

**(Night. Eight bells. A man descends the rigging and goes off. Leaning over the rail, looking seaward.)**

Starting with the title of Soo Kim's edition, one immediately gets a sense that the viewer is being pulled into a narrative, but the narrative begins with an aside, in parentheses. However it is parenthetical without apparent context.

Is it a sailor, who after finishing his shift, is relaxing before heading to bed? Yet in maritime symbology, eight bells denote that a sailor has died. So we could ask, is his body then looking out to ocean, before a burial at sea?

The enigmatic title then leads us to the artwork, searching for clues or hints:

A girl in a black dress walks along a wicker gangway that is floating in a jungle's river. Presumably she is walking to an ornated white staircase that is jutting out of a cave's mouth in a cliff face.

Inside a cave, the girl is not there. A small table draped with an orange cloth is covered with an assortment of small, perhaps religious objects. Behind the table, two posts balance a long narrow carved object. A wooden door obstructs the exit to the cave, but decorative openings in the door allow blinding daylight into the darkness. On this side of the photo-sculpture, actual light seems to explode through the hand cut elements, creating a real-life effect that echos the printed rays of light in the photograph.

An answer, might lie somewhere between the lattice-like cut photos and the voids inside them. Soo's gesture of removing, hiding, and revealing, encourages the viewer to walk around the work repeatedly in an attempt to learn the mysteries of this elegant photo-sculpture.

When discussing her practice, Soo often speaks of creating strategies to slow down the viewer's reading of her photographs. This concept materially manifests itself within the production of her working process. It begins with, unexpectedly, the back of these photographs. Typically, the rear of the photograph would be obscured when traditionally framed, however these prints are displayed back-to-back, sandwiched between glass. This presentation, features the prints complex geometric network of actual folds and cutouts, and in addition, gives an unanticipated exposure to the metallic paint that has been applied to the back of the prints.

Like the last rays of sunlight through a trellis, the gold or bronze paint peek through the polygonal openings on the front of the photographs. These metallic colors emerge from the cutout voids, sharing the absence of the photograph's missing material with real voids. Not only is the paint revealed, but also, so is the physical location behind the artwork. It is quite easy to see though the unpredictable and abundant apertures created by Soo's cutouts. The viewer then may question, what is the inside or outside, front or back, when looking at this work.

So perhaps the narrative is a parenthetical one, brackets within brackets. Is the lattice-like structure of the photographs (with their painted backs), a network of parentheses? Is Soo letting the world behind (and around) this artwork interject its remarks into her practice?

This project with Eric Gero / Editions is Soo Kim's first collaboration on an edition.



Soo Kim, (*Night. Eight bells. A man descends the rigging and goes off. Leaning over the rail, looking seaward.*), 2014, hand-cut and scored pigmented inkjet prints, acrylic lacquer & frame, 68.5 x 47 x 12 cm / 27" x 18-1/2" x 4-3/4" (framed), edition of 10