

# SHIN SANG-HO

The Mind of a Master

Han Collection  
33 Museum Street  
London  
WC1A 1LH

hancollection.london@gmail.com  
@hancollection.london

Shin Sang-ho was born in 1947 and is an internationally renowned artist and pioneer for Korean craft and design, with work featured in the British Museum, Victoria and Albert Museum and the Royal Trust Collection. He is the former Dean at Seoul's Hongik University College of Fine Arts, and was a visiting professor at the Royal Academy of Art in London from 1995-1997. His love for ceramics began when he visited the kiln sites at Icheon in 1965, where he saw how ceramic artists work - in a 2019 interview for EBS, Shin stated that:

“Visiting there gave me an indescribable feeling of community difficult to find in the city. It was then that I knew straight away that this was for me”.

Throughout his career, Shin has had to overcome misjudgements from his peers for his embracing of modern and contemporary design and techniques. His critics labelled him a traitor, as he diverted away from the traditional Korean ceramic styles and firing methods. While Shin acknowledges the value of tradition, he believes that not every potter is destined for that path - diversity and acceptance of change is equally as valuable.

It is for this reason that Shin is famous for his innovation and uniqueness within the field of ceramic art. This uniqueness also manifests in his firing methods. Where traditional ceramicists in Korea use wood-firing, Shin became infamous for his acceptance of the gas kiln - a technique which he first learned in Japan. When asked why he prefers the gas kiln over the traditional Korean kiln, the artist emphasises the success rate of the ceramic pieces in comparison to the wood-fired kiln.







## NOTE 노트

The traditional ceramic forms featured in this exhibition (celadon, porcelain, and buncheong) were produced by Shin Sang-ho during the years 1991-1992. During this period, the artist worked on adapting the shapes and glazes of traditional Korean ceramics to fit the contemporary period. These forms have never been produced by the artist since - thus, making the pieces in this exhibition part of a **limited edition** of works by the artist.



# 청자

## C E L A D O N

Shin Sang-ho's celadon work is characterised by its delicate beauty and subtle variations in color and texture. Celadon is a type of glaze that was first developed in China and later adopted by Korean potters during the Goryeo dynasty (918-1392). The glaze is characterised by its green colour, which is achieved through the use of iron oxide and a reduction firing technique.

Shin Sang-ho has taken this traditional technique and elevated it to new heights, creating pieces that are characterised by their simplicity and elegance. His celadon pieces come in traditional forms such as bowls, vases, and cups, and are frequently adorned with intricate patterns or textures created by carving or incising the clay before it is glazed and fired. This gives his work a sense of depth and complexity, inviting the viewer to examine and appreciate the piece from multiple angles.

Another important aspect of Shin Sang-ho's celadon work is his attention to detail. He spends a great deal of time carefully crafting each piece, ensuring that the form, texture, and glaze are perfectly balanced. This attention to detail results in pieces that are both beautiful and functional, inviting the viewer to use and appreciate the piece in their everyday life.

Overall, Shin Sang-ho's celadon work is a testament to his mastery of traditional Korean pottery techniques and his dedication to innovation and excellence. His pieces are a beautiful combination of ancient and modern, and his use of natural materials and attention to detail make them truly unique and special. Similar pieces to the ones featured in this exhibition can be found in the permanent collections of the British Museum, and Victoria and Albert Museum, London.







Celadon Jar with Wheat and Grasshopper Decoration, 1991

Celadon  
H.20.5 x D.18cm  
SSH-C1



**Faceted Celadon Jar, 1991**

Celadon  
H.24.5 x D.18cm  
SSH-C2







**Faceted Celadon Jar, 1991**

Celadon  
H.26 x D.9.8cm  
SSH-C3





Faceted Celadon Jar with , 1991

Celadon  
H.27 x D.11.5cm  
SSH-C4





**Square Twisted Celadon Vase, 1991**

Celadon  
H.30 x D.9cm  
SSH-C5

# 백자

## Porcelain

Shin Sang-ho's porcelain work is highly regarded for its beauty and skillful craftsmanship. Porcelain is a type of ceramic that is known for its white color, which is achieved through the use of kaolin clay and a high firing temperature.

Shin Sang-ho's porcelain pieces often feature simple, elegant forms, which are adorned with intricate patterns or textures. He uses a variety of techniques to create these patterns, including carving, incising, and inlaying. The resulting pieces are delicate and beautiful, inviting the viewer to examine them closely and appreciate their fine detail.

There is a fascinating story relating to Shin's porcelain, connecting the artist, former South Korean President Chun Doo-hwan, and Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. In the 1980s, Shin Sang-ho was commissioned to create a set of porcelain pieces for Chun Doo-hwan, who was serving as the President of South Korea at the time. The pieces were to be presented to Queen Elizabeth II as a gift from Chun Doo-hwan during a state visit to England.

Shin Sang-ho created two round vases that were decorated with intricate designs inspired by traditional Korean motifs. The pieces were then presented to Queen Elizabeth II in 1984, and they were so well-received that they were added to the Royal Trust Collection, which is a collection of art and antiques owned by the British Royal Family.

This was a tremendous honor for Shin Sang-ho, as his work was now part of the prestigious Royal Trust Collection, and it brought international attention to Korean pottery and art. It also served as a symbol of the strong diplomatic ties between South Korea and England, and the gift was seen as a gesture of goodwill and friendship between the two countries.

Today, the pieces created by Shin Sang-ho for Chun Doo-hwan and Queen Elizabeth II are highly valued for their historical significance and their beauty, and they continue to inspire and captivate people from both Korea and the United Kingdom.







**White Porcelain Jar, 1991**

White Porcelain  
H.38 x D.12.5cm  
SSH-P1







White Porcelain Jar, 1991

White Porcelain  
H.27 x D.10cm  
SSH-C2





**Faceted White Porcelain Jar, 1991**

White Porcelain  
H.23.5 x D.10.5cm  
SSH-P3



분청

Buncheon + dream

Shin Sang-ho is known for his exceptional skills in creating traditional Korean pottery, and his work in the field of Buncheon is particularly noteworthy. Buncheon is a type of Korean pottery that was popular during the Joseon Dynasty (1392-1897) and is characterized by its textured surface that is decorated with white slip.

Shin Sang-ho's Buncheon pieces form his 'dream' series, and are a beautiful blend of tradition and modernity. He combines the ancient techniques of Buncheon with his own contemporary vision to create works that are both timeless and contemporary. His pieces are unique in that they are not only functional but also works of art that can be displayed and admired. Similar pieces to the ones featured in this exhibition can be found in the permanent collections of the British Museum, and Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Shin Sang-ho's Buncheon human and animal sculptures are a unique and striking addition to his body of work. These sculptures showcase his skill in creating pieces that are both realistic and abstract, and that capture the movement and energy of their subjects. His sculptures are a celebration of the natural world, and they showcase the beauty and versatility of traditional Korean pottery.

Through his work, Shin Sang-ho has helped to elevate Buncheon to a new level of artistry and has cemented his place as one of the most talented ceramic artists of his generation.







**Dream, 1992**

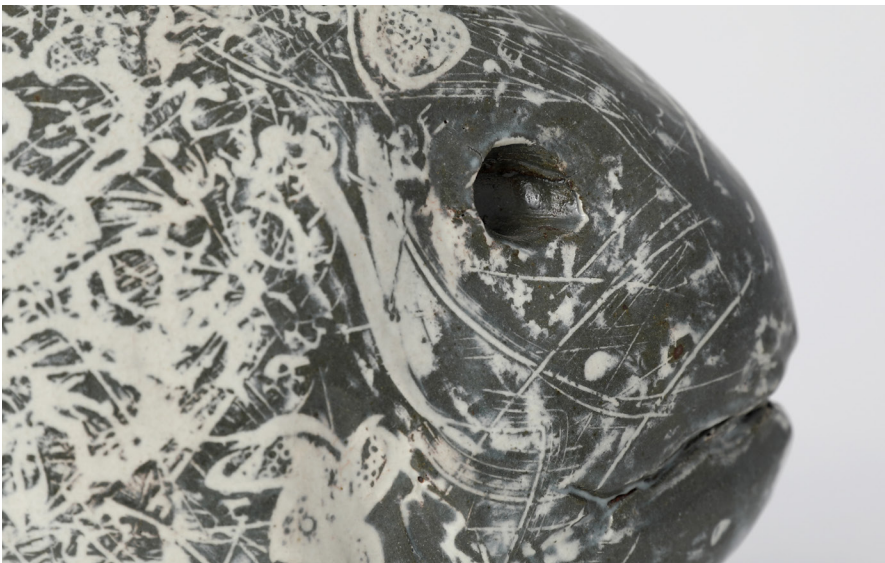
Buncheong Stoneware  
H.11cm x D.43cm  
SSH-B1





Dream, 1992  
Buncheong Stoneware  
H.10cm x D.34cm  
SSH-B2





**Dream, 1992**  
Buncheong Stoneware  
H.13 x D.33cm  
SSH-B3





Dream, 1992

Buncheong Stoneware  
H.47.5cm x D.13cm  
SSH-B4







Dream, 1991

Buncheong Stoneware  
H.46.5cm x D.14cm  
SSH-B5





Dream, 1992

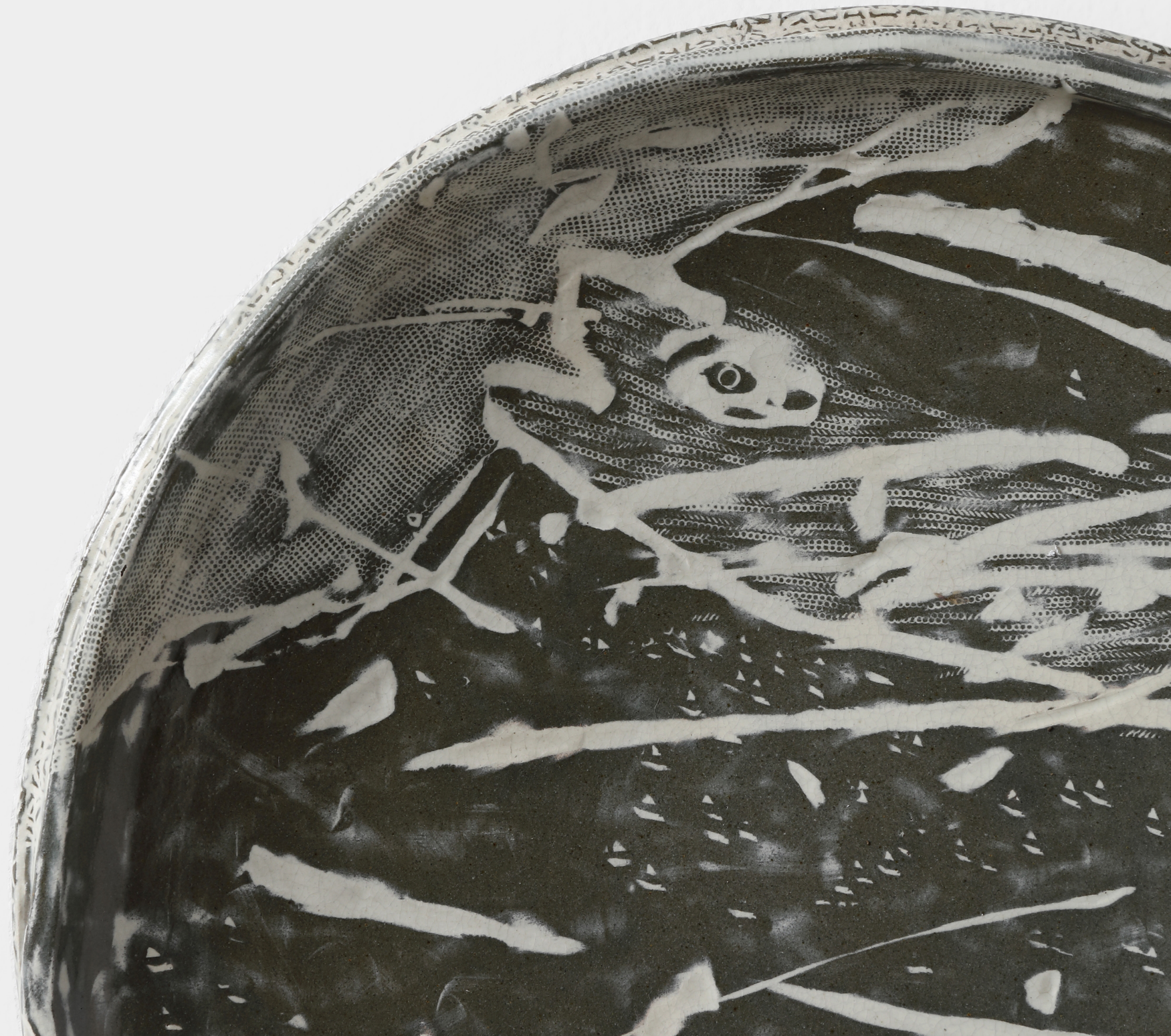
Buncheong Stoneware  
H.40 x D.29cm  
SSH-B6





**Dream, 1991**

Buncheong Stoneware  
D. 44.5cm  
SSH-B7







Dream, 1998

Buncheong Stoneware  
H.35 x D.21  
SSH-B8





**Dream, 1992**

Buncheong Stoneware  
H.47 x D.26cm  
SSH-B9





Dream, 1992

Buncheong Stoneware  
H.27.5cm x D.17.5cm  
SSH-B10





**Dream, 1992**

Buncheong Stoneware  
H.44cm x D.28cm  
SSH-B11





Dream, 1992

Buncheong Stoneware  
H.36cm x D.24cm  
SSH-B12





Dream, 1992

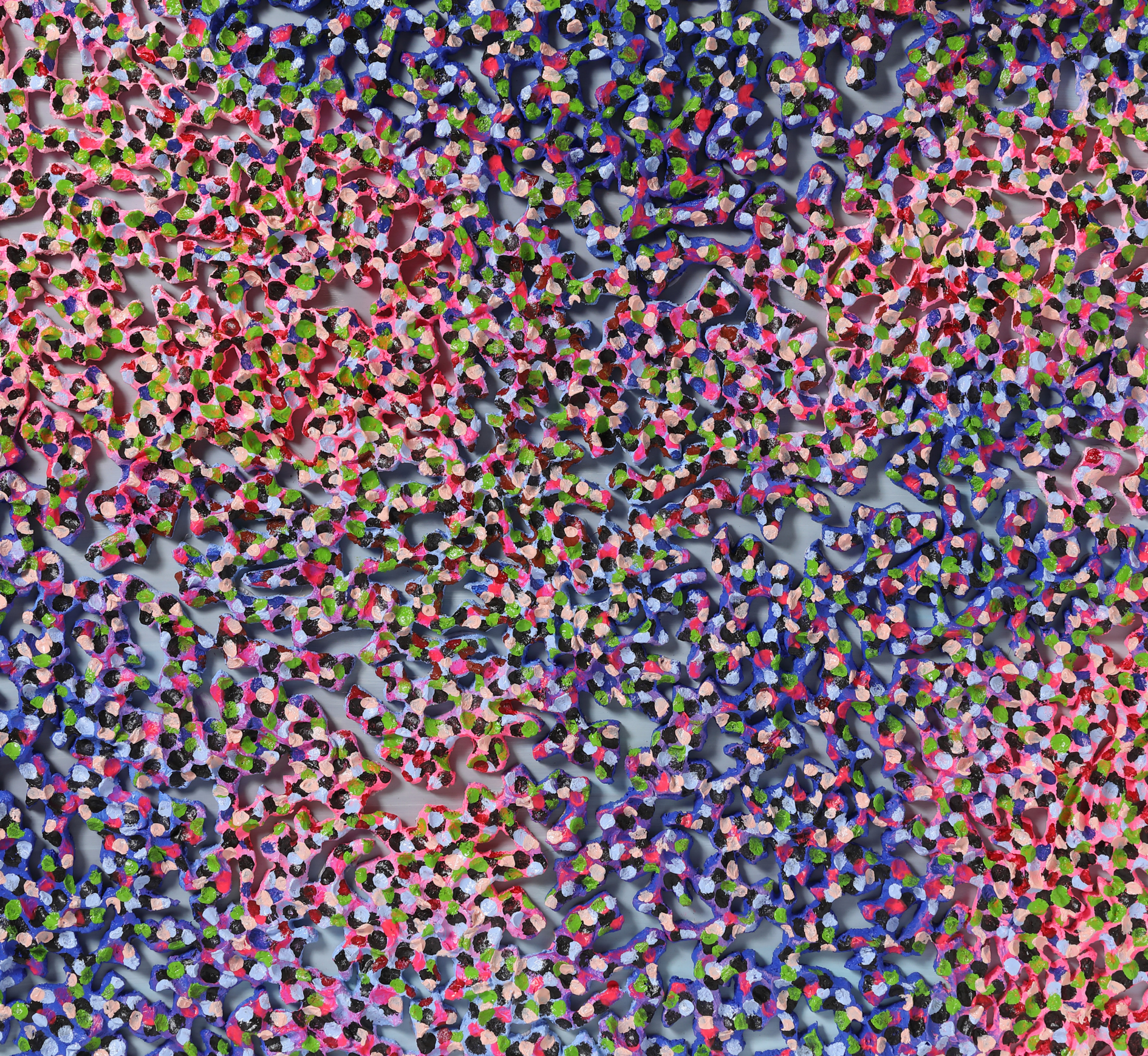
Buncheong Stoneware  
H.19.5cm x D.12cm  
SSH-B13



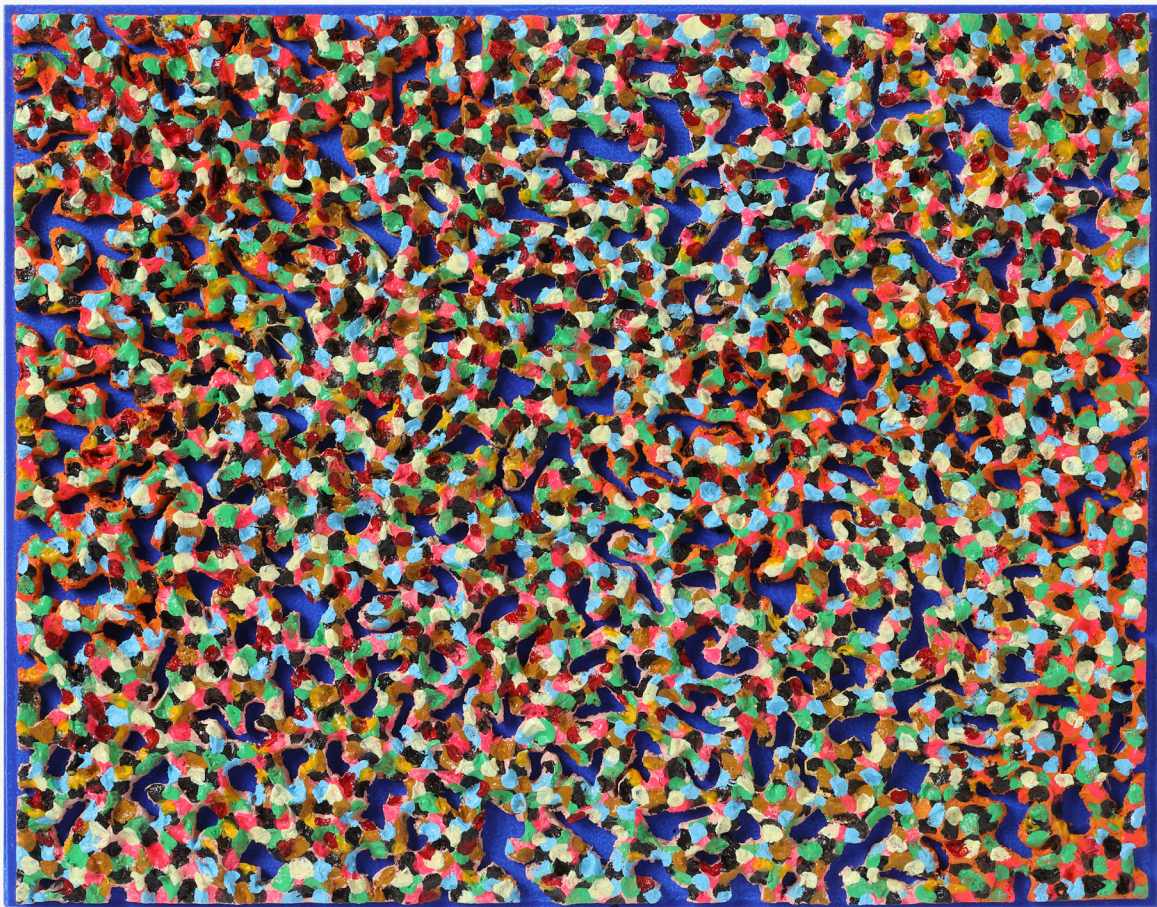
# 무식록 Apocalypse

Shin Sang-ho is known for his colourful fired paintings titled 'Apocalypse', which are a unique and innovative addition to the world of ceramic art. His pieces are both beautiful and thought-provoking, combining his extensive knowledge of traditional methods with modern artistic sensibilities.

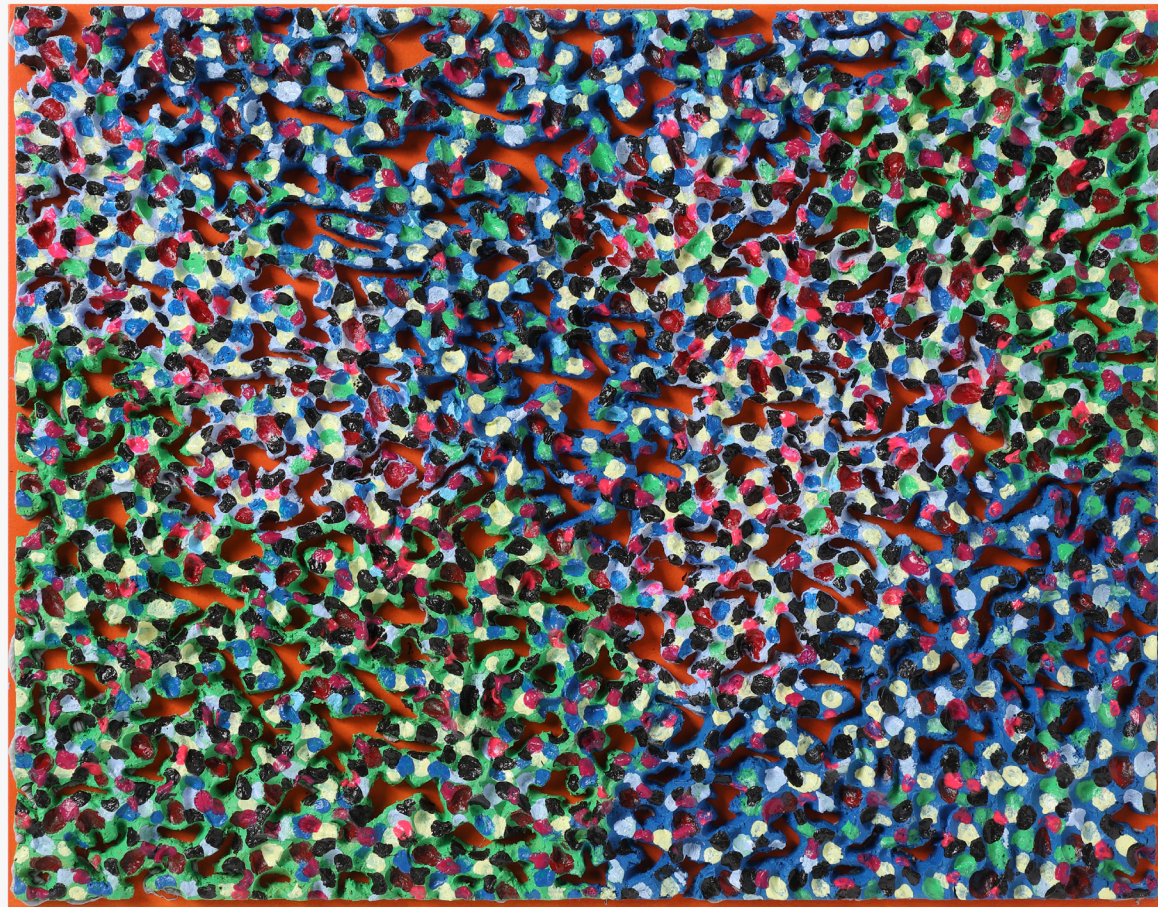
The inspiration for these pieces came from his careful consideration of his vision for a final series of artworks. When meditating on the leaves and branches of the large elm tree, first planted upon his arrival at his studio over 4 decades ago, he saw light emerging through the negative space. These fired paintings are meant to emulate this vision - light passing through dispersed leaves and twigs - and represent his final thoughts as a professional artist before retirement. His beloved elm tree - his partner for over 40 years, was present at the very beginning, and is present for the very final stage of Shin's ceramic career.





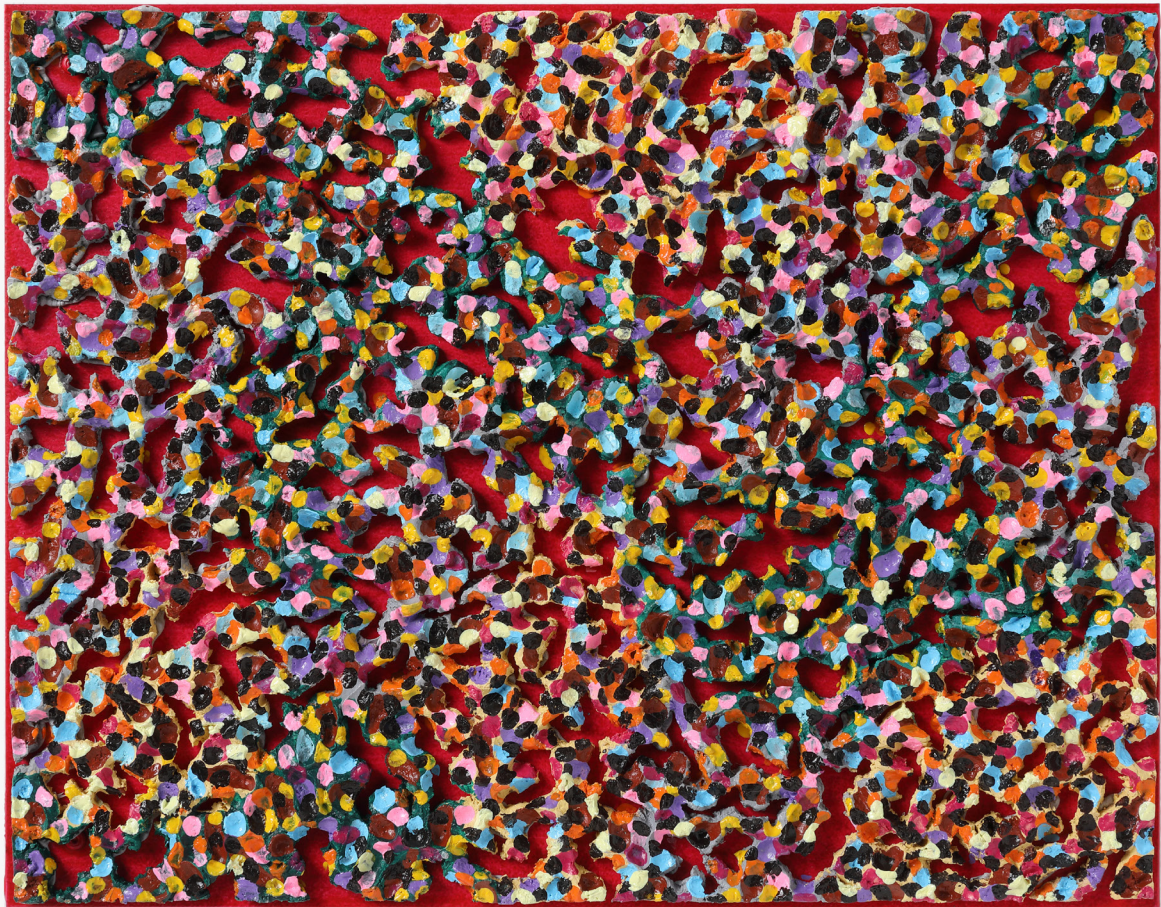


묵시록  
Apocalypse, 2022  
Fired Painting  
H.27 x D.35cm  
SSH-A1

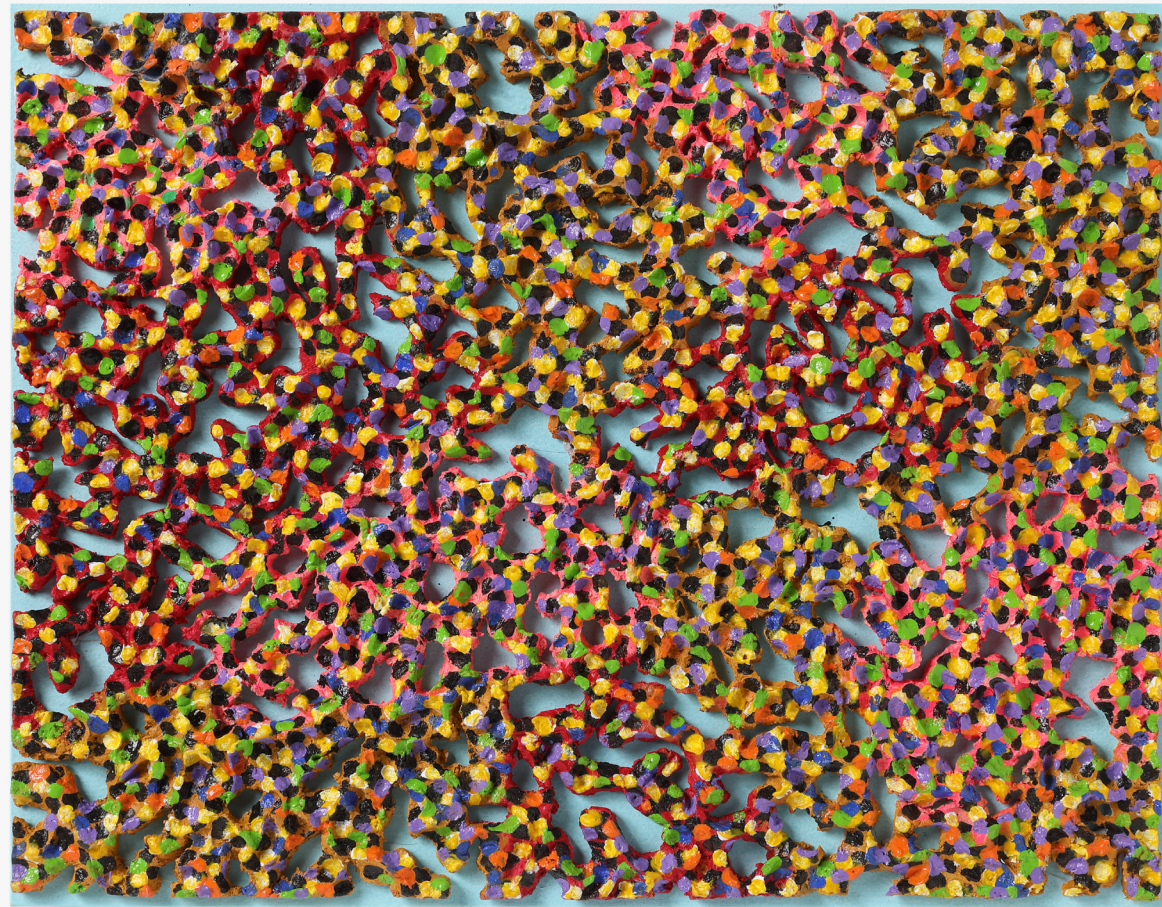


묵시록  
Apocalypse, 2022  
Fired Painting  
H.27 x D.35cm  
SSH-A2



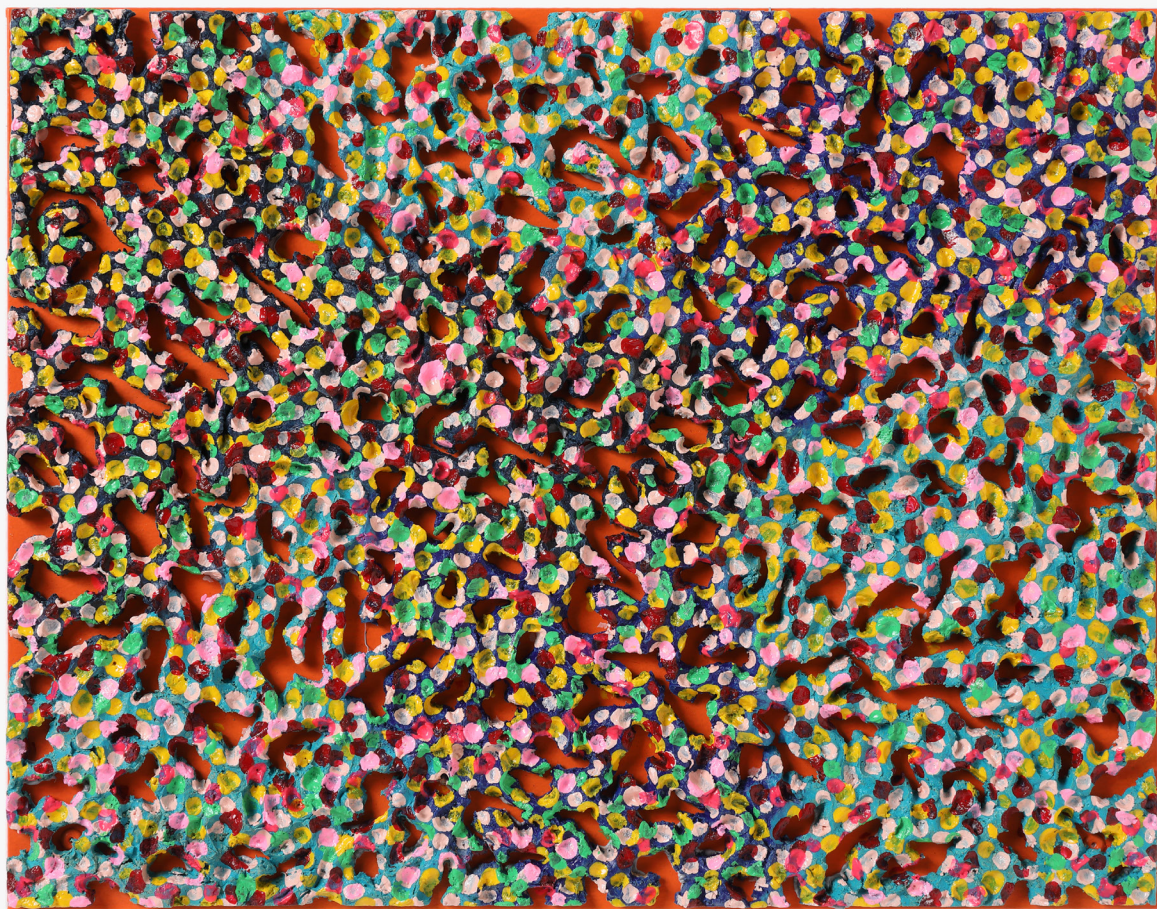


목시록  
Apocalypse, 2022  
Fired Painting  
H.27 x D.35cm  
SSH-A3



목시록  
Apocalypse, 2022  
Fired Painting  
H.27 x D.35cm  
SSH-A4



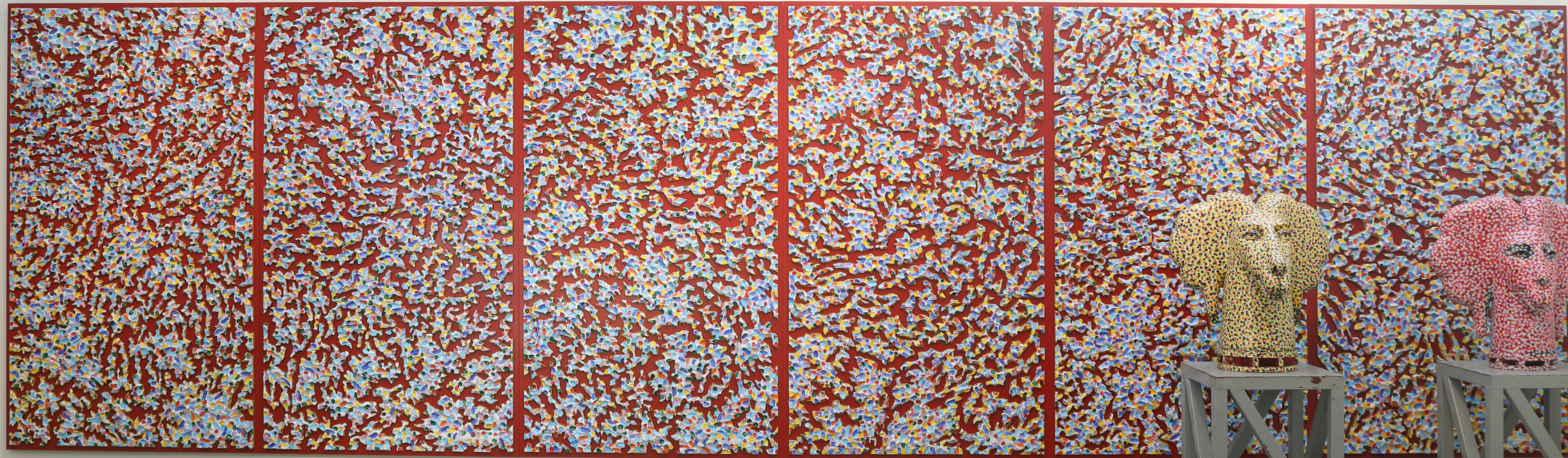


목시록  
Apocalypse, 2022  
Fired Painting  
H.27 x D.35cm  
SSH-A5

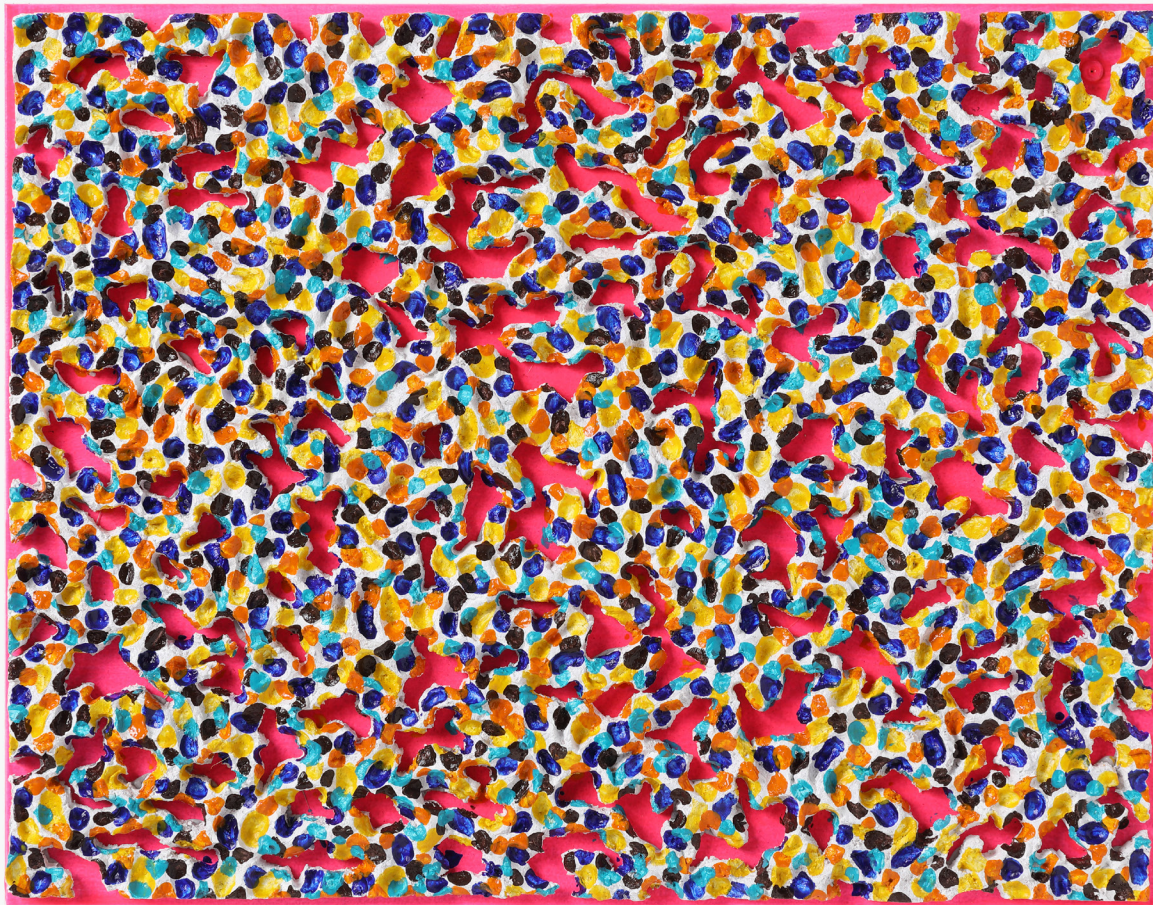


목시록  
Apocalypse, 2022  
Fired Painting  
H.27 x D.35cm  
SSH-A6

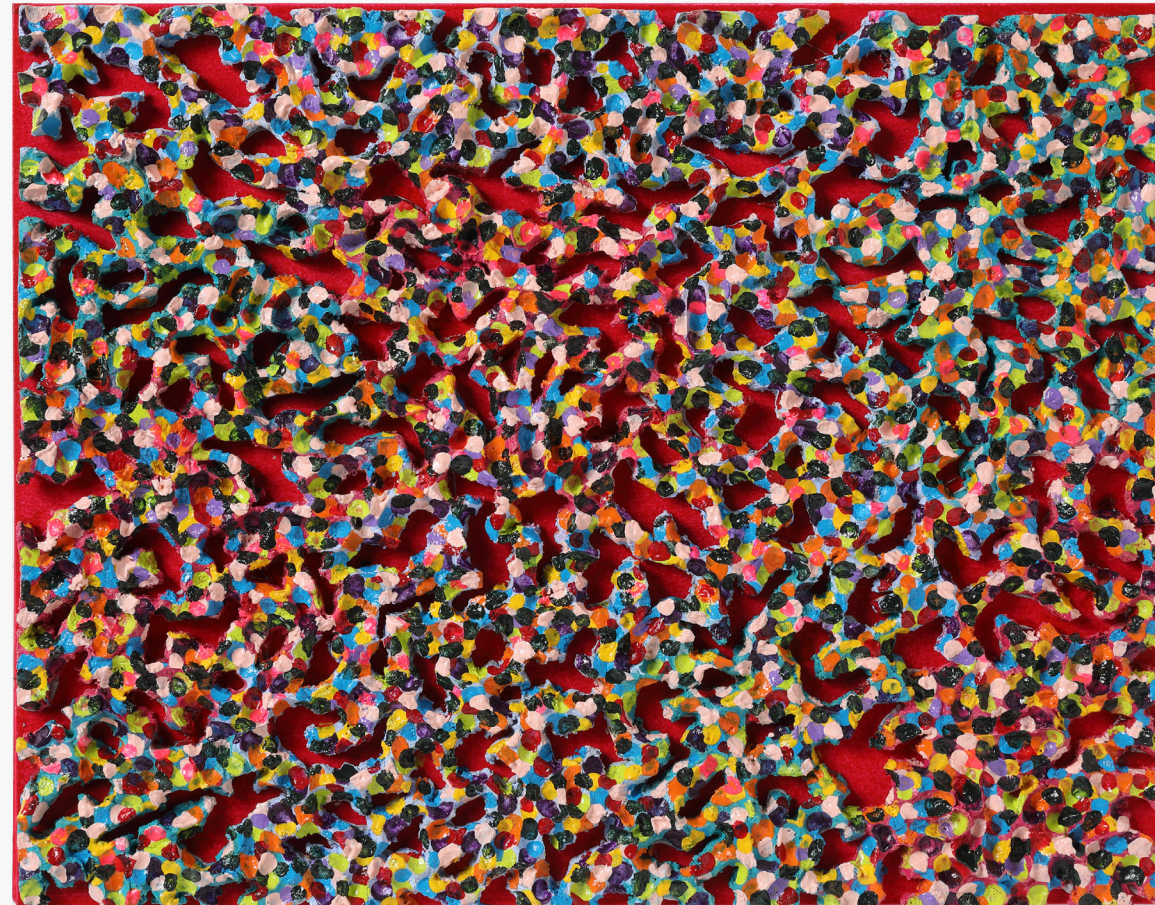






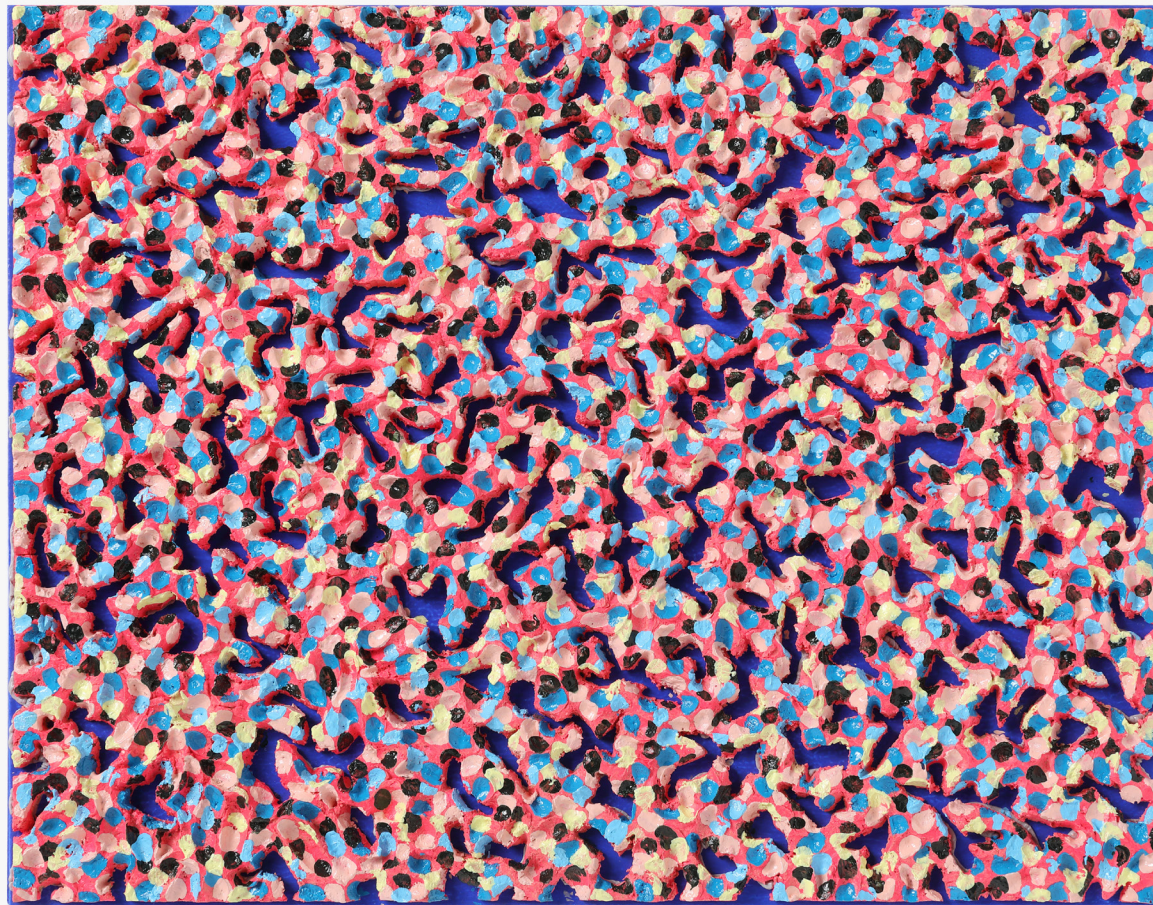


목시록  
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Fired Painting  
H.27 x D.35cm  
SSH-A7

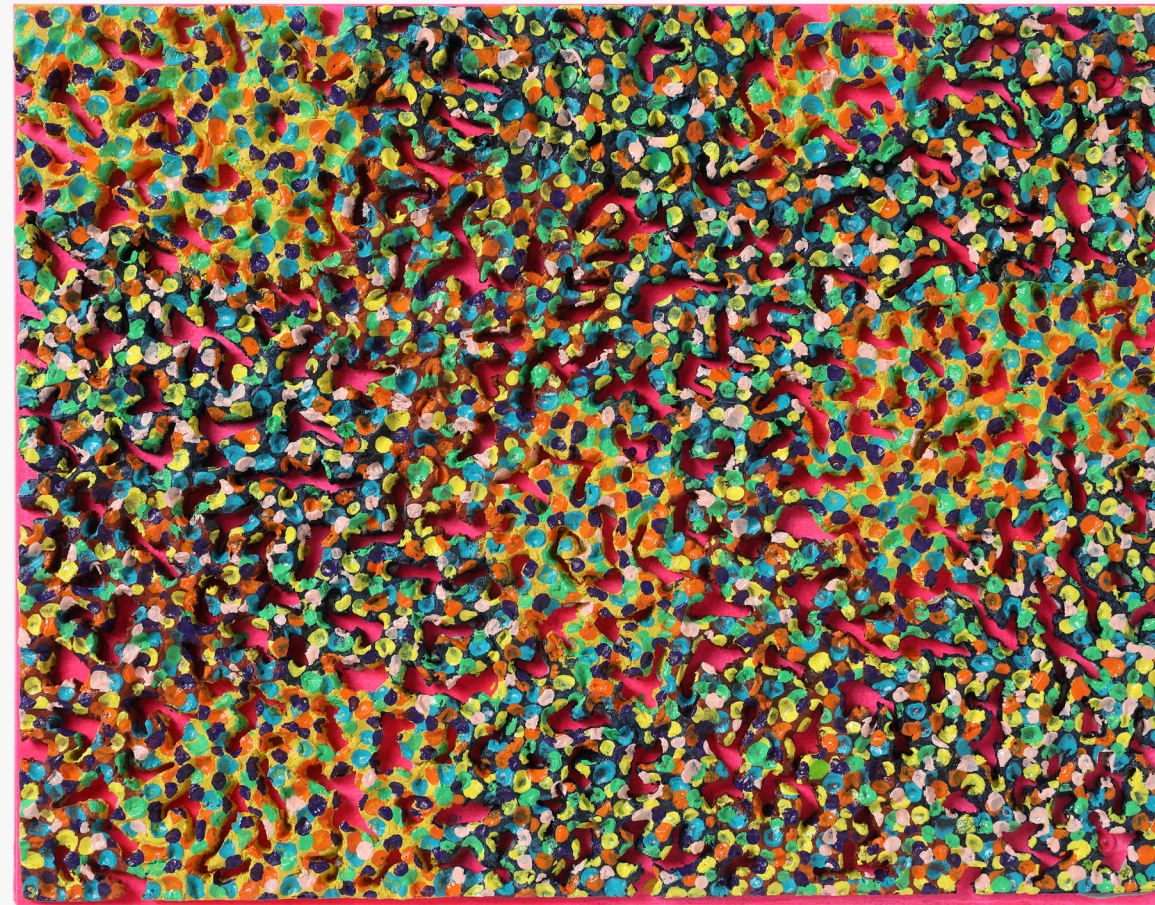


목시록  
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Fired Painting  
H.27 x D.35cm  
SSH-A8



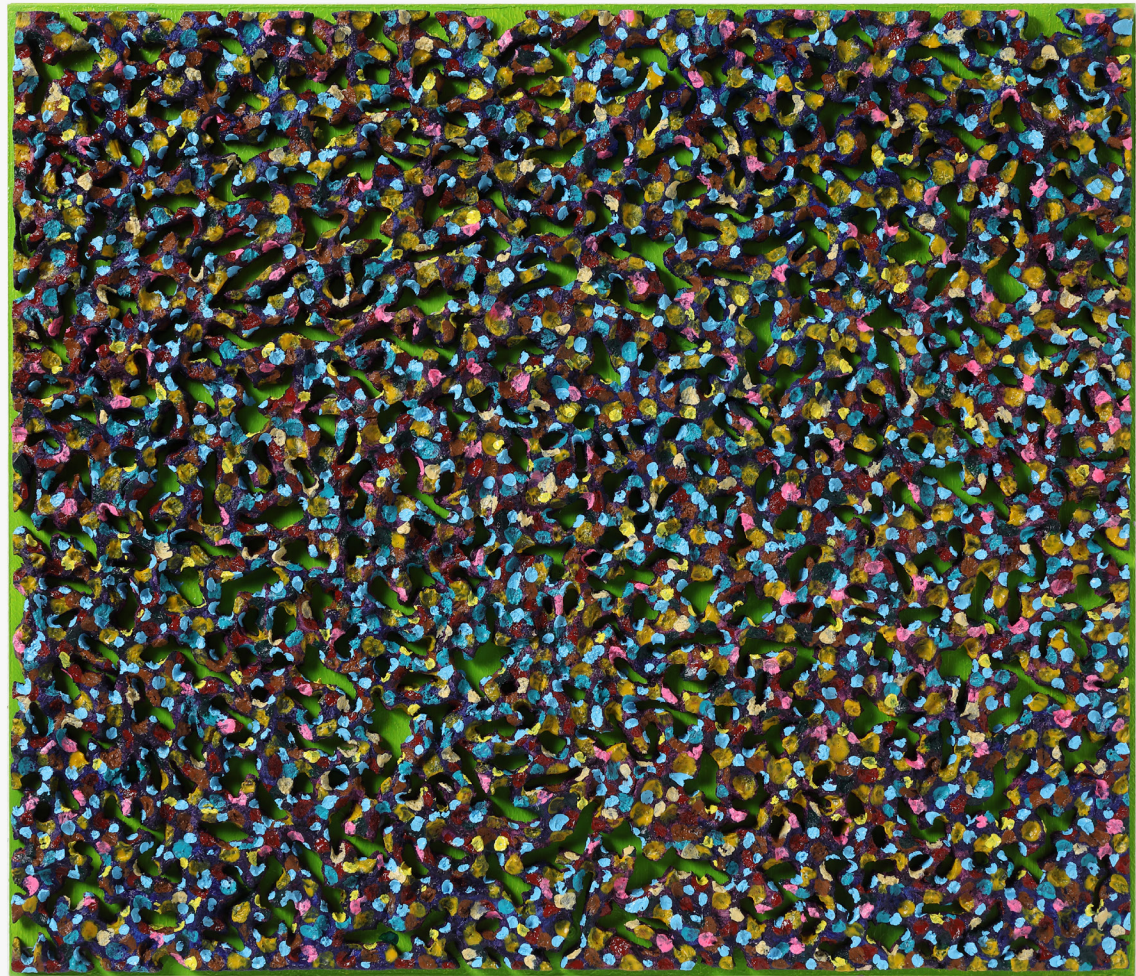


목시록  
 Apocalypse, 2022  
 Fired Painting  
 H.27 x D.35cm  
 SSH-A9

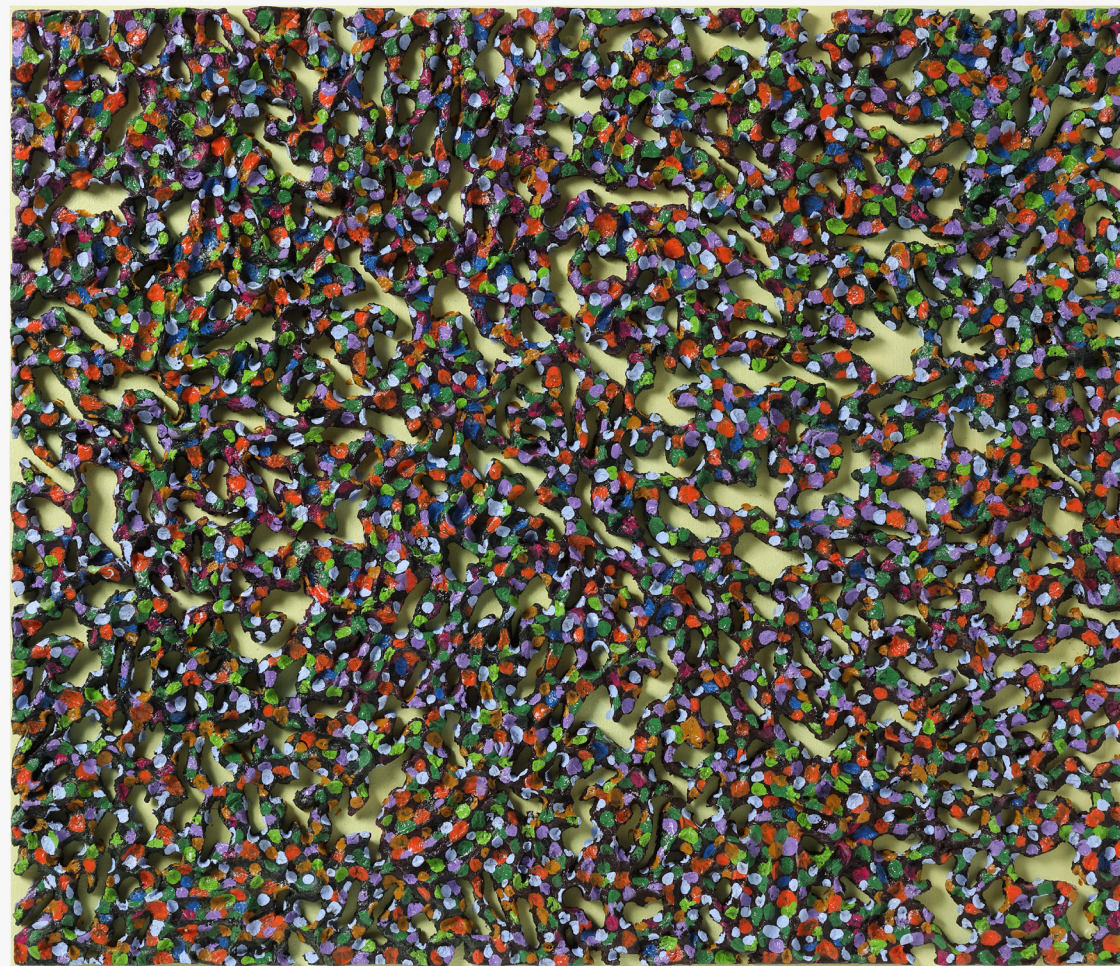


목시록  
 Apocalypse, 2022  
 Fired Painting  
 H.27 x D.35cm  
 SSH-A10



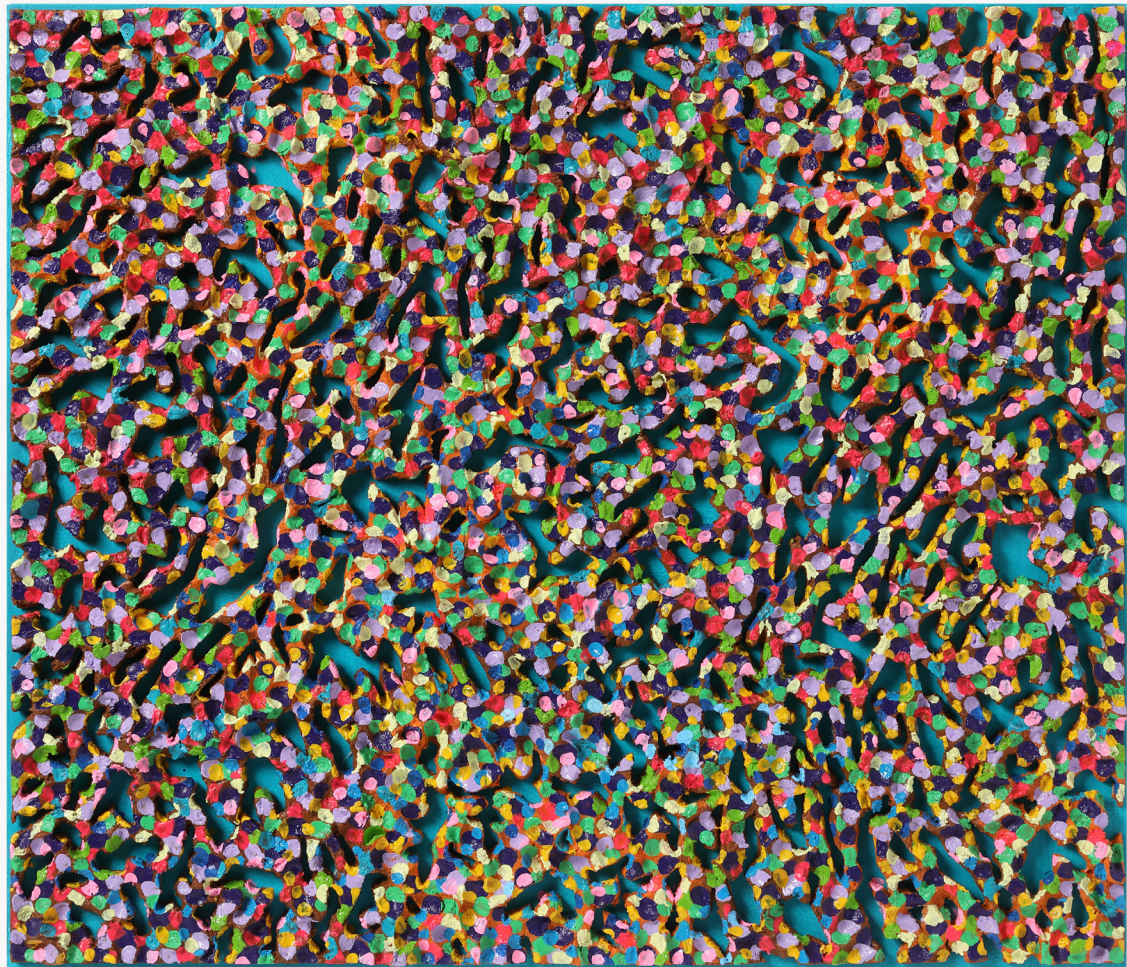


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Fired Painting  
H.45.5 x D.53cm  
SSH-A11

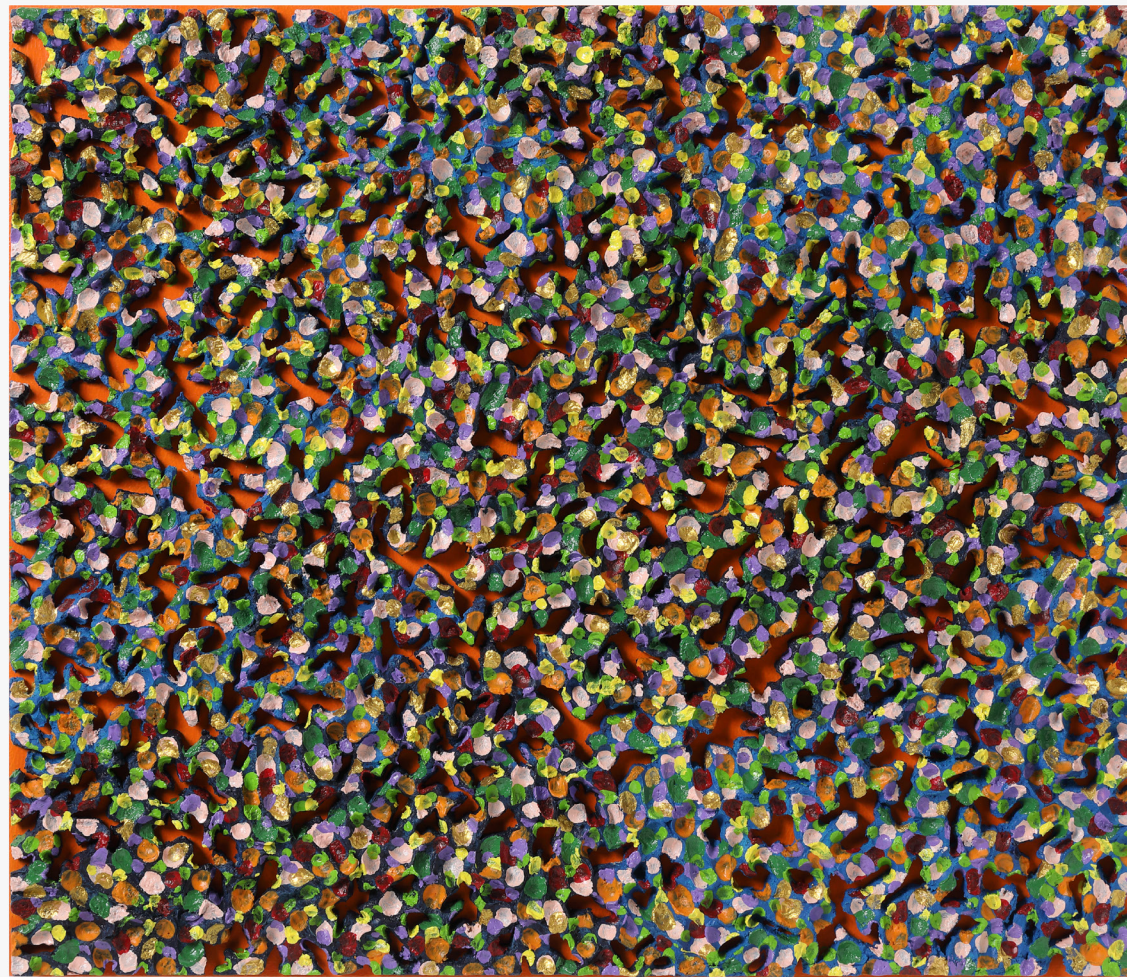


목시록  
Apocalypse, 2022  
Fired Painting  
H.45.5 x D.53cm  
SSH-A12



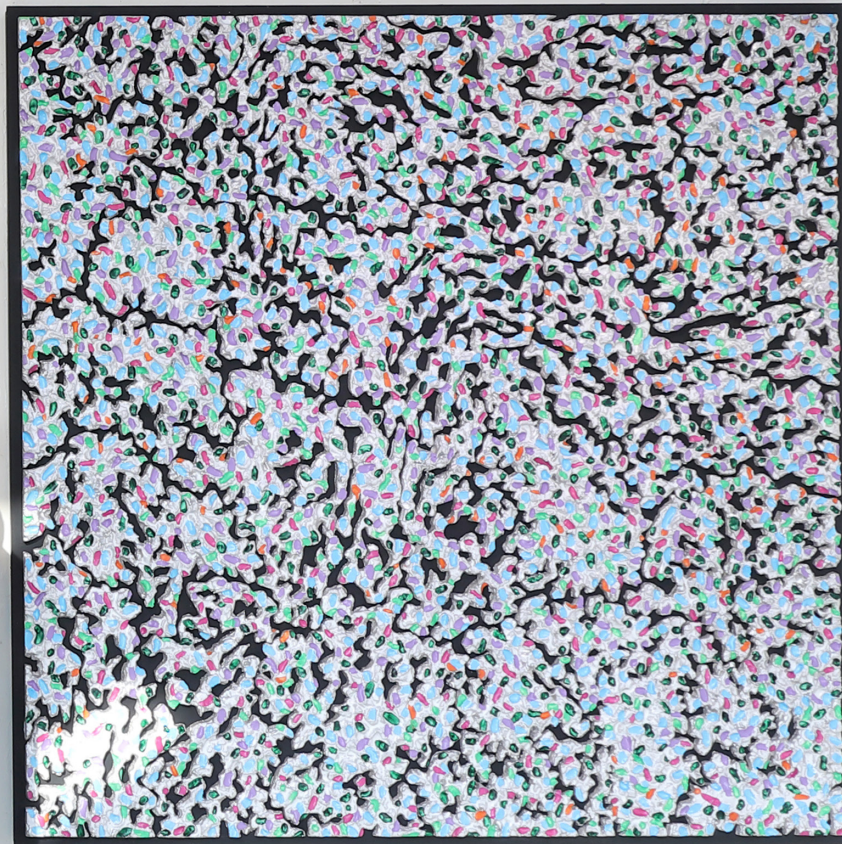
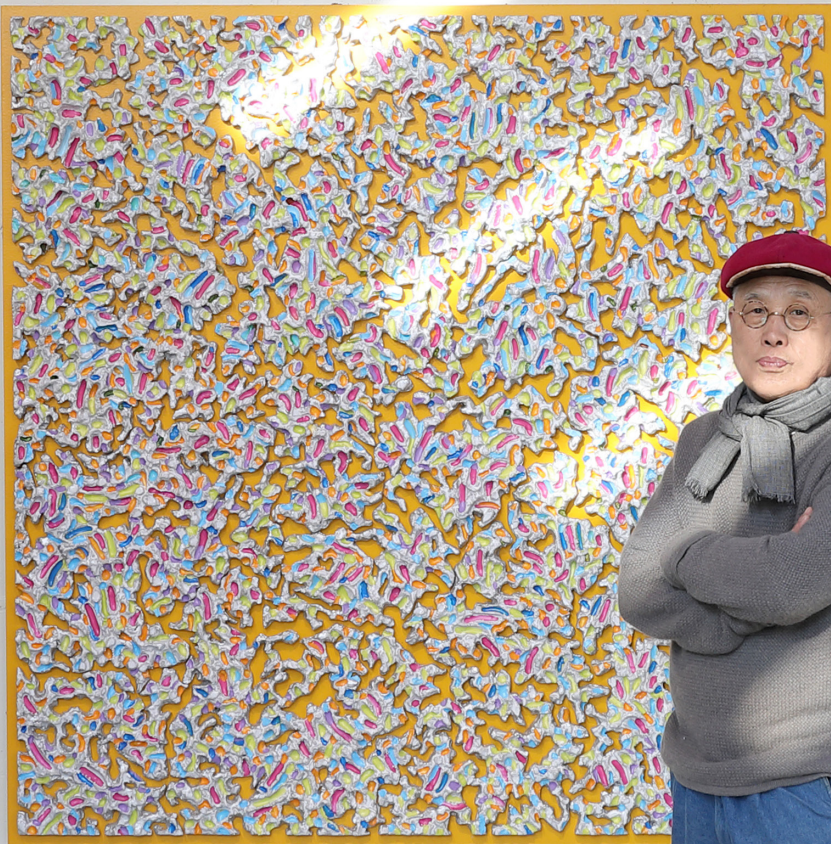
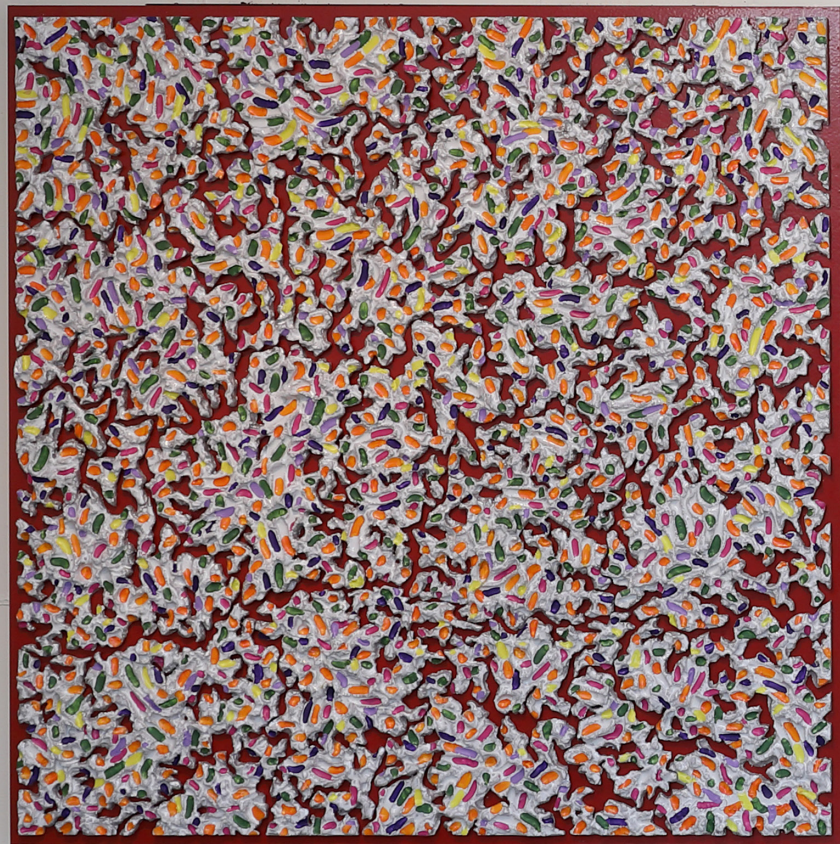


목시록  
Apocalypse, 2022  
Fired Painting  
H.45.5 x D.53cm  
SSH-A13

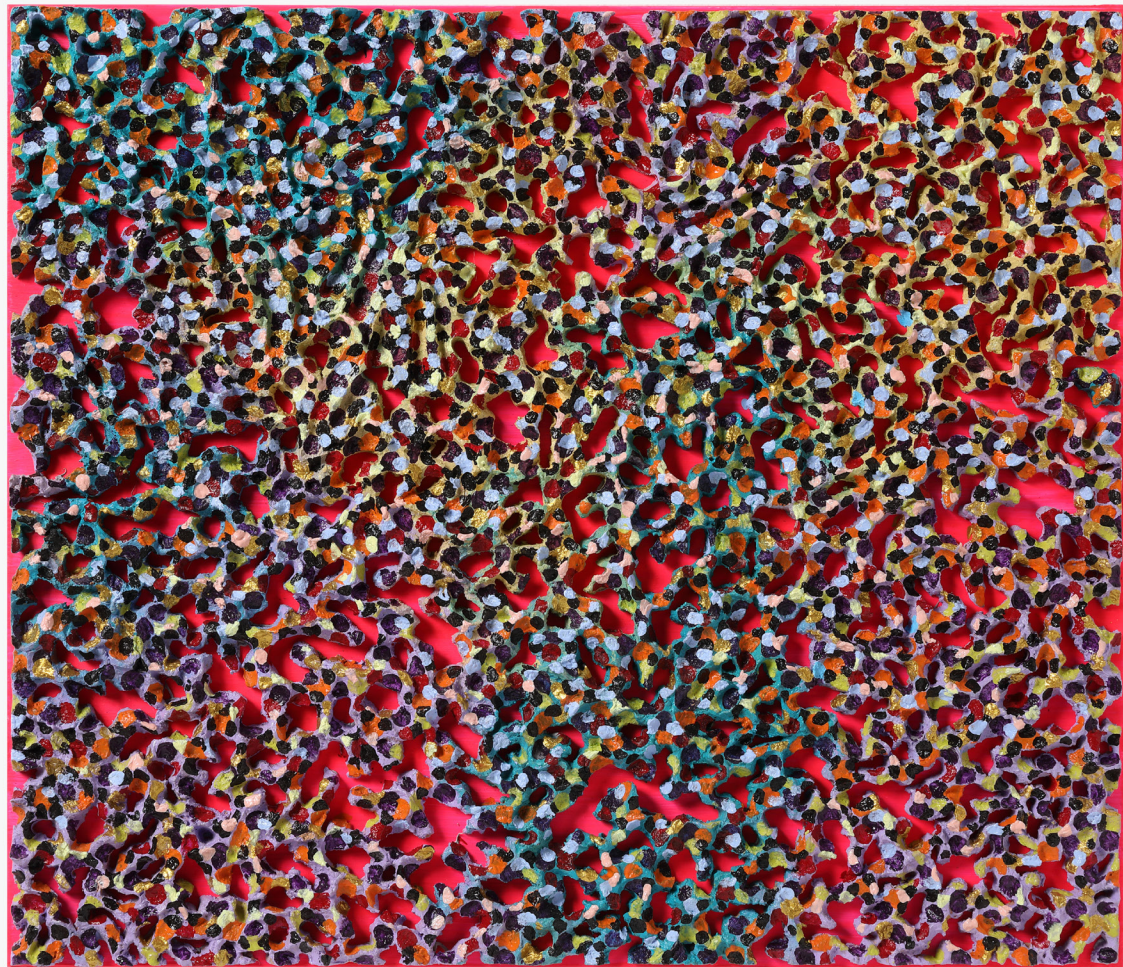


목시록  
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Fired Painting  
H.45.5 x D.53cm  
SSH-A14

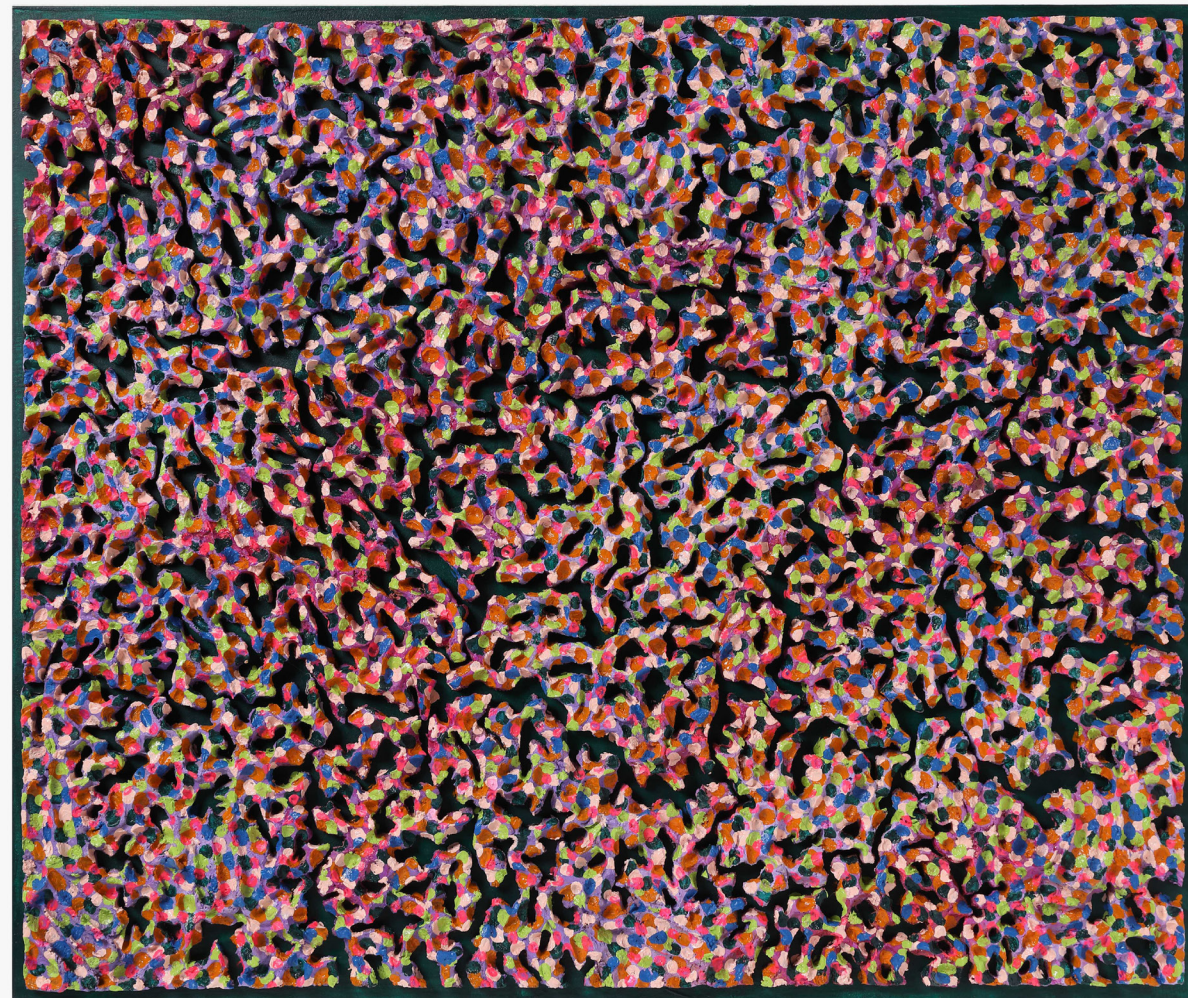






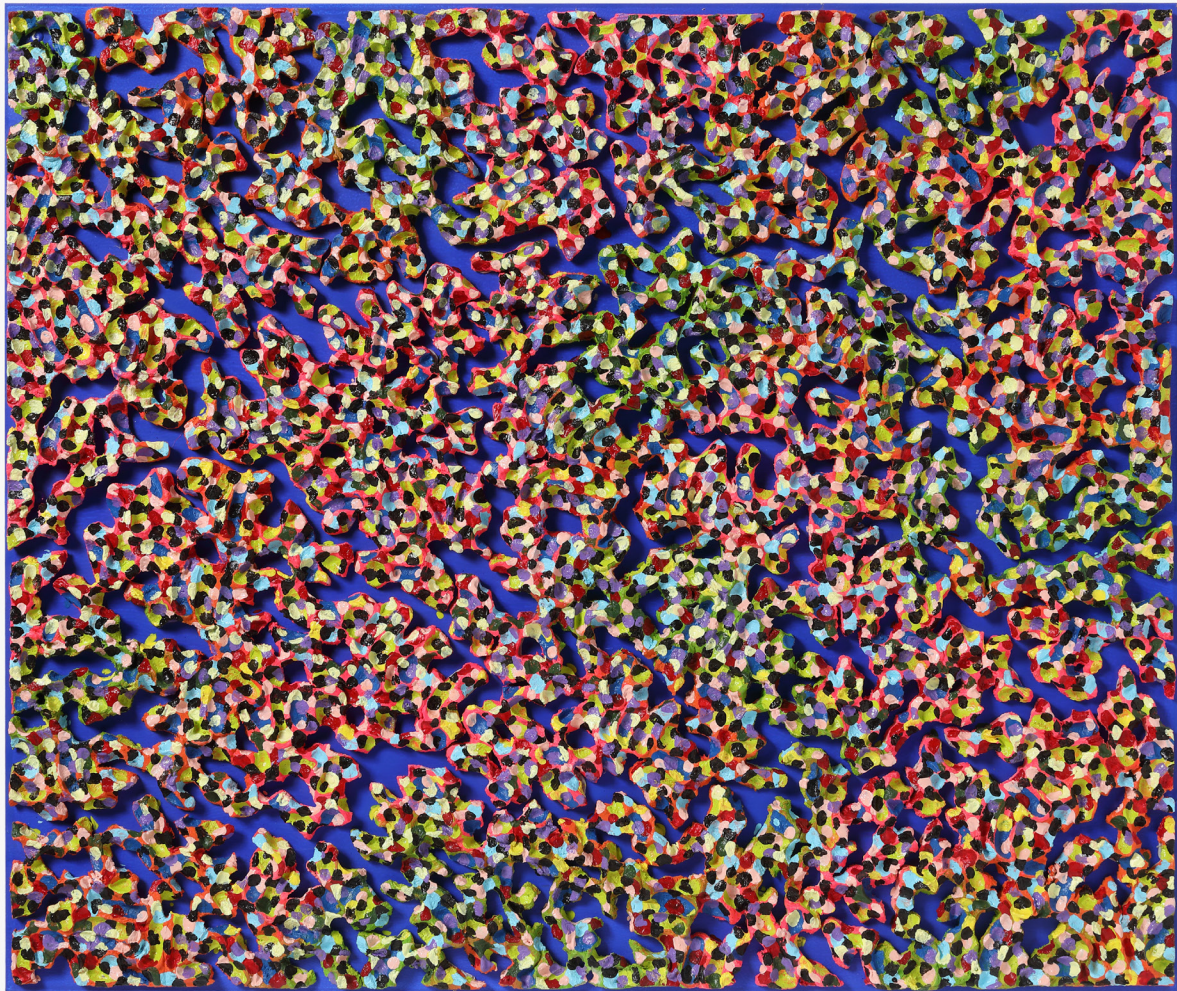


목시록  
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 Fired Painting  
 H.45.5 x D.53cm  
 SSH-A15

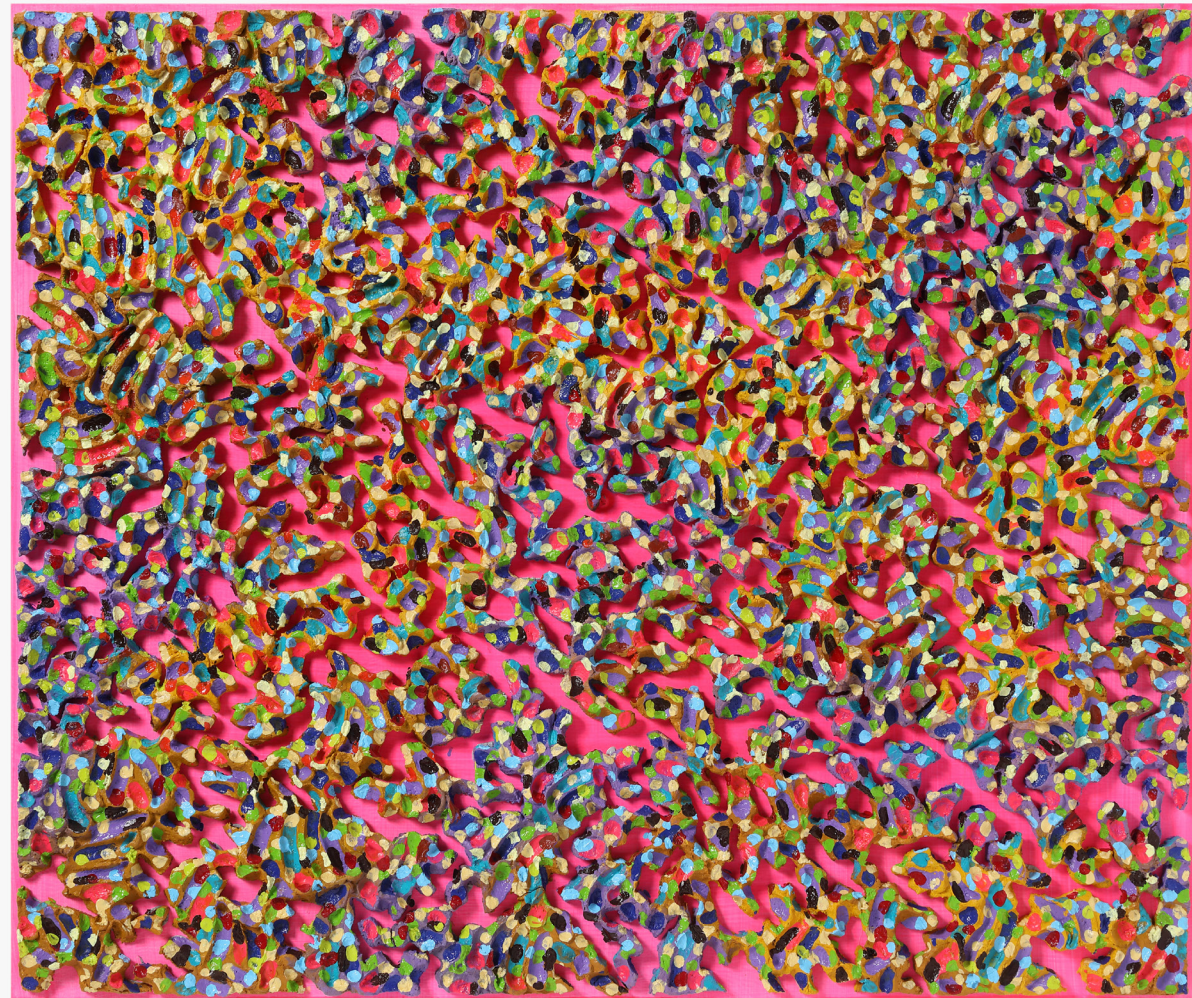


목시록  
 Apocalypse, 2022  
 Fired Painting  
 H.61 x D.73cm  
 SSH-A16





목시록  
 Apocalypse, 2022  
 Fired Painting  
 H.61 x D.73cm  
 SSH-A17



목시록  
 Apocalypse, 2022  
 Fired Painting  
 H.61 x D.73cm  
 SSH-A18





목시록  
 Apocalypse, 2022  
 Fired Painting  
 H.61 x D.73cm  
 SSH-A19



목시록  
 Apocalypse, 2022  
 Fired Painting  
 H.61 x D.73cm  
 SSH-A20







## **Han Collection 2023**

### **Director**

Jinsoo Park

### **Art and Antiques Consultant**

Thomas Clifton

### **Catalogue**

**Written, Translated, and Designed** by Thomas Clifton

**All photos** courtesy of the Artist and Ye Studio.