

The title of the most recent exhibition by Yangbin Park is *The Cover Story*. The artist displays using printmaking techniques, such as etching images of book covers on top of aluminum plates. The size of book cover images is quite enlarged and the colors are de-saturated as if suggesting an old book that has lost its vitality. The way this work is presented—laying on the floor reminiscent of a carpet or a mat in a grid—is different from a conventional way of displaying a book. Considering how this work is installed, its presentation deviates from the usual way of displaying two-dimensional work, such as painting, yet is still very two-dimensional for installation work.

The artist said he wanted to change how we perceive a book. So, he reduced the thick volume of the books to the thin cover as an image and installed them usually being stored on a shelf on the floor. The artist attempted to disintegrate the voice of authority implied by the heavy volume by means of reducing to the floor level. Thereby, the books that we used to look up on a shelf became something to behold, looking down to the floor.

To the artist, a book represents a source of knowledge and education that influences the public, which is more often than not, taken as the truth. The artist as a creator is conscious of the fact that a book that we are prone to believe is a creation of the author. Thereby, Park intended to produce work that contemplates on meaning of the object, a book. Herein, the artist attempted to investigate meaning of texts in relation to the idea of book in depth.

The medium called a book functions as a catalyst that reinforces a voice of the author and contexts of the book. With the inventions of materials, such as papyrus and parchment paper, a book could be developed into the form with which we are familiar today. Through these advancements, humans could deliver texts to a broader population for a longer period, which resulted in an expansion of state power and developments of civilization. Followed by the developments of printing and photography, a book evolved into such diverse contexts to the degree that it would have been unimaginable in the earlier time. In tandem with the developments of a book rapidly becoming accessible to the mass people, culture and the concept of the public would take a shape, a study and knowledge were radically cultivated to give a birth to a modern civilization.

Yet, the artist seems to attend the fact that since the advent of digital revolution, such as an internet, the author-oriented way of delivering knowledge has confronted a major change. That being said, upon entering digital age, a two-way communication, such as Google, Wikipedia, Facebook and likes quickly replaced an authoritative author-centered communication. Park seems to keenly recognize these changes in our perceptions of a book. The artist suggests that this age of collective

knowledge in which we live in today calls for a new perspective to perceive what a book or texts represent.

This is why, I believe, Park presented these book covers in a way that they look worn and faded in a grey tone, alluding to a sort of fossils. He seems to argue that the voice of authority represented by these books, the voice of author reigning over the public granted by their covers are no longer commanding us as they had in the past.

In Yangbin Park's work, the monumentalized images of book covers just revealing their dull colors which seem to have lost all the vitalities are laying on the floor- flat and silent reminiscent of remains-as if to indicate they are deceased. The title of the exhibition *The Cover Story* implies both a *cover story* and a *created story* simultaneously. Looking back to the past, many books and printed materials were used as an apparatus through which those powerful covered up and manipulated stories in favor of their interests (history is written by the winner). And there the artist situate the voice of authority epitomized by these texts on the cover into that of relics displayed at a museum so that he can break down the way we generally perceive them, creating a situation, in which to suggest a different perspective under a new light.