

Beyond Fragments: Memory, Materiality, And The Sensorial Construction Of Identity In Contemporary Art Practice

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Abstract

This collaborative research interrogates the complex relationship between memory, identity, and materiality through the innovative artistic practice of Sooyeon Kim. Co-authored by critic Issei Wake and artist Kim herself, this study positions her work as a philosophical and sensory exploration of fragmented memory that expands current theoretical frameworks in art studies. Methodologically grounded in Jacques Derrida's hauntology and Dominick LaCapra's concept of working through trauma, Kim's practice deliberately disrupts linear historical narratives, revealing memory as fluid, fragmented, and in perpetual reconstruction. Her distinctive integration of woodprint and enamel techniques creates a multisensory engagement where material presence becomes an active site for negotiating personal and collective remembrance. Through sophisticated processes of layering, erasure, and tactile intervention, her work fundamentally reconfigures how sensory perception mediates identity formation in a rapidly shifting cultural landscape. This research demonstrates how contemporary artistic practice functions as a dynamic cultural mediator, effectively bridging tradition and contemporaneity while critically expanding discourse on globalized memory cultures. Beyond merely documenting historical experience, Kim's work establishes participatory spaces that invite audiences to reconstruct, reinterpret, and embody memory as an evolving phenomenon. By synthesizing theoretical analysis with artistic intervention, this study reveals how artistic practice transcends representation, emerging as a methodology for critical reflection, cultural negotiation, and epistemological inquiry. The findings contribute significantly to current debates in art theory, aesthetics, and philosophy, establishing artistic practice as an essential mode of knowledge production that reshapes how we perceive and engage with history, identity, and sensory experience in contemporary society.

Keywords: aesthetic epistemology; collective remembrance; hauntology; multisensory perception; trauma theory