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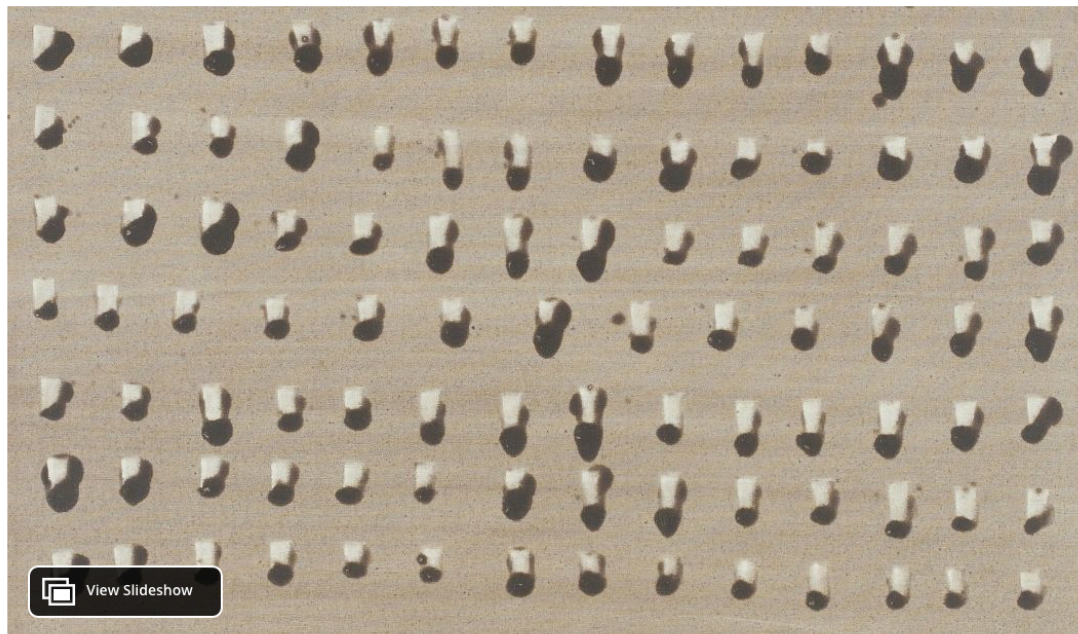
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'Cho Yong-Ik's iconoclastic Dansaekhwa at Edouard Malingue Gallery'

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Cho Yong-ik's Iconoclastic Dansaekhwa at Edouard Malingue Gallery

BY SAMUEL SPENCER | MAY 15, 2016



A detail from "76-726," by Cho Yong-ik.
(Courtesy Edouard Malingue Gallery)

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Three decades of paintings by [Cho Yong-Ik](#) are on view at Hong Kong's Edouard Malingue Gallery until June 18, giving visitors the chance to consider the arc of the Korean artist's career.

The exhibition is divided into three categories, each representing a decade-long series created by Cho. In "Scratch Series," from the 1970s, Cho challenges the conventions of Dansaekhwa, a Korean abstract movement of the 1970s characterized by the use of a monochromatic palette. While most Dansaekhwa artists sought to efface the mark of the artist from his or her work—a reaction to the approach of the Abstract Expressionists—Cho laid bare the role of his own hand in his paintings.

Cho created each work in the series by painting a canvas with two monochromatic layers and then scratching off the top layer of paint with his thumb, revealing the bottom layer. He repeated this scratching process over and over across the work, filling the canvas with neat rows of scratches. In this fashion, Cho literally marked the canvas with his fingerprints.

In the 1980s, Cho began the "Wave Series," in which he used rhythmic strokes to create wavelike patterns in the paint. These patterns evoke the waves of the sea, a step into figurative art that represented another break from the traditionally abstract Dansaekhwa style.

The artist waded deeper into figurative painting in the 1990s, when he created his "Bamboo Series." This series of stylized paintings of bamboo branches stretched the limits of Dansaekhwa, drawing upon typical elements such as the use of hanji paper but tossing out abstraction altogether.

"[Cho Yong-Ik](#)" runs through June 18 at Edouard Malingue Gallery in Hong Kong.