Lee created ten new sculptures for a 2014 installation at Versailles, breathing new life into the 17th century landscape. About the experience, the artist reflected: “In East Asia, they approach garden landscaping by accentuating the presence of nature, but in Europe they sometimes transfigure nature to fit human concepts... What underpins the historic and man-made Gardens of Versailles are their hidden history and the power of nature. The tension within the duality of the visible and hidden stimulates me and rouses my imagination... The motive behind my work is to establish a relationship between the made and not made. This is an issue that rose out of lament and criticism against the modern notion of productivism.”

Two museums have dedicated their interior and exterior spaces to Lee's enigmatic works, Space LEEUFAN at the Busan Museum of Art in South Korea, inaugurated in 2015; and the Lee Ufan Museum on the island of Naoshima in Japan, which opened in 2010. Though Lee was initially reticent to both proposals, he has discussed his change of perspective, working in close partnership with each architect on the concept and design of each, overseeing the installation and selection of works, and seeking to create a harmonious, immersive environment conducive to a true understanding of his artistic practice.

“Their is the untouched space on my canvas. If I make one stroke, there is suddenly a resonance in that space...where I put the strokes on the canvas is very significant, I hope viewers experience a moment where they can transcend themselves through the work,” Lee explained during an interview at Pace Gallery, where a new suite of works from his renown Dialogues series debuted in 2018. “Looking at the strokes can provide moments when people can experience something outside normal life or think different about the world. I think it is the role of the artist to create such opportunities. Artists offer new perspectives in an uncertain world.”

The Hirshorn Museum in D.C. hosted a site-specific installation from Lee in its sculpture plaza in 2019. The ten new pieces, which responded to the museum's distinctive architecture and continue the artist's Relatum works, were historic: his largest outdoor project on US soil, his first exhibition in the nation's capital, and the first time the Hirshorn has dedicated its plaza to a single artist. Lee discussed his Relatum at the Serpentine Gallery in 2018.

Two exhibitions at Cahier’s d’Art in Paris in 2019 highlighted a new ensemble of drypoint etchings and Lee’s complete series of 1983 gouaches, Acorns and Wildcat, originally produced as illustrations for Buddhist writer Kenji Miyazawa’s 1924 text.

Lee contributed an elegiac essay to Pace Gallery’s Artist’s Respond Series in May of 2020, considering the lessons and impact of the global pandemic:

“When times are turbulent and cracks appear in the order of things, a division emerges in humanity's interior. Modern human beings have, in a sense, built their existence on division from the very beginning...humankind has arrived where it is today through an agelong process of development that reinterprets nature,” he reflected. “Perhaps what people are searching for is neither devotion to nature nor the defiant reassertion of civilization, but an ambivalent awareness of existence that spans both...The joy we experience in everything we see comes from the vitality of nature—it is the very source of ourselves.”
LEE Ufan 李禹煥 이우환 (Korean, b. 1936)
Dialogue, 2019
Acrylic on canvas

Private Collection, Los Angeles; L2020:91.1

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