

JEONG WOOKYUNG

WORK & PRACTICE · Weaving Time, Painting the Energy of Life

I began painting knitted structures because of my memories of my mother. In the slow movement of knitting, I sensed patience, devotion, care, and love. Knitting became not simply a subject, but a method for making my paintings.

I do not use actual yarn. With paint and a very fine brush, I paint small stitch-like marks one by one on canvas. The gesture repeats, yet no two marks are identical. Pressure, breathing, paint density, and the movement of the hand create minute differences. It is repetition produced by a living body, not by a machine.

Repetition Is Time

A single work may require thousands or tens of thousands of brushstrokes. Some take months; large works can take years. Repetition becomes labor, discipline, play, and a way of enduring time.

The first nine-meter work *Earth* (144.5 × 900.0 cm), completed over three years from 2016 to 2019, makes this accumulation of time physically visible. As one repeated unit expands across nine meters, the scale of the painting becomes inseparable from the scale of time lived by the artist.

Past, Present and... and Relationship

The ellipsis leaves room for time not yet arrived and for a life that continues. Earlier marks may be covered by later ones, but they do not disappear; even invisible layers remain part of the work.

The Korean word *그리고* carries both the connective meaning of 'and' and the verbal sense of 'drawing' or 'painting.' Thus the title can also mean 'painting the past and the present.' Just as a knitted form depends on one stitch connecting to another, human life is formed through relationships.

Earth, Flowers, and the Energy of Life

In Earth, the earth is not merely a landscape but the ground in which life is born, grows, and returns. Nietzsche's phrase 'remain true to the earth' in Thus Spoke Zarathustra led me to reconsider the relationship between human beings and nature.

Flowers likewise embody birth, growth, disappearance, and renewal. In Energy, flowers, color, and repeated lines express the force created when distinct forms of life meet and coexist.

From Personal Memory to Social Memory

Figures, nature, currency, text, cities, architecture, and social events appear in my work because personal memory is never completely separate from society.

During the 2020 pandemic, I painted my daughter and young grandson wearing masks. The unfamiliar reality of even a young child having to wear a mask became both a memory of our family and part of the shared memory of a generation living through the pandemic.

In 2026, Past, Present and... (The Pain of the Himalayas) responded to the devastation of the Nepal floods through repeated blue stitches and swirling movement. Knitting is Love does not mean painting only what is beautiful. It also means refusing to turn away from human suffering and the wounds of nature.

Beyond the Plane - The Multiplex of Painting

More recently, I have folded, curved, and expanded canvas, creating space between painted surfaces. In the 2025 award exhibition at Daejeon Museum of Art, viewers could walk among the works and experience the image through the movement of their own bodies.

I call this the 'multiplex of painting': not a desire to make painting complicated, but to allow time, space, body, memory, and the viewer's experience to coexist. A single painted stitch grows into a surface; the surface extends into space; and that space meets the body of the viewer.