



## **JONGKU KIM | Artist Statement**

Kim's works cross various media and are not centered on any one in particular. In fact, each work establishes an organic integrated relation with the others to form a unitary whole. His work begins with the labor-intensive act of grinding steel. The ponderous mass of steel is transformed into light powder which falls calmly on the floor via his protracted grinding. With the powder, he writes calligraphy on the floor as if it were Chinese ink. The steel powder calligraphy is captured by a C.C camera mounted on the floor and projected onto the screen. This video installation displays a landscape which horizontally spreads out. This temporary installation work that will be dismantled remains as photographs.

The transformative process is of fundamental importance because it involves not only a physical change but also a change in the meaning. The steel in the artist's work symbolizes the materialist civilization of contemporary society. The hard steel, a symbol of our desire for development, is used to build skyscrapers and has become weapons that have destroyed civilizations established over several centuries.

The artist removes the massiveness and aggressiveness from the steel through the transformation of the steel from a large mass to minute powder. The steel now become physically delicate and liberal enough to react to the subtle flow of air. He doesn't stop here but moves forward to rid all materiality from the steel powder. He writes calligraphy with the powder creating an art of sublimity and transcendence of a lofty mind. The steel is dematerialized at last.

The metamorphosis of steel is connected with the artist's reflection on today's materialist civilization. Contemporary society has followed blind goals of development and growth and is subordinate to material value. This brings harmful effects like vertical hierarchy and destruction of human life and civilization. The artist expression his criticism through his work. The transformation of a mass of steel, the symbol of contemporary materialist civilization, into steel powder and then into a horizontal landscape visualizes his hope to bring the vertical system of our contemporary society back to the unbiased horizontal system. His peaceful landscape opens up a new place of possibility, hope and coexistence. In the space, the viewer, like the liberated steel powder in his work, can escape from day to day limitations and experience free and peaceful spirituality.