

Potasia:

Potatoism in the East

On View

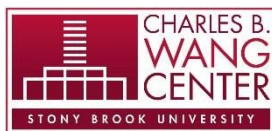
March 15 – June 15, 2018

Charles B. Wang Center



Charles B. Wang Center
Stony Brook University
100 Nicolls Road
Stony Brook, NY 11794
thewangcenter.org

Image Credit: Hwang In-Je, *The Potato Flower Fragrance of Taehongdan County*, 1999, Linoleum print (Ed. 1 of 5), 16 x 32 inches, Courtesy of Koryo Tours.



Potasia: Potatoism in the East features an insightful and entertaining survey of artworks with the potato as their central subject matter. The pieces showcase a wide spectrum of potatoes, in all manner of genres and situations—from the fantastical to the realistic, and from the comedic to the serious. The potato is not only a nutritious and earthy food but, as featured in these Asian artworks, it is also an egalitarian, versatile, multifaceted, multilingual, and multidisciplinary motif.

A diverse body of artworks examine the social, cultural, and political attitudes and ideas attached to the potato. With a focus on contemporary Asian art—featuring installations, sculpture, drawings, paintings, photos, videos, and even socialist propaganda posters—**Potasia: Potatoism in the East** highlights a number of curious and fascinating examples of the ubiquitous potato as represented in Asian popular culture in fine art, books, videos, cartoons, movies, songs, toys, and snacks.

Opening Reception

Wednesday, March 21st, at 5 PM in the Charles B. Wang Center Skylight Gallery. Free admission and open to the public but RSVP is required at thewangcenter.org.

By drawing on a long artistic and historical lineage, as well as by making contrasts and comparisons with diverse mediums, this exhibition illustrates the manifold creativity in the contemporary art world.

This exhibition is curated by Jinyoung Jin, director of cultural programs at the Charles B. Wang Center, and artist Jeffrey Allen Price.



Image Credit: **Potato Portraits** by Ginou Choueiri, 2011, 10 x 8 inches, C-Print photograph.

Gallery Hours

Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM–8:00 PM, and Saturday and Sunday, 12 PM–8:00 PM. Free Admission.

About the Charles B. Wang Center

Founded in 2002, as an Asian and Asian American Cultural Center and an integral component of Long Island's Stony Brook University, the Charles B. Wang Center is dedicated to being the foremost world-class center of Asian and Asian American arts and culture.

Central to the Charles B. Wang Center's mission is the encouragement of an ever-deeper understanding and enjoyment of Asian and Asian American arts and culture by diverse local, national, and international audiences through public programs. These programs include exhibitions, films, lectures, workshops, performances, and educational discussions. For more information on cultural programs visit www.thewangcenter.org.

Related Programs

Art Crawl, lectures, and workshops are offered in conjunction with the exhibition.

For more information, please visit

thewangcenter.org or email

wangcenter@stonybrook.edu.

Calendar

March 21 | Guided Exhibition Tour by Jeffrey Allen Price | Skylight Gallery

March 22 | The Motif of Potatoes in Korean Media (Old and New) | Lecture Hall I

March 27 | Potatoism: A Global History of Potato Art | Lecture Hall I

April 6 | Potato Prints Workshop | Chapel

April 20 | Small Potatoes: Creating Crochet Amigurumi | Chapel

April 27 | North Korea: Addressing Human Needs in A Challenging Environment | Lecture Hall I

Exhibition Highlights



Image Credit: ***Awakening*** by Okada Noriko, 2018, monoprint on fabric, yarn and ceramics, 36 x 36 x 7 inches.

Multidisciplinary Japanese artist Okada Noriko uses the potato to stand for the conflict between nature and culture. Growth is a natural phenomenon, but humans do not look kindly upon this process when it comes to potatoes. A potato's normal biological function produces a potent toxin for humans if ingested. Therefore, potato farmers ensure that potatoes are harvested as tubers, and after the harvest, potatoes are kept away from light and other conditions in which they can grow.



Image Credit: ***Potato Villains*** by Anna Prikazchikova, 2018, 32 x 28 inches, acrylic on canvas.

This painting depicts a lemonade bottle filled with kerosene used to kill potato beetles in Russia. During the Cold War, the Soviet government claimed the Americans were dropping potato beetles out of planes in an attempt to sabotage their crops. Children were sent out to the fields to collect the beetles after school ended for the day.



Image Credit: *With the Spirit of Taehongdan County, Let's call out the the last victory in Potato Farming!* by Chan-Gil Moon, 2014, 23 x 17 1/4 inches, reproduced poster. Courtesy of Koryo Tours.

The potato is the primary subject of this unique collection of socialist posters from China, North Korea, Russia, and Vietnam. These posters offer unique insight into the socialist societies of these four countries, often highlighting the potato as a crop of high importance to their populations. Potatoes in this medium are usually depicted as a vibrant plant pulled from the soil, bearing a bumper crop to emphasize the vegetable's high nutritional value. Once considered to be a secondary food item, the potato has since become the main staple food in these countries, replacing rice and wheat.

