

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Byung Hoon Choi: Water Meditation
November 9– December 17, 2016
Opening reception: Wednesday, November 9, 6-8 PM

New York, NY [August 27, 2016] Friedman Benda is pleased to announce *Water Meditation*, Byung Hoon Choi's second solo exhibition in New York. For over 35 years, the Korean artist has built a unique oeuvre drawing on Zen Buddhist ideologies of introspection and Taoist notions of balance. Known for his play between natural and fabricated elements, he sets rough beside polished, old against new. Choi consistently uses the word "afterimage" in titling his work in reference to what he calls "an imaginary and mystical encounter with a previous world not yet experienced." He returns with new works in two mediums—traditional lacquer and basalt—centered on the theme of water.

This exploration of lacquer is a first for Choi. Inspired by his Korean heritage, he draws on traditional craftsmanship in East Asia, where lacquer techniques have been widely practiced for over 2,000 years. In his experimentation, Choi mixes pigment into the lacquer, especially apparent in the red undertones of *afterimage of beginning 016-459*. The smoothly polished lacquer reflects like liquid surfaces, a metaphysical ode to the exhibition's title. Still water fills a number of the larger pieces, a more literal leitmotif.

Juxtaposing the resting water of the lacquer works, the fountains' running water evokes the notion of a moving, living sculpture. The fountains represent a progression of Choi's work in basalt, growing vertically, resembling a scholar's rock or a naturally grown accumulation. On a more intimate scale than before, new seating and a table balance the rounded shapes of the lacquer works. Emphasizing the rougher parts of the stone, Choi is seen exploring the affinity of polished basalt as allegorical liquid surfaces.

About Byung Hoon Choi

A pioneer of modern Korean craft, Byung Hoon Choi's work is both aesthetic and functional, employing numerous natural materials such as wood, clay, granite and natural stone to create minimal furniture that is seen as both object and art. Choi's work is held in numerous collections throughout Korea, including the National Museum of Contemporary Art and the Korean Culture and Art Foundation; abroad his work can be seen in the permanent collection of the Vitra Design Museum, Weil am Rhein; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; and the Musée des arts décoratifs, Paris. In 1989 he was given the annual award from the Korean Craft Council and in 2007 he received Grand Prize at the Seoul Living Design Fair. He is currently a Professor at the College of Fine Arts at Hongik University in Seoul.

About Friedman Benda

Friedman Benda is a gallery dedicated to presenting established and emerging designers who create historically significant work and are at the forefront of their practice. Founded in 2007, the gallery's exhibitions and publications have played a vital role in the development of the contemporary design market and education, and take a comprehensive approach to work that intersects the fields of design, craft and art. Friedman Benda represents an international roster of designers spanning five continents and multiple generations.

For further information visit www.friedmanbenda.com

Media Contacts:

Blue Medium, Inc.
Michelle DiLello
michelle@bluemedium.com
T: +1 (212) 675-1800

Friedman Benda
Jennifer Olshin, Partner: jennifer@friedmanbenda.com
Carole Hochman, Director: carole@friedmanbenda.com
T: +1 (212) 239-8700

FRIEDMAN BENDA 515 W 26TH STREET NEW YORK NY 10001
FRIEDMANBENDA.COM TELEPHONE 212 239 8700 FAX 212 239 8760



afterimage of beginning 016-471, 2016
Basalt and black granite
89 x 35.5 x 23.75 inches
226 x 90 x 60 cm



afterimage of beginning 016-458, 2016
Traditional Korean lacquer on white ash
14.25 x 59 x 35.5 inches
36 x 150 x 90 cm