Interview | Seoul-Based Artist Jiwon Choi

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Jiwon Choi (b.1996, Lives and works in Seoul, Republic of Korea) explores the gap between life and death, tracing interstitial spaces where the present and future intersect. She employs objects such as frames, doors, and blinds as symbolic portals, opening onto narrative fields where time, space, and memory accumulate. By incorporating remnants of life such as antique crafts and preserved insects, her work evokes a quiet persistence beyond vitality. Her recent practice centers on the theme of '*Fever*', reflecting sensory thresholds shaped by shifts in temperature and their corresponding affective states, from numbness to heightened passion and immersion. Recurring motifs of orchids in varied colors and forms, once the subject of obsessive collection, function alongside porcelain dolls as devices that generate subtle visual tension.

Jiwon Choi holds a BFA and MFA in Painting from Ewha Womans University. She has held solo shows at Tang Contemporary Art (Beijing, 2026), Kumho Museum of Art (Seoul, 2026), WESERHALLE (Berlin, 2025), PARKSEOBO FOUNDATION(Seoul, 2024), and ThisWeekendRoom (Seoul, 2023, 2020) and actively participated in various group shows in Korea, China, Germany, and Thailand including at Tang Contemporary Art (Beijing, 2024), Backstage (Shanghai, 2024), Seoul National University Museum of Art (Seoul, 2023), Art Space Hohwa (Seoul, 2023), Daejeon Creative Center (Daejeon, 2023), Gyeonggi Museum of Modern Art (Ansan, 2022), Ilwoo Space (Seoul, 2022), and Seoul Arts Center Hangaram Design Museum (Seoul, 2021). Choi was a selected artist of Kumho Young Artist (2025), Kiaf HIGHLIGHTS Awards (2024), New Hero of Public Art Magazine (2022) and her works are included in the collection of Government Art Bank of MMCA (Korea), X Museum (China) PARKSEOBO FOUNDATION (Korea), Space K (Korea), and White Rabbit Gallery (Australia).



Orchid Fever, 2026, oil on canvas, 181.8 × 454.6 cm.
Courtesy of the artist and ThisWeekendRoom, Seoul

Can you tell us about your background and how you started your artistic journey?

As a quiet child, I enjoyed spending time alone. I always looked forward to art class and would often become deeply absorbed in a single activity. I remember one day when I was feeling upset, sitting quietly in my room and carefully drawing a milk carton and an apple with colored pencils. Instead of eating my snack, I observed and drew what was in front of me, and gradually felt calmer and more at ease. Perhaps that was when I first decided that I would keep drawing.

What are the main themes or concepts you explore in your work?

I primarily project human emotions and sensations onto smooth, glossy objects, weaving them into surreal narratives to create artistic tension. The porcelain doll, which symbolizes anonymity, serves as both a tool and a medium for this process. Though inanimate, these dolls sometimes acquire a seemingly living presence in my paintings. Orchids also appear frequently, creating collisions between unfamiliar and disparate elements. In contrast to porcelain dolls, orchids are living organisms, yet their exceptionally smooth surfaces and perfect symmetry make them appear artificial. I regard these qualities as a kind of perfection. In my recent solo exhibition, *Glazed Fever*, at the Kumho Museum of Art, I presented works that intertwine my exploration of and obsession with objects that spark my curiosity with personal experiences, taking “fever” as their central theme.



《Glazed Fever》, 2026, installation view, Kumho Museum of Art, Seoul, Korea.
Courtesy of the artist and ThisWeekendRoom, Seoul

How has your artistic style evolved over time?

I organize everything by year, from unfinished ideas and early works to my most recently completed pieces, and often look back over their progression. It is a way of examining how my attitudes and awareness have changed. While my early practice focused on expressing intuitive, raw emotions with immediacy, I now develop my work alongside cultural and visual research related to my practice. For instance, I visit places such as the National Orchid Garden in Singapore, the ceramics collection at the V&A in London, and porcelain museums and tile shops in Berlin, Dresden, and Meissen, exploring with interest the present-day narratives that have emerged from their histories. Engaging deeply with the things I am drawn to is a kind of exercise in gradually expanding the world of my work.

In what ways do you think the art world has changed since you started your career?

Around 2020, when I made my debut with my first solo exhibition, the world was undergoing profound changes due to the pandemic. All channels of communication shifted online and onto social media, and this rapid transformation brought fear and anxiety to emerging artists, myself included. The conditions for focusing on my practice were inevitably unstable, and I worried that interest in and recognition of my work might vanish like a mirage. Yet the Korean art scene soon regained its vitality as it began attracting attention as a major hub in Asia. I feel fortunate to have grown into an artist whose work gained recognition across different cultures during this period.



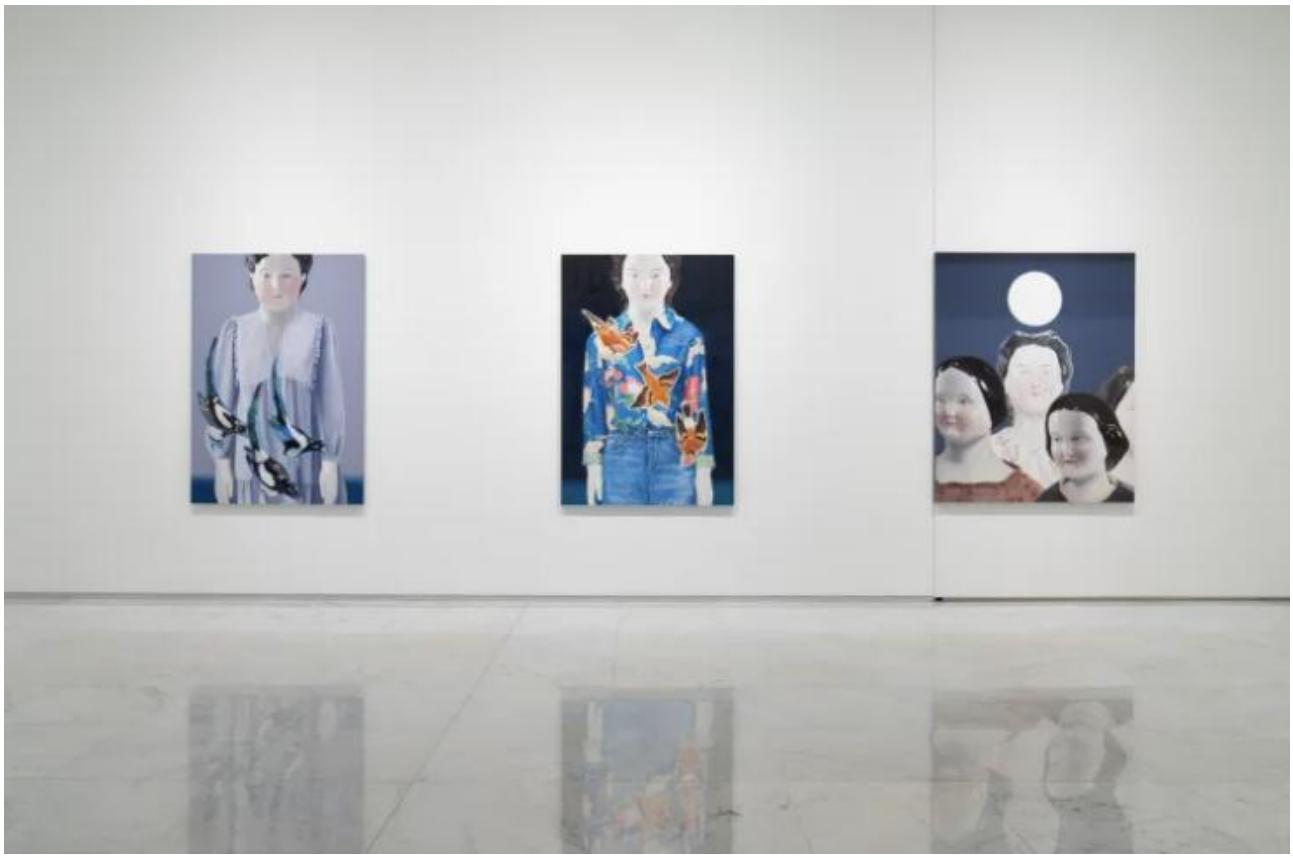
A Nocturnal Village, 2024, oil on canvas, 112.1 × 162.2 cm.
Courtesy of the artist and ThisWeekendRoom, Seoul

What role do you believe art plays in social and cultural change?

In my practice, I respond more sensitively to my inner desires and senses than to social causes. I believe that society becomes a better place when enough of artists' sincere actions accumulate. At first glance, artists may seem to be expanding only their own worlds. Yet just as small dots come together to form lines and planes, their artistic endeavors bring diverse values in life to light and encourage society to take notice. This is why I want to continue working steadily from where I stand, seeking a distinctive painterly language and devoting myself fully to that process.

How do you approach exhibiting your work? What are your goals when showing your art in public spaces?

The distance between works, and the physical distance at which viewers encounter them, are immensely important. A work can be interpreted in an entirely different context depending on its relationship with its surroundings. I look forward to seeing what new impressions my works will create once they leave the studio for my upcoming solo exhibition in Beijing. At the same time, I always feel nervous when so many viewers come face to face with my work. Making art inevitably involves both pleasure and pain. Still, I hope that the viewers I will soon meet can fully sense my sincere desire to fulfill my role as an artist, along with the intense thought and questioning that go into my practice.



《Veil of Thoughts》, 2022, installation view, Ilwoo Space, Seoul, Korea.
Courtesy of the artist and ThisWeekendRoom, Seoul

Text and photo courtesy of **Jiwon Choi and ThisWeekendRoom**



Jiwon Choi

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