

N/A

White Lies

Jiyeon Chung

May 11 - June 8 2024

Opening - Feb 19 2025 / 7PM - 9PM

Wed Appointment Only

Thu - Sat 12PM - 7PM

Sun 2PM - 7PM

Gallery N/A is hosting the upcoming showcase of Jiyeon Chung's latest solo exhibition, *White Lies*, from May 11th to June 8th.

Jiyeon Chung uses sculpture, sound, and photography to explore how social phenomena and deeply personal states of mind—such as ego, prejudice, and emotion—intersect and merge. Her work often starts from a place of irritable passivity, delving into the psychological tension marked by subtle transgressions, hidden coercions, and other nuanced emotions. This intricate interplay of feelings is where Chung's primary interest lies.

The exhibition title, *White Lies*, refers to the seemingly harmless lies people tell to maintain relationships and avoid minor conflicts. These white lies are commonplace, often justified as well-intentioned gestures. Spoken from the subjective perspective of the speaker, these words oscillate within the psychological boundaries—as though vibrating between the walls—of prejudice, double standards, and defence mechanisms.

In this exhibition, Jiyeon Chung employs a seemingly paradoxical strategy by embracing an exaggerated minimalist approach to the layout and design of Gallery N/A. She alters the main space with additional walls and narrow hallways, creating an environment that feels both oversized and empty. This restrictive setup reflects the artist's intention, as she explains, "I believe I was doing it with the best intentions." The result is that instead of conveying a unified objective, the dispersed arrangement serves as a synesthetic metaphor for despondency.

As visitors enter, their view of the space and the path they must follow is deliberately restricted, while shrieks emanate from the main exhibition area. The 6 channel sound installation, *Condition Reserved*, features recordings of roller coaster riders' screams, juxtaposing the paradoxical Anglulst in the closed space, when two seemingly opposite emotions, fear and enthusiasm, are experienced simultaneously or sequentially. Such intertwined sensations act to repulse viewers with an unremitting indecipherability.

In a room off to the side, the sculptures *Work Ethics* are displayed. Those pieces began with the artist collecting anecdotes from those around her, asking, "Do you remember the type of corporal punishment you experienced as a child?" Interestingly, the shapes, types, and methods of punishment, along with the nicknames for the sticks or switches used by teachers, were strikingly consistent across different locations and generations throughout Korea. Some of the common tools of punishment that were recounted were cue sticks, brooms, back scratchers, flutes, pointers, and various forms of disciplinary exercises like crouching walks, squats, wall-sits, and repetitive sentence writing on the chalkboard. The shared familiarity with these forms of punishment underscores how there is an entire culture built around corporal punishment and that its methods have been transmitted over time. The artist particularly scrutinizes the term "love lashes" used in Korea to describe these punishments. By incorporating the word "love," it perpetuates the false notion that such punishment is a necessary part of discipline while obscuring its inherent cruelty. The sculptures cast an anachronistic image of people on their knees being disciplined, juxtaposing the harsh reality of coercion with the impossibility of justifying or continuing such practices.

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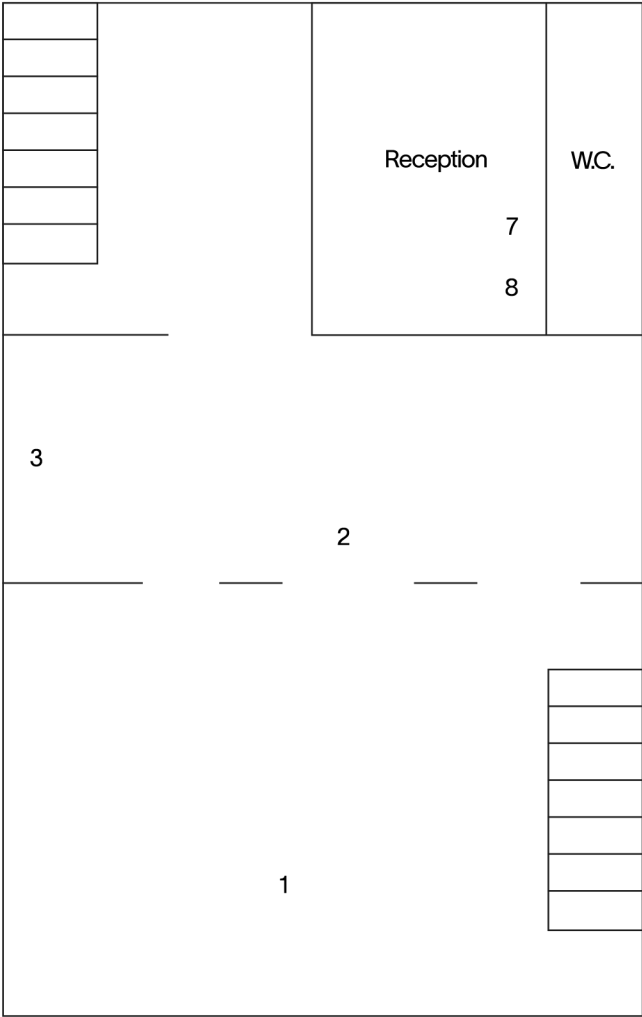
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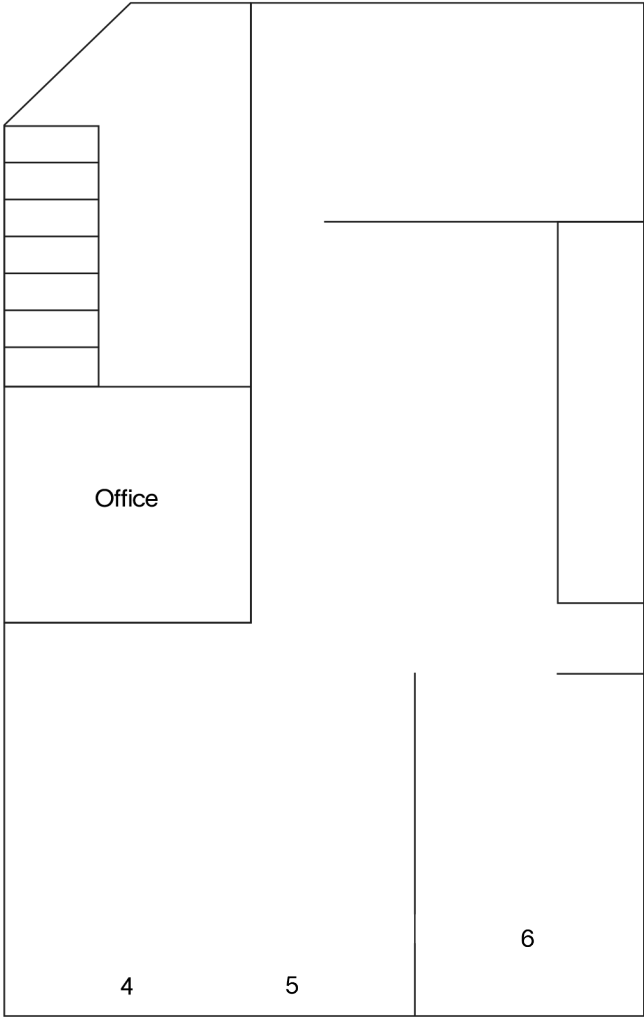
Similar to the culture surrounding corporal punishment, the practice of writing apology letters as a form of punishment is also widely shared and passed down. These letters often contain repetitive phrases like, "I am sincerely sorry for what I've done. Please forgive me, and it will never happen again." The artist took this concept further by hiring a law firm, an administrative attorney's office, a personal lawyer, and a professional writer to ghostwrite an apology letter on her behalf for actual infractions she committed. The artwork, titled *Apology Gifts*, presents the text of this apology letter, including the oral apology, but deliberately omits any mention of the specific misdeed. This piece questions the practice of apologies and highlights the often formulaic strategies used in their creation, typically employed to present the image of well-intentioned, yet ultimately empty eloquence.

In her exhibition *White Lies*, Jiyeon Chung provides an experience that invites audiences to explore paradoxes and challenges their imaginations as well as their associations. She delves into the psychological arousal of irony in extreme situations, lies designed to be readily accepted, the allure of easily accepted lies, and the absurdity of exaggerated realities, which—ultimately empty—leave viewers oscillating between laughter and anxiety with uncertainty.

Jiyeon Chung earned her bachelor's degree in photography from Chung-Ang University in 2012 and is expected to graduate from the Städelschule in 2024. Her recent solo exhibitions include *Condition Reserved* at Kornhäuschen in Aschaffenburg, Germany (2024), and *Payday* at N/A Gallery in Seoul, South Korea (2022). Major group exhibitions she has participated in include *Rocking Meadows* at Wiesen Kunstverein in Wiesbaden, Germany (2023), *5 More Minutes* at saasfee*pavilion in Frankfurt am Main, Germany (2022), *The Abyss* at Hall1 in Seoul, South Korea (2022), and *Lash 23* at Nassauischer Kunstverein Wiesbaden in Wiesbaden, Germany (2019).



- 1. *Condition Reserved, 2024*
6 channel sound installation, wood, paint
2 min 38 sec in a loop, dimension variable
- 2. *Work Ethics, 2024*
Epoxy resin, stainless steel
7.6 x 36 x 1.9 cm
- 3. *Work Ethics, 2024*
Epoxy resin, stainless steel
7.6 x 45 x 2.3 cm



- 4. *Work Ethics, 2024*
Epoxy resin, stainless steel
7 x 51 x 3.8 cm
- 5. *Apology Gifts, 2024*
6 stamped petition letters ghostwritten by a former head of police investigation, a public prosecutor, a private attorney, a licensed administrative agent, a screenwriter, and a ghostwriting agency regarding criminal case number 2018 형제 37430
100 x 130 cm
- 6. *Buds, 2024*
Epoxy resin
dimension variable
- 7. *Buds, 2022*
Photogram on Ilford fiber base photographic paper, acrylic, paint on wooden frame
29 x 39 cm
- 8. *Buds, 2022*
Photogram on Ilford fiber base photographic paper, acrylic, paint on wooden frame
29 x 39 cm