

Designboom August 16, 2011

Do Ho Suh at Lehmann Maupin Gallery

Korean artist Do Ho Suh presents 'Home Within Home' at Lehmann Maupin Gallery in New York. The series of sculptural works reflects Suh's continued investigation of themes surrounding cultural displacement and the co-existence of cultural identities, along with the perception of our surroundings and how one is able to construct memory from a space. The work draws on his own feeling of displacement, when he arrived in the U.S. in 1991 from his native country, to study at the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD), an experience which led him to measure spaces as a means of establishing a relationship with his new environment. Later in his artistic career, he developed the idea of taking these measurements and using them to replicate and transport spaces. This exhibition shows the artist's constructions of these architectural expanses and the elements within, which he has executed in a range of mediums including fabric, resin and styrofoam. The show includes such works as 'Fallen Star 1/5', 'Home Within Home' and his newest 'Specimens', a series of nylon fabric objects- replicas of objects remaining in his New York home as if all of its walls were to be removed.

Suh's 'Fallen Star 1/5' and 'Home Within Home' are ongoing projects which he began back in 2008, in which he has created replicas of his childhood home in Korea, and his adopted one in Providence, Rhode Island.

'Fallen Star 1/5' reflects the chapter in Suh's life, constructed to depict his journey from Korea to America, which he describes as having felt as if he was being 'dropped from the sky'. Within this narrative, a tornado lifts Suh and his Korean house, transporting him to the U.S. where the tornado drops him and his abode on a building in Providence, Rhode Island. The work is a depiction of this crash and the two homes fusing them together. *'It's my personal journey from Korea to the U.S. and the story of the house that came along with me, or brought me here,'* says the artist.

In contrast to the collision depicted in 'Fallen Star 1/5', 'Home Within Home' merges the two houses together, but we are unsure if the artist's Korean home has grown inside of his Providence one, or if the Providence residence is engulfing the Korean one. Walls and doors here have been cleared in the Korean home, making the space between the two more porous. The architectural sculpture is dissected into four quadrants made of translucent resin, each section raised and pulled apart so that the audience can walk through it.