

THE ARTIST

- Shin Beomsun is Professor Emeritus of Korean Literature at Seoul National University. He never made or exhibited an artwork but has an expanding collection of small stones found over the last few years.
- Shin is dedicated to researching pre-historic rock carvings or paintings, known as petroglyphs. They are made by removing part of a stone's surface by picking, abrading, or carving. Every day he sketches them, one after another, to read them carefully and closely. He is interested in the many stories and mythologies that may have arisen from the images and patterns engraved on these stones.



THE ARTWORK



TALES IN STONE: IN SEARCH OF THE LANGUAGE OF PRIMORDIAL PARADISE

2022

Mixed media installation, dimensions variable

- **MEDIUM:** This mixed media installation includes stones collected by Shin, sketches of them by Shin, paintings by Koon Kwon, photographic prints by Kyoungtae Kim and an optical viewing device designed by Sungeun Lee.
- **TECHNIQUES/PROCESSES:** Shin collaborated with Koon Kwon, Kyungtae Kim, Maya West, mediabus, Min & Sulki and Lee Sungeun to create the installation. As varied contributions emerged from the same subject matter, Shin's collection of stones, the artwork demonstrates the many ways in which stones may be read—through a photograph, a painting, a microscope or a close examination of the stones themselves—and the mythologies that may emerge from readings by different people.
- **IDEAS/INSPIRATIONS/CONTEXT:** To Shin, petroglyphs are the origin of many tales. These small ancient stone tablets make stories travel, stories that await discovery by those who seek them. His readings of the stones reveal numerous beings: shamans, "cheonsa" ("angels" in Korean), a princess and queen, and a griffin (a mythical creature with the body of a lion and the head of a bird). Shin chose to name these characters differently, with "shyamyang" rather than "shaman," "tenshya" rather than "cheonsa" and "gyryffyns" rather than "griffin." These oddly named beings blend into each other in joyful and vital forms—Queen Shyashya, for instance, is composed of multiple, endlessly weaving lines of gyryffyns—not unlike stories and myths that interweave and emerge from each other.

DID YOU KNOW?

1. Shin said that ancient stone tablets called to him through extraordinary dreams. In one, he was climbing up an endlessly soaring cosmic tree; in another, mysterious pictograms covered a huge, endless fence made of meat, which people could share between them.
2. Koon Kwon was inspired by a rainbow-coloured comet-shaped light she saw in the sky in 2017, which was surrounded by countless eyes. To her, this was no ordinary act of seeing, but rather an incredible spiritual face-to-face meeting, a moment of unforgettably powerful eye contact.

Artist Folio – MEETING NATASHA

SECONDARY:

ENGLISH

SCIENCE

ACTIVITIES AND QUESTIONS

PRE-VISIT

What stories or myths come to mind when you think of the artwork's title, *Tales in Stone*?

DURING YOUR VISIT

Which stone attracts you the most and why?

Observe the carvings in the stones. What are some stories you can see in them?

POST-VISIT

What are some mythical creatures and stories you are curious about?

Have you ever had a dream that inspired you to do something? What was it about and what did it inspire you to do?

