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## *Synecdoche*, Watershed Work by Byron Kim, Installed at the National Gallery of Art



Byron Kim's *Synecdoche* (1991–present) is on view in the modern and contemporary art galleries in the National Gallery of Art's East Building.

National Gallery of Art, Washington, Richard S. Zeisler Fund

***Synecdoche*** (1991–present), a recent acquisition by Korean-American artist **Byron Kim** (b. 1961), has been newly installed in the East Building's modern and contemporary art galleries. *Synecdoche* is a continuing project of portraiture now comprising more than 400 panels, each a single hue ranging from light tan or pink to dark brown. Finding sitters among strangers, friends, family, neighbors, and fellow artists, Kim records each person's skin color in oil paint mixed with wax that he applies with a palette knife on a single 10 x 8-inch panel, a common size for portrait photography. When installed, the accompanying subtitle consists of the names of the sitters, arranged alphabetically by first name.

*Synecdoche* was a watershed for the artist, having received much acclaim since its first showing in the 1993 Whitney Biennial. Subsequent iterations have been seen in installations and exhibitions around the world.

Kim's work explores the history of abstract painting, the problems of color and vision, and issues of human identity and existence. The title—referring to a figure of speech in which a part represents the whole or vice versa—makes clear that issues of representation, both visual and democratic, are in play. The work can be installed in many ways, using some or all of the panels, in a grid of almost any size or shape. The acquisition of *Synecdoche* was made possible through the Richard S. Zeisler Fund.

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## General Information

The National Gallery of Art and its Sculpture Garden are at all times free to the public. They are located on the National Mall between 3rd and 9th Streets along Constitution Avenue NW and are open Monday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Gallery is closed on December 25 and January 1. With the exception of the atrium and library, the galleries in the East Building will be closing gradually beginning in July 2013 and will remain closed for approximately three years for Master Facilities Plan and renovations. For specific updates on gallery closings, visit [www.nga.gov/renovation](http://www.nga.gov/renovation) (<http://www.nga.gov/renovation>) .

For information call (202) 737-4215 or the Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) at (202) 842-6176, or visit the Gallery's website at [www.nga.gov](http://www.nga.gov). Follow the Gallery on [Facebook](http://www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt) at [www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt](http://www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt) and on [Twitter](http://twitter.com/ngadc) at [twitter.com/ngadc](http://twitter.com/ngadc).

Visitors will be asked to present all carried items for inspection upon entering. Checkrooms are free of charge and located at each entrance. Luggage and other oversized bags must be presented at the 4th Street entrances to the East or West Building to permit x-ray screening and must be deposited in the checkrooms at those entrances. For the safety of visitors and the works of art, nothing may be carried into the Gallery on a visitor's back. Any bag or other items that cannot be carried reasonably and safely in some other manner must be left in the checkrooms. Items larger than 17 by 26 inches cannot be accepted by the Gallery or its checkrooms.

For additional press information please call or send inquiries to:

Press Office

National Gallery of Art

2000B South Club Drive

Landover, MD 20785

phone: (202) 842-6353 e-mail: [pressinfo@nga.gov](mailto:pressinfo@nga.gov)

Deborah Ziska

Chief of Press and Public Information

(202) 842-6353

[ds-ziska@nga.gov](mailto:ds-ziska@nga.gov)