

Jaeok Lee

Artist's Statement

The pieces that I currently make are inspired by the old Korean stone figures that were used as guardian statues like tomb guards, fertility and protection guards, etc. related to indigenous beliefs and Shamanism. They used to be prevalent up to 19th century before they were considered superstitious and worthless after the introduction of Christianity. Whenever I visit Korea, I seek out these statues and totems. Many of these objects are impressive work of art, simple but elegant. Some of them resemble traditional artworks of Africa, Americas and Polynesia or even modern art. It is a wonder that there are common threads across the wide span of time, culture and geography. I am drawn to their simple yet powerful presence. I feel deep connection to the traditional Korean culture while I work on them.