

K-craft's slow seduction goes against type

Craft | Korean makers are upending both tradition and contemporary cultural tropes. By *Hyo Jung Lee*

Unlike the glossy trend-hopping, headline-grabbing allure of K-pop and K-beauty, Korean craft is all about the slow reveal. PAD London makes the case for its richness, diversity and international reach, across numerous galleries from Korea and beyond. Contemporary makers are drawing on the country's long craft traditions and find-

applying white slip with a rice-straw brush. The result is almost cloudlike. Jaik Lee (presented by Gallery LVS & Craft) similarly pushes the form further for "Transition Crescents", using meticulously joined copper that is polished to give it the appearance of porcelain. Lee describes his practice as akin to "the biological development of a living organism" – evolving and adapting over generations.

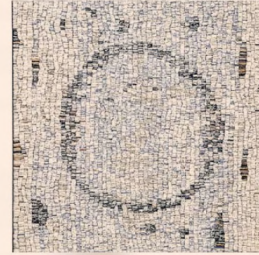
Elsewhere are more experiments with materials. Sora Lee, also represented by Lloyd Choi Gallery, takes *jogakbo* – the 14th-century practice of patchworking leftover fabric for wrapping and storage – and transforms its practical origins into a modern composed art form by introducing natural lacquer, or *ottchil*.

On display is a design culture that is unafraid to evolve and challenge itself.

new ways to move them forward – adapting, combining and sometimes completely rethinking them. Take, for example, the spherical white moon jar, the most recognisable form in Korean ceramics, dating to the 17th century. Juchool Yun's "Cheomjang Moon Jar", presented by Lloyd Choi Gallery, retains the quiet, rounded form but transforms its surface through *cheomjang*, a technique of repeatedly

◀ "Transition Crescents" (2026) Jaik Lee

Drawing on the imperfect roundness and joining marks of Joseon-era moon jars, this piece reinterprets the form through welded copper, porcelain coating and gold leaf. gallerylvs.org



▶ "Mur/Halo" (2022) Sungwook Park

This work draws on burchong, the Joseon tradition of applying white slip to dark clay. Rather than treating the surface as decoration, Park uses the slip as if it were paint, building up layers and making marks directly on to the clay. lloydchoi.com



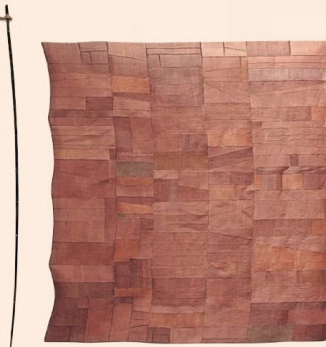
▶ "Cheomjang Moon Jar 181003" (2018) Juchool Yun

A piece that reinterprets the classic Korean moon jar with *cheomjang*, layering white slip with a rice-straw brush to create a tactile, cloudlike surface. lloydchoi.com



▶ "Beopgongchangs-in Jjang" (2025) Wondeok Kwon

The traditional structural framework of a *jjang*, a Korean wooden cabinet, but with its interior and exterior lined with translucent *hanji* paper. Light passes through and transforms a functional piece of furniture into something dynamic. gallerylvs.org



▶ "Ottchil Jogakbo No. 1" (2018) Sora Lee

Lee reimagines traditional Korean patchworking with aged ramie plant fibres, hand-stitched into a hanging work. She developed her own natural lacquer technique to strengthen the delicate fabric, while giving it a distinctive sheen and depth of colour. lloydchoi.com



▶ "Daetdol 2401" (2024) Myungjaek Jung

The stone steps found in a traditional Korean house (*hanok*), redefined as a bronze stool. Stripped back to its essential form, the work explores the restrained curves, materiality and sense of spatial emptiness found in a *hanok*. charlesburnand.com