Exhibition made possible with support of the C. Grimaldis Gallery, Baltimore, the Talbot County Arts Council and the Maryland State Arts Council.

Not Pictured

Mirror Drawing I, 2013
Plywood, LED lights and mirrors

Tunnel, 2013
Unique, cinderblocks, fluorescent lights and mirrors
23 x 68 x 68 inches
Chul Hyun Ahn was born in Busan, South Korea. He received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the Chugye University for the Arts in Seoul, South Korea. In 1997 he moved to the United States and later received a Master of Fine Arts from the Mount Royal School at the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) in Baltimore in 2002. Ahn creates sculptures utilizing light, color, and illusion as physical representations of his investigation of infinite space. He achieves this through the use of electrical light sources including Light Emitting Diodes (LEDs), fluorescent, and black lights set between mirrors and one-way mirrors combined with housings made of plywood, cast concrete, or cast acrylic materials. The image of the work is created through the placement of lights between the two reflective surfaces, which creates the illusion of an infinitely reflecting light sculpture. Ahn’s mirrored light sculptures arose out of his background as a painter. His interest in hard-edge, geometric abstraction and creating his background as a painter. His interest in Ahn’s mirrored light sculptures arose out of illusion of an infinitely reflecting light sculpture. The effect is close to “infinity,” something he says did not learn in school but spent a lot of time experimenting and testing. When he discovered the magical properties of one-way mirrors, Ahn knew he had found a method of creating infinite depth. By the time of his 2002 MFA Thesis Exhibition at the MICA, he had abandoned traditional painting altogether in order to create his now signature sculptural light constructions. The effect of his artwork is minimalistic in a way, involving light as a fundamental element. Ahn himself does not call it sculpture, though it is three-dimensional, and so is actually hard to define in one word. In conversation the term “fourth dimension” was discussed, relating to space and time, though Ahn’s works are non-kinetic. The somewhat shy Ahn explains that while his training in Western, his family background is Asian, and that his mother’s Buddhist religion - with its philosophy of “emptiness” - may have unconsciously influenced his way of working. Upon seeing her son’s work during a US visit she immediately understood the artwork.

In 2011, Ahn began a new body of work entitled Mirror Drawings which re-introduced his own painterly hand to the work. The drawings are made by scratching into the back of the mirror layer to create line-based, abstract images instead of allowing the construction of lights themselves to form that image. In addition to the drawings, Ahn has been exploring architectural spaces that have always been present in the artist’s work, such as the Tunnel series and Portal piece.

Ahn’s first solo exhibition was with C. Grimaldis Gallery in 2003 with six light sculptures. Since then he has exhibited extensively nationally and internationally and is included in numerous private and public collections in Paris, Karlsruhe, Seoul, Istanbul, Dubaï and closer to home at the Delaware Art Museum, amongst many others. Discovered by Constantine Grimaldis, who first saw Ahn’s work at his 2002 MFA thesis exhibition at MICA, Ahn is a member of a group of young light artists including Olafur Eliasson, Ivan Navarro, Spencer Finch and Leo Villareal. He mentions Dan Flavin and James Turrell as lighting examples. Creating new meditations on notions of the infinite and the void distinguishing mirrors facing each other, to create what he calls “barbershop mirror effect.”

Chul Hyun Ahn Perceiving Infinity


Mirror Drawing #67, 2013
Unique acrylic, LED lights and mirrors
91 3/4 x 71 5/8 x 13 5/8 inches

Mirror Drawing #68, 2013
Unique acrylic, LED lights and mirrors
91 3/4 x 71 5/8 x 13 5/8 inches

Dots, 2012
Aunt Proof, plywood, LED lights and mirrors
61 1/2 x 77 5/8 x 60 inches

Forked Series #27”, 2012
Edition 1/3, plywood, fluorescent lights, mirrors, color gels and mirrors
21 x 21 x 4 inches

Forked Series #28” 2012
Edition 2/3, plywood, fluorescent lights, mirrors, color gels and mirrors
21 x 21 x 4 inches

Forked Series #29”, 2013
Edition 3/3, cast acrylic, LEDs, mirrors
90 x 71.5 x 12.5 inches

Railroad Nostalgia, 2012
Edition 1/3, plywood, railroad tracks & tie, LED lights and mirrors
130 x 144 x 41 2/5 inches

Void, 2011
Edition 2/3, and acrylic, LED lights and mirrors
96 x 71 5/8 x 12 5/8 inches

Exhibition Checklist