

Jong Sook Kang

*Tong-In Gallery
Seoul, South Korea*

Jong Sook Kang's work is united conceptually by the Korean expatriate's enthusiasm for her adopted home. The stylized elements in the work celebrate the city while acknowledging its diversity. In terms of the immigrant's vision, her most striking and frankly aspirational works represent the riches available to us all in America. Frequently, her works offer a Modernist take with stark horizontal and vertical lines, softened by their rounded forms.

Uniformly apple-shaped, each work is composed of dots, lines and planes, harmoniously incorporating a multiple dimensionality. The apples varying in shape and color are intermingled, representing an idiosyncratic cityscape. Her tableaux are evocative enough that they come to life as we effortlessly project ourselves into them. Less grandiose and, as such, more touching is a series of forms that make up the population of the artist's dream city. With these, Kang shows her mastery of metaphor. Here, at last is New York in all its unruly spontaneity. In her work, paradoxically, Kang has shown herself to be a true citizen of the world. The intermingling of multifarious cultures and races provide her with a rich source of artistic inspiration.

Kang through her work strives to represent communion and communication among people who adapt themselves to their surroundings. She depicts in a simple geometric form, aspects such as Hudson River bridges and Manhattan nighttime skylines. Along with the subject of spectacular cityscapes, the artist borrows the image of the apple to express her lyrical inner self. The apple, symbolic of exuberance and abundance, is a metaphor of love, frequently associated with the voluptuous female body.

Chris MacLeod

Manhattan in Apple (2005), 13" x 13" x 13", white stoneware, low-fire glazing.



Tony Moore

*Garrison Art Center
Garrison, New York*

Tony Moore's sculptures draw their iconography from the rural English countryside of his birth, as well as the historical traditions of heraldry, knighthood and the institutions of Church and State.

His sculptures are at once voluminous and majestic, forceful and serene. They engage subjects as diverse as the inevitable consequence of human action in the personal, cultural and political spheres. Moore's work expresses the urge to break free of the constrictions of inhumane social institutions, and the transcendental belief that such structures can be transformed to reflect the inherent beauty of nature and transcendental law.

Within Moore's work there is both a substantive depth and a quietness implying an optimistic future where such transcendence is possible, while at the same time there is a stark and honest confrontation with the endless repetition of pain and suffering born of blind ignorance. The imagery has roots drawn from his own boyhood in the English countryside, but it is also equally evocative of current global tensions from which there seems no immediate escape.

The possibility of a hopeful future is seen in the lyricism and minimalist beauty of the forms, as if we are being shown the incongruity of the effects of violence and hatred, and at the same time the aspiration for a more ideal world.

Tony Moore's ceramic sculpture is at once heroic and confrontational, elegantly and delicately detailed, minimalist and substantial. Above all, it is a truly unique and beautiful expression of the compelling desire for freedom in a world which is increasingly brutal and limiting not only to artistic expression but to human life itself.

Vivian Goldstein

Blind Man's Buff (2004), 16" x 15" x 17", wood fired ceramic.



Gilda Oliver

*Naomi Silva Gallery
Atlanta, Georgia*

Gilda Oliver's angelic creatures with hollow eyes and golden lips bring a message of hope and spirituality for our turbulent times. Her sculptures extend the theme of mythical creatures that bear and absorb the emotional scars of human beings and bring universal protection and spirituality.

Considering that suffering plays a central role in this concept, Oliver's own experience seems to have impregnated every piece. Most of her sculptures depict female or androgynous heads of ethereal beings, defined by the artist as angels. Their scars and poignant expressions converge, at first, a sad message.

A second look, however, changes this initial impression to a more optimistic view. It is the effect produced by Oliver's sophisticated technique, which combines traditional elements such as clay and glaze with light-colored paint and gold highlights. The pale faces with gleaming eyelids, eyebrows and lips, convert these creatures into carriers of peace and hope.

Her works combine the spiritual elements with the material components, in an interplay that has been the artist's preoccupation since childhood. Contrast of color and gold to express basic forces of nature and spirituality are not new in art; they are, indeed, among the oldest approaches.

As an artist and art historian, Oliver knows this well. Nevertheless, she manages to make a traditional approach both fresh and relevant. Through her expressive and well-crafted work, sometimes of substantial proportions, Oliver enables the viewer to examine personal and collective emotional experiences. Drawing experiences from her own life, the artist provides us with art for healing the soul.

Walter Kaufman

The Spring of Angel (2005), 26" x 26", ceramic.

