works initiated during his residency: a series of watercolours, two automatons as well as a new 'object-sculpture for dancing' and a video of its performative display in the streets of Seoul in the company of Korean musicians and dancers.

By playing with scale and balance, the artist creates a poetic vision of urban chaos that bears witness to a megalopolis in constant change.

# About the artist's practice

Joseph Kieffer is an interdisciplinary artist who explores materials and manufacturing processes, transforming and manipulating objects in order to release their narrative potential.

From sculpture and performance to drawing and dance, he uses humour and poetry to capture the technical or psychological mechanisms that human beings activate in their daily lives. More specifically, his projects address the notion of interaction through the experience of built spaces, the human body and the environment.

Kieffer also assumes the role of a 'choreographer of objects' and collaborates with theatre companies, dancers and musicians to bring his sculptures to life. The forms he creates engage spectators in micro-events and new experiences that elude traditional artistic categories.

## Biography

Joseph Kieffer (b. 1982) lives and works in Strasbourg. A graduate from the Haute École des Arts du Rhin in 2005 (Art-Object Department), he is also a founding member of the artists' studio La Semencerie in Strasbourg. He has benefited from several artist residencies, notably at Œil de Poisson and the Maison des Métiers d'Arts in Quebec City (Canada) in 2014 and at Wiesenstraße 29 eG in Berlin in 2015, the latter thanks to the support of the CEAAC. His works have been presented among others at the TJP (Centre Dramatique National, Strasbourg-Grand Est) as part of the Inact Festival and the Festival des Giboulées - Biennale Internationale Corps-Objet-Image, as well as in galleries in France, the Czech Republic and Canada. He also frequently works with school classes.

[www.instagram.com/kieffer.joseph/](https://www.instagram.com/kieffer.joseph/)  
[www.josephkieffer.com](http://www.josephkieffer.com)



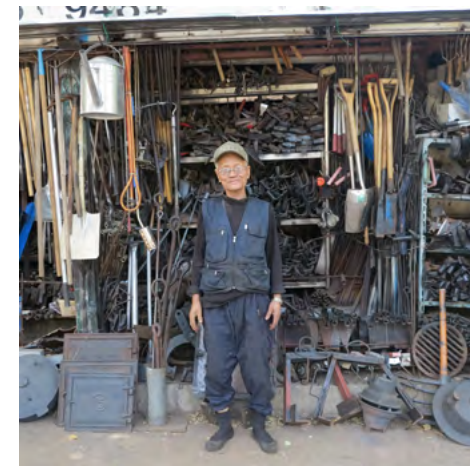
# Residencies program Strasbourg <> Seoul

This residency is organised in partnership with SeMA NANJI RESIDENCY, a residency program run by the Seoul Museum of Art (SeMA).

In the frame of this partnership, a Korean visual artist and a French visual artist benefit from a three-month residency. French laureates are hosted by SeMA in Seoul, while Korean grantees are hosted by the CEAAC in Strasbourg.

Joseph Kieffer and Sun Choi are the two laureates of these exchanges in 2022.

SeMA  
NANJI RESIDENCY



Previous page (from top to bottom and from left to right):

Joseph Kieffer, *La maison qui explose*, 2009, photo: Marie Prunier  
Joseph Kieffer dans son atelier de la Semencerie, 2021, photo: CEAAC  
Joseph Kieffer, *Plancton plastique*, 2020, photo: Naohiro Ninomiya

On the right:

Joseph Kieffer, excerpts from the visual archive of the artist-in-residence, Seoul, 2022.  
© Courtesy of the artist

## Informations & contacts



CEAAC  
Centre Européen  
d'Actions Artistiques  
Contemporaines

7 rue de l'Abreuvoir  
F-67000 Strasbourg  
+33 (0)3 88 25 69 70  
www.ceaac.org

Wed–Sun: 2pm > 6pm  
(except on public holidays)  
Free entrance

- Guided tours and school  
groups welcome  
by appointment:  
Gérald Wagner,  
public@ceaac.org

- Press relations:  
Anne Ponsin  
communication@ceaac.org

## The CEAAC

Founded in 1987, the Centre européen d'actions artistiques contemporaines (CEAAC) aims to support, produce and promote contemporary creation for all audiences. Since 1995, it has been housed in the former Neunreiter glassware and porcelain store, an Art Nouveau building in the heart of the historic Krutenau district in Strasbourg. The CEAAC is a unique place for exhibitions and experimental practices, whose artistic and cultural events testify to the wealth and diversity of the regional, national and international contemporary art scene. Since 2001, it has also been running a far-reaching international exchange and residency programme with German, Hungarian, Czech, Canadian and Korean institutions.

After more than 30 years of activity, the CEAAC has arrived at a turning point in its history. Building on its vast experience and its privileged location within the university district of a city that is both one of the four official European capitals and the capital of the Grand Est Region (5.5 million inhabitants), the CEAAC has renewed its Board of Directors in November 2020. The Board is chaired by Anne Wachsmann Guigon, barrister and President of the Linklaters Foundation.

In September 2021, Alice Motard was named the new Director of the CEAAC. Her artistic and cultural vision aims to strengthen the European character of the CEAAC while working towards meeting the requirements to obtain certification as a Contemporary Art Centre of National Interest (C.A.C.I.N.). Her project for the future art centre pursues two lines of artistic research: on the one hand, a reflection on the modes of production, reproduction and circulation of images with regard to the history of Alsace as one of the birthplaces of the printing industry; on the other hand, an exploration of vernacular, local and popular knowledge and knowhow.

The CEAAC is an association under the local law of 1908 and benefits from the support of the Grand Est Region, the City of Strasbourg, the DRAC Grand Est and the European Collectivity of Alsace. The CEAAC is also part of the Plan d'Est and Arts en résidence networks.

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