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## HAEGUE YANG: REMOTE ROOM

BARBARA WIEN, BERLIN

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Haegue Yang's work is often a contemplation of the conditions of a meandering, unstable existence. Her recent *Series of Vulnerable Arrangements* (2006) at Utrecht's BAK invited the viewer to follow the artist on subsequent journeys into the heart of other cities (in addition to Utrecht there are now Seoul, Cologne and Basel versions of *Series of Vulnerable Arrangements*). She conveys her thoughts and impressions in videoworks, while simultaneously creating an installation environment that exposes visitors to the elements and climatic conditions of some of the places she has visited. In *Remote Room*, at Barbara Wien, Yang shifts towards a more self-reflexive contemplation of the potentials and conditions of artistic endeavours. Yet her longstanding concerns are still here in the abiding interest in systems we inscribe in our environment as we attempt to structure and understand the world.

In *DIN A4 / DIN A3 / DIN A2 Whatever Being* (2007), an array of sloped white rectangles sits discreetly on the wall. As the title suggests, these forms owe their dimensions to standard German paper sizes. Here Yang highlights an instance of the many industrial norms governing our daily lives. At the same time this is a meditation on the medium of paper at the core of the exhibition. Continuing Yang's ongoing investment in a practice that shuttles between two- and three-dimensional disciplines, this work transforms the flat surface of paper into a sculptural object.

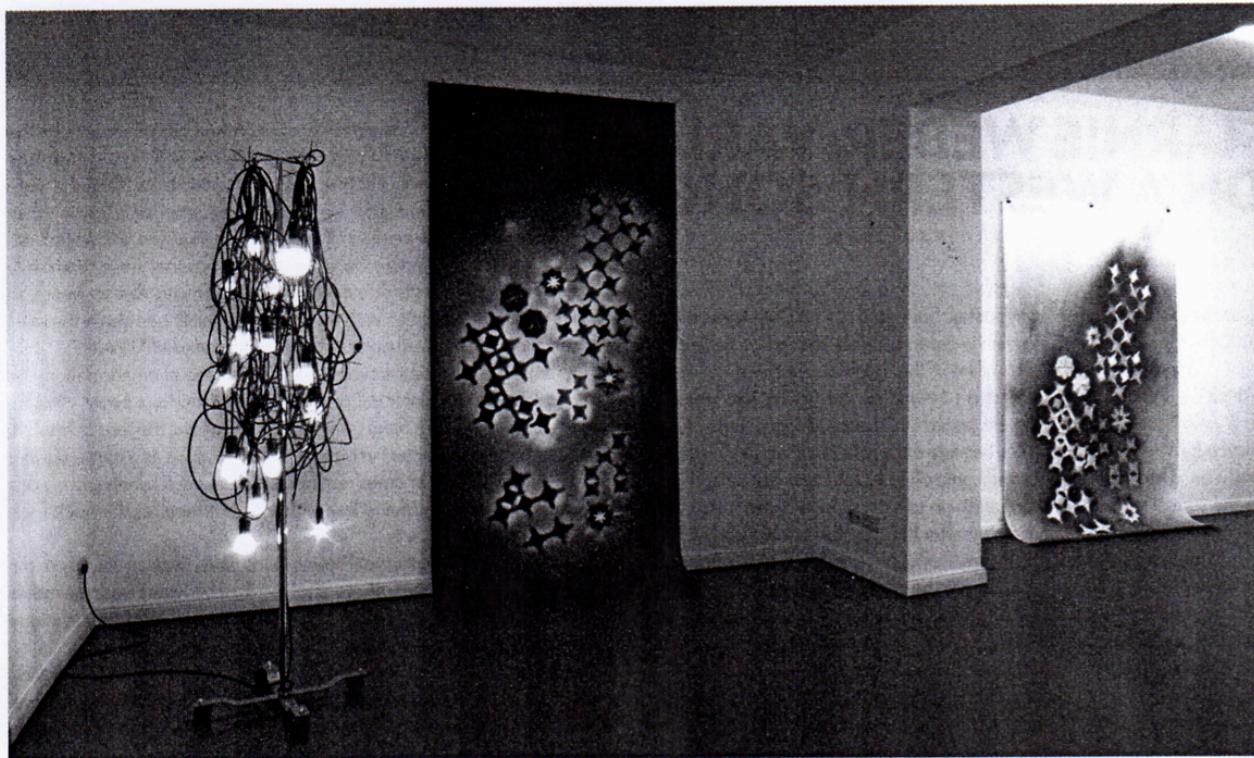
The direction of this operation is reversed in *Non-Foldings* (2007), a galaxy of black-and-white geometrical silhouettes of origami sculptures

stencilled on long sheets of paper, chance outcomes of the process by which Yang spray-painted the origami objects that feature in her 2004 video *Unfolding Places*. The traces assume a life of their own as painterly works in which 3-D objects are unfolded onto a single plane.

*Quasi MB - in the middle of its story* (2006-7) is the exhibition's centrepiece. Consisting of 18 framed panels that juxtapose typed and handwritten sheets of paper, the installation is a heartfelt homage to the two-minute film *La Pluie* (1969), by Marcel Broodthaers. In the original, Broodthaers is seen writing on a sheet of paper as a shower of water dissolves his words. Adopting a variety of narrative voices and perspectives, Yang's typed texts occasionally mirror the barely legible words of their washed-out handwritten counterparts. They reflect on her intention to reconstruct Broodthaers's project, even including texts that are signed 'M.B.', as if penned by the late artist himself. These different registers of authorship and identity are interwoven with references to Yang's nomadic existence as an artist, resulting in an installation that amounts to a sort of travel diary.

For the first time, Haegue Yang introduces references to the work of another artist as a vehicle for an analysis of the places that she emotionally, intellectually and physically inhabits. Perhaps she has finally found a place for her practice to feel at home. Her reflections on Broodthaers's sceptical approach to language, art and its institutions adds a critical dimension to her practice while at the same time celebrating its idiosyncratic tone.

Astrid Mania



*Non-Foldings*, 2007, white or black lacquer spray paint on black or white paper, dimensions variable. Courtesy Galerie Barbara Wien, Berlin