

김영헌: 프록시마

Kim Young-Hun: Proxima

2026. 8. 19 (Wed) – 10. 3 (Sat)

Reception: August 19 (Wed) 5-7PM

Artist Talk: September 19 (Sat) 2-4PM

Gallery JJ (63 Apgujeong-ro 30-gil, Gangnam-gu, Seoul)
Hours: Tue – Sat 11am-7pm (Closed Mon, Sun) www.galleryjj.org

An Unfamiliar Longing, Anemoia

Gallery JJ is pleased to present *Kim Young-Hun: Proxima*, a solo exhibition of recent paintings by Kim Young-Hun. Known for his signature ripple patterns and chromatic fields, Kim expands the language of painting through perceptual landscape reshaped by paradigm shifts in contemporary science and technology. His paintings render visible an otherwise imperceptible field of vibrating electronic waves, transforming this energetic reality into a poetic metaphor for memory and longing across space and time. The exhibition brings together some twenty paintings from recent *Frequency* series that further extends his pictorial language, alongside *Electronic Nostalgia*, his seminal series, begun in 2009.

Layers of pigment, stains, scratches, and vibrating lines and planes emerge and recede, moving between continuity and discontinuity to create resonant visual variations. Rhythmic strokes sweep across the canvas, carrying the subtle tremor and movement of the body, while weathered surfaces reveal buried layers of color that hold the passage of time and awaken nostalgia. The tension and harmony between opposing forces define Kim's practice: luminous digital color, ordered lines, and the irregularity of noise converge into a pictorial world of remarkable coherence. At times, the work unfolds as virtual space; at others, as a form of musical abstraction.

Rooted in memories of virtual space, *Electronic Nostalgia* has evolved from fragmented dissolving forms shaped by electronic noise, through utopian landscapes, into an increasingly abstract realm of geometric pixels and waves. By contrast, *Frequency* turns from noise toward the material language of painting, establishing a consistent direction and order while generating rhythm through the weight and physicality of paint. This exhibition premieres *p26015-Frequency* (2026), a new work composed of a single brushstroke in which the wave energy of the cosmos finds expression as *qi*, embodying the East Asian ideal of *qiyun shengdong* (spirit resonance). Together these two defining series reveal the evolution of Kim's practice, extending an electronic microcosm toward the scale of the universe. Ultimately, the microscopic and the vast are inseparably connected beyond the limits of perception, drawing us toward an uncharted space-time. The exhibition takes its title from *Proxima*, the nearest star beyond our solar system. Though our nearest stellar neighbor, it remains unimaginably distant and forever beyond reach, evoking the boundless universe and imagination. Starlight reaches us from the distant past; the stars we see belong to

another time. Here, starlit longing converges with the rhythmic pulse of the scientific cosmos.

I.

In Kim Young-Hun's practice, the immaterial world of electronic waves and frequencies beyond sight finds material form through painting. It appears as digital images and virtual landscapes shaped by the artist's own perception, and a form of visualized light and sound that permeate everyday life while drawing invisible realms, from the energies that compose the universe to realities disclosed by science, into the field of sensation. The electronic becomes the medium through which Kim encounters the world, its wave patterns giving form to the dynamic energy of a universe in perpetual vibration.

Above all, Kim is guided by the conviction that painting is an adventure. Through sustained exploration of brush, paint, canvas, and palette knife, he allows each material to remain true to its own nature while forging a new pictorial language. The recurring stripes in his paintings build an abstract vocabulary charged with electronic sensibility: each wave-like streak emerging as a single gesture, with multiple colors sliding into one another to create a smooth rhythm and the buoyant pleasure of drawing. These wave patterns simultaneously construct and dissolve forms through collisions between noise and color, turning the painting into a dynamic field of energy. Kim's practice moves from the unseen infinity concealed within binary logic of zeros and ones toward world where reality and the virtual overlap, ultimately converging in the interference and generation of waves. Rhythm evokes a world in perpetual flux, while noise, appearing as stains and fields of color, introduces discontinuity. His longing for the analog extends into the quantum world revealed by contemporary physics, opening a meditation on a universe understood not as fixed substance but as both particle and wave. Like the fluidity of life accelerated by digital platforms, and the unsettled identities of those who drift without anchorage, his paintings tremble, shift, and transform in constant vibration. By bringing the fragmented sensibility of today's digital condition onto the profoundly analog surface of painting, Kim awakens a new mode of perception in our time.

Why, then, is the electronic central to Kim's practice? Underlying his paintings is a sustained engagement with contemporary media technology, the electronic realms of analog and digital media, and technological development. Long before the digital era, Kim recognized the rapid evolution of electronic technology and its profound impact on human perception. In 1995, his media installation *A Nap That Came Like Giddiness* received the Grand Prize at the JoongAng Fine Arts Prize, establishing him as one of Korea's most promising young artists. He then spent over a decade in Europe before returning to Korea in 2009, where his installation and video works exploring the existential dimensions of human life gained recognition in France, the UK, and elsewhere. Several years as a video journalist revealed both the possibilities and limitations of media. Following his return, *Electronic Nostalgia: Broken Dream* (2010) at Sungkok Art Museum brought together digital installations and a new body of paintings begun in 2008, proposing a nostalgia for the future amid accelerating technological change.

As the subtitle '*Broken Dream*' suggests, objects and bodies appear fragmented, expressing a critical view of a reality subtly manipulated by distorted media and the rapid advance of communication technology. Beneath the material presence of Kim's paintings remain the same concerns: the omnipresence of media and digital technology, longing for what has passed, and anxiety about what is yet to come. Since winning the Ha In-Doo Art Award in 2020, Kim has been based in Seoul, with exhibitions in New York, France, Hong Kong, and elsewhere. His work is held in the collections of Leeum Museum of Art, Jaha Museum of Art, Sungkok Art Museum, the MMCA Art Bank, Kolon Group, Bank of America, and other major public and private collections.

The works on view reveal Kim's recent formal explorations, with wave patterns drifting gently across white grounds, at times fading until the image seems to extend beyond the frame. The *Frequency* series continues to expand this language. Its single-stroke works emerge from a continuous gesture in which force and grace, density and translucency, pace and pause coexist, bringing an infinite space to life. In East Asian art theory, Shitao described the single stroke (*yihua*) as the origin of all things and the source of every form. In the instant of the brushstroke, his pursuit lies not in rigidity or cold, manufactured perfection, but in the warmth of the analog: the subtle tremor of the body and the fleeting traces of vibration within each gesture. Other works create expansive fields of wave patterns, where countless fine lines in luminous pastel tones generate thoughtful variations of frequency and fill the surface with clear, radiant energy. Like restrained minimalist music, they unfold through rhythm itself. The *Electronic Nostalgia* series develops further transformations of pattern, with square pixels of noise layered over strata and waves like distant landscapes seen from above. In *p23055-Electronic Nostalgia* (2023–2026), broad and fine brushstrokes create tension, while circles and squares appear suspended as if drifting through space. Yet the closer one looks, the more the image recedes, revealing instead the physical presence of paint itself: thick and thin, transparent and smooth. Wave and noise, once held in tension, ultimately resolve into a shared rhythm. Kim often speaks of ripples, light, music, and the scent of coffee. How are his paintings perceived and experienced at the intersection of technological media, contemporary sensation, and painterly imagination? The exhibition opens toward a renewed encounter with painting, where seemingly opposing realms converge—analog and digital, past and future, real and virtual, material and immaterial, science and nature, romance and anxiety.

"We live within ever-shifting waves: scan lines on a cathode-ray TV, the grooves of vinyl records, wind and waves, a cello's adagio, curved spacetime, gaps between quarks, swirling galaxies, the universe observed by James Webb, life within digital space..." — Artist's note

II.

The ambivalent thoughts on technological advancement and the future, along with the existential unease that drew attention in his early works, have gradually shifted into nostalgia: something both unfamiliar and familiar. Looking back, the *Beyond the Future* series (2008–2009) and *Cloud Map* series (2010–2013) presented dynamic compositions driven by mechanical motion, reminiscent of early twentieth-century Futurism, before evolving into virtual landscapes that hinted at an approaching future. The *Electronic Nostalgia* series also began with fragmented forms, yet the world created through noise soon became a radiant utopia resembling an East Asian landscape painting, eventually converging into an abstract realm where geometric pixels generate variations.

Pixelated noise in his painting occupies broad fields of color that shape the overall atmosphere. Scraped and peeled by squeegee or palette knife, the paint takes on a weathered, antique patina. These elements disrupt the order of the waves. Like the electronic noise encountered through media, they emerge as an unknown space: an interface connecting us to the electronic world, a matrix leading toward online and virtual realities. Noise becomes a gap, a rupture, and an interface that disturbs waves while generating new rhythms and spaces.

While exploring the sensibility of the electronic world, Kim chose the traditional medium of painting over computer technology. Nostalgia is not simply a longing for the past, but an emotion born of absence in the present, perhaps even a defense against the anxiety of an accelerated age. As the artist recalls, his work is rooted in memories: the subtle movement of water and the soft touch of wind, sensations first encountered through the body and carried

into his paintings. Following these experiences of nature came the sensory memories of vinyl records before the digital era, the mechanical qualities of white noise from televisions and electronic devices, the spectrum of light, and, above all, memories shared with his son in the virtual worlds of online games. By tracing these sensations and perceptions, Kim has developed a painterly vocabulary uniquely his own. His work embodies what critic Lee Ha-rim described in 2019 as a *"nostalgia for what has never been experienced,"* a yearning for the future born from accelerating technological shifts. Fragmented time and space that resist wholeness and continuity, the disjunction between experience and memory, and the unfamiliar longing and intangible loss left by virtual reality offer Kim's paintings an aesthetic distinct from traditional painting. Virtual worlds are endlessly replaced and quickly disappear, yet the memories they leave behind are preserved in painting, remaining inseparable from his present.

III.

"Its life would be an interrupted series of sensations in which nothing was connected." – Denis Diderot, *D'Alembert's Dream*

Digital media have transformed the very structure of thought and perception. Marshall McLuhan argued that media reshape our sensory balance and patterns of thought, even as we remain largely unaware of the transformation. Their influence operates beneath consciousness, reorganizing perception regardless of individual opinion or awareness. As smartphones and high-speed networks fragment every moment into a state of hyperconnectivity, collapsing the distances of time and space, we have grown accustomed to the frictionless logic of algorithmic systems and the immaterial sensation of drifting through endless streams of information. As philosopher Byung-Chul Han observes, digitization has loosened our tangible connection to the world, making experience increasingly light, smooth, and shallow.

Behind this digital condition lies quantum mechanics. Everything in existence emerges through unpredictable deviations; without deviation, nature creates nothing. Early twentieth-century physics fundamentally transformed our understanding of reality. The world is no longer understood as fixed substance but as quantum states defined by coherence, superposition, and entanglement. Only when coherence is lost and superposition collapses does one of many possible states become observable. Nature, therefore, rests not on continuity but on discontinuity. Modern art found its parallel in this shift, embracing abstraction, the dissolution of representational realism, and new ways of imagining psychological and metaphysical realities.

Some have predicted that digitization will ultimately dissolve reality itself, leaving perception to resemble a three-dimensional display. Images experienced as shifting networks of intensity have likewise emerged in contemporary moving-image art, including the work of Pierre Huyghe. As the conditions of vision continue to change, how might painting itself be experienced anew? Kim turns to the digital sensibility and mode of being shaped by electronic technology, exploring new forms and chromatic possibilities through a transformed perception. Distorted wave rhythms and vibrant complementary colors bring fantasy and kinetic energy into the same pictorial field. Like quantum mechanics, the paintings unfold through discontinuity, where deviation and superposition, emergence and rupture become painterly conditions.

The robust, fractured structure of Kim's abstract brushwork recalls the fragmented perception produced by digital devices. At the same time, shimmering pastels, vivid synthetic hues, and fluorescent colors evoke the self-illuminating spectrum of RGB light, creating an atmosphere that feels almost cybernetic, suspended between reality and virtual

space. The recurring pairings of green and pink, yellow and blue likewise evoke the digital logic of complementary colors. As the artist notes, *"If color fields, fluorescent hues, and fractured compositions evoke digital attributes, the striped brushwork, splattered pigment, palette-knife marks, geometric lines, and scratches reveal the analog."* Collision and interference generate new forms as rhythm and energy ripple outward. Held in productive tension, digital fragmentation and analog fluidity ultimately return painting to its material presence, bodily gesture, and physical experience.

Earlier in the twentieth century, Robert Delaunay explored the simultaneity of color, using adjacent hues to produce optical vibration and musical movement. His studies of complementary color generated sensations of motion and depth, while Kandinsky also explored the emotional and perceptual force of chromatic contrast. The undulating rhythm in Kim's paintings, imagery operates synesthetically, resonating with the viewer's bodily rhythms and creating new perceptual relationships. As critic Kim Yoonseob observed, *"Measured breathing and a visual language of musical notation become nothing less than the rebirth of the poetic language of abstraction."*

As Graham Harman argues, art can approach the real through metaphor without describing it directly. The refined rhythms and drifting poetic language of Kim's paintings evoke nostalgia, allowing glimpses of a probabilistic microscopic world, a universe filled with countless stars, and the origin of our discontinuous, overlapping, interconnected existence. Between scientific reality and unfamiliar longing lies the tension between the real and sensation, where Kim Young-Hun's paintings attain their deepest resonance, like distant stars beyond reach.

Text | Juyeon Kang, Gallery JJ Director

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[About Artist]

Kim Young-Hun (b.1964)

Kim Young-Hun is a Seoul-based painter active internationally in New York, France, and Hong Kong. He received his BFA in Painting from Hongik University and MA in Painting from Chelsea College of Arts, University of the Arts London. After winning the Grand Prize at the JoongAng Fine Arts Prize in 1995, he worked in Europe until 2009, including residencies at Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris (2000–02), and Höherweg Studios, Düsseldorf (2003). He has held solo exhibitions at Sungkok Art Museum, Jaha Museum of Art, Space K Daegu, Soluna Fine Art Hong Kong, Galerie Richard (Paris/New York), Hakgojae, and elsewhere, and received the Ha In-Doo Art Award in 2020. His work is held in major public and private collections, including Leeum Museum of Art, Jaha Museum of Art, Sungkok Art Museum, MMCA Art Bank, Government Art Bank, Kolon Group, and Bank of America.

Through the vibration and rhythm of waves, Kim creates a contemporary language of abstraction. Painting brings the invisible into the realm of sensation: light and sound that permeate everyday life, as well as the energies that constitute the universe. Juxtaposed complementary colors distort form and structure, while noise, collision, and interference generate new patterns like waves in vibration and resonance. Charged with the dynamic energy of a universe in motion, his paintings draw us toward the origins of life and the world.

[Image Plate]



김영헌 Kim Young-Hun
p25014-Electronic Nostalgia, 2025
Oil on canvas, 100 x 80.5cm



김영헌 Kim Young-Hun
p25024-Frequency, 2025-2026
Oil on linen, 80 x 100cm



김영헌 Kim Young-Hun
p26012-Frequency, 2026
Oil on linen, 97.4 x 130cm



김영헌 Kim Young-Hun
p23055-Electronic Nostalgia, 2023-2026
Oil on canvas, 61 x 73cm

[ENG CV]
Kim Young-Hun (b.1964)

- 2008 M.F.A. Chelsea College of Art and Design, University of Arts London, London, UK
2007 Goldsmiths College, University of London, London, UK
1992 B.F.A. Hongik University, Seoul, Korea

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2026 *Kim Young-Hun: Proxima*, Gallery JJ, Seoul
2025 *Moments of Resonance*, Art Chosun Space, Seoul
2023 *Frequency*, Hakgojae Gallery, Seoul
Meta River, Soluna Fine Art, Sheung Wan, Hong Kong
Meta River, Galerie Richard, Paris
2021 *Ripple Ripple*, Soluna Fine Art, Sheung Wan, Hong Kong
2020 *Diamond Mountain: Electronic Nostalgia*, Soluna Fine Art, Sheung Wan, Hong Kong
2019 *Electronic Nostalgia*, Galerie Richard, Paris
Electronic Nostalgia, Galerie Richard, New York
2017 *Virtual-Scape*, Choi & Lager Gallery, Seoul
2016 *Noise: Electronic Nostalgia*, Gail Art Museum, Gapyeong, Korea
2013 *Cloud Map*, Space K, Daegu, Korea
2012 *Cloud Map*, Zaha Museum, Seoul
2010 *Electronic Nostalgia: Broken Dream*, Sungkok Art Museum, Seoul
2003 Höherweg 271 Studios, Düsseldorf, Germany
2002 Espace Icare, Issy-les-Moulineaux, Paris
2001 Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris
1997 *Dark Side of the Moon*, Woong-Jun Gallery, Seoul
1995 Total Museum of Contemporary Art, Jangheung, Korea

Selected Group Exhibition (2000~)

- 2026 *The Dynamics of Abstraction and Resonance*, Art Project CO, Seoul
Echoes in Between: Four Voices in Korean Abstraction, Soluna Fine Art; Korean Cultural Centre, Central, Hong Kong
2025 *Re:Connect*, Soluna Fine Art, Sheung Wan, Hong Kong
Soyu × Gongyu (Having and Sharing), Koo House Museum, Yangpyeong, Korea
2024 *Pneuma*, Soluna Fine Art, Sheung Wan, Hong Kong
Cross the Word, Marc Minjauw Gallery, Brussels
2023 *Insight of Painting*, Koo House Museum, Yangpyeong, Korea
Summer Abstract Painting, Galerie Richard, Paris
衣錦尚絅(Eui-geum-sang-gyeong), Hakgojae Gallery, Seoul
2022 *Ways of Seeing*, JARILAGER Gallery, Cologne, Germany
2D x 3D = Boundless, NY x LA = ∞, One Art Space, New York
Reflection, Soluna Fine Art, Sheung Wan, Hong Kong
Ode to the Moon: 吟風詠月(Um-pung-myeong-wol), Soluna Art Group, Korean Cultural Center, Central, Hong Kong
2021 *Total support 2021*, Total Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul
PRISM, Soluna Fine Art, Sheung Wan, Hong Kong
Pars pro toto 以偏例全(I-pyeon-rye-jeon), Cian Art Museum, Yeongcheon, Korea
Visual Pleasures, Galerie Richard, New York
2020 *淸風明月(Cheong-pung-myeong-wol): An Ode to Life*, Soluna Fine Art; Korean Cultural Centre, Central, Hong Kong
2018 *Color Matters*, Galerie Richard, New York
2017 *Visualizing Today*, Hongik Museum of Art, Seoul
Kim Young-Hun, Robert Muntean: Imperfect Consonance, UNC Gallery, Seoul
2016 *Shane Bradford, Kim Young-Hun: The Middle Distance*, Choi & Lager Gallery, Cologne, Germany
Please Return to Busan Port, Vestfossen Museum, Vestfossen, Norway
2015 *夢中哀傷(Mong-jung-ae-sang) - 三色桃(Sam-saik-do)*, Jaha Museum, Seoul

- 2014 *Neo-Sansu*, Daegu Art Museum, Daegu, Korea
- 2013 *Homo Utopias*, HADA Contemporary, London
Fantasy - will be There, Daegu art factory, Daegu, Korea
Kim Hyunjun, Kim Young-Hun and Han Jisoc, HADA Contemporary, London
- 2012 2012 *Geumgang Nature Art Biennale: Nature, Human being and Sound*, Geumgang Nature Art Center, Gongju, Korea
Transformed Human, Space K, Gwangju, Korea
The Secret, the Margin of Error, Gwangju Museum of Art, Gwangju; Busan Museum of Art, Busan; ARKO Art Center, Seoul
- 2011 *From a Distance, Keep a Distance*, Sungkok Art Museum, Seoul
- 2010 *Mullae Art Space Opening Special Exhibition*, Mullae Art Space, Seoul
Over the Rainbow, Sungkok Art Museum, Seoul
Art Actually, Kunst Doc Gallery, Seoul
- 2009 *Nomadic Project: Time and Space*, Dalanzadgad City Museum, Gobi, Mongolia
'De-familiarization' by Anna art project, Nolias Gallery, London
- 2008 *Condensation 2008*, Desima Gallery, London
- 2007 4482, King's Park Studio, London
- 2002 *Kim Young-Hun, Christelle Spano*, Paris Project Room, Paris
Biennale d'art contemporain de Saint-Cloud: Nature Cult, Musée des Avelines, Saint-Cloud, France
Waldkunstpfad (Forest Art Path), Black Forest, Darmstadt, Germany
- 2001 *It's a Wonderful World: Sol, Mur, Temps*, Espace arsenal, Issy-les-Moulineaux, Paris
Un Certain Regard sur la Nature, Abbatale, Bernay, France
Energie Raum, Städtische Galerie Dreieich, Dreieich, Germany
Sol / Mur / Temps (Floor / Wall / Time), Centre Culturel Coréen, Paris
- 2000 *Fiestalux*, Rue de Pont Neuf, Paris
Collective Show 2000, CITE Internationale des Arts Gallery, Paris

Awards

Ha In-Doo Fine Art Award, Seoul, Korea(2020); Grand Prize, Joongang Fine Art Prize Seoul, Korea(1995)

Artist Residencies

Ha In-Doo Fine Art Award Residency, Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris, France(2023); Höherweg 271 Studios, Dusseldorf, Germany(2003); Samsung Residency Program, Cite Internationale des Arts, Paris, France(2000, 2001); Freeman Fellowship, Vermont Studio Center, Johnson, Vermont, USA(1996)

Collections

Museum of Contemporary Art Art Bank, Gwacheon, Korea; Museum of Contemporary Art Government Art Bank, Gwacheon, Korea; Leeum Museum of Art, Seoul, Korea; ZAHA Museum, Seoul, Korea; Sungkok Art Museum, Seoul, Korea; Kolon Group, Seoul, Korea; Pulmuon Group, Seoul, Korea; Korea Petroleum Industries Co., Seoul, Korea; Bank of America, New York, USA; The Arts Club, London, UK, The St. Regis Shenzehn, Shenzhen, China