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Art Gallery Shows to See in October

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This week in Newly Reviewed, Dawn Chan covers Cho Yong-Ik's genre-defying twists, Asad Raza's art for animals, Christopher K. Ho's modernist candelabra, and a group show of papermakers.

CHINATOWN

Cho Yong-Ik

Through Oct. 31. Kiang Malingue, 50 Eldridge Street; 917-722-8228, kiangmalingue.com.



Cho Yong-Ik, "93-9," 1993, acrylic on canvas. Estate of Cho Yong-Ik and Kiang Malingue; Photo by Dan Bradica

The Korean term “Dansaekhwa” identifies a loose circle of South Korean artists who favored monochromatic palettes, repetition and a focus on process. But the moniker came long after the artworks themselves. As the art historian Joan Kee, who wrote the first English-language scholarly book on Dansaekhwa, told me, “The market in particular has a way of pasting the label on anyone, whether or not they wished to be seen that way.”

Now, a solo show of the painter Cho Yong-Ik, who died in 2023, reveals how thoroughly his work both earns the Dansaekhwa label and sloughs it off entirely. Even its title, “The Irreducible I,” hints at the genre-defying twists Cho’s explorations took throughout his career.

The six decades of work on view include figuration, an abstract canvas that resembles a turbulent storm and geometric paintings evoking the architecture of modern cities. The biggest portion of works, though — successive rows of marks on single-color backgrounds — look like what many of us imagine as Dansaekhwa. Close examination reveals a surprising technique: Cho wasn’t lining up daubs of paint, so much as scraping it away, with a palette knife, brush, squeegee or his thumb.

Some of his scraped shapes may recall ghostly arrowheads; others resemble bird wings flexing in strong wind. One work, “93-9,” intentionally evokes the bamboo leaves of traditional ink paintings. It’s been noted that these works used acrylic paints, which dry relatively quickly. Cho made his rows of marks aware that his window was always closing. *DAWN CHAN*