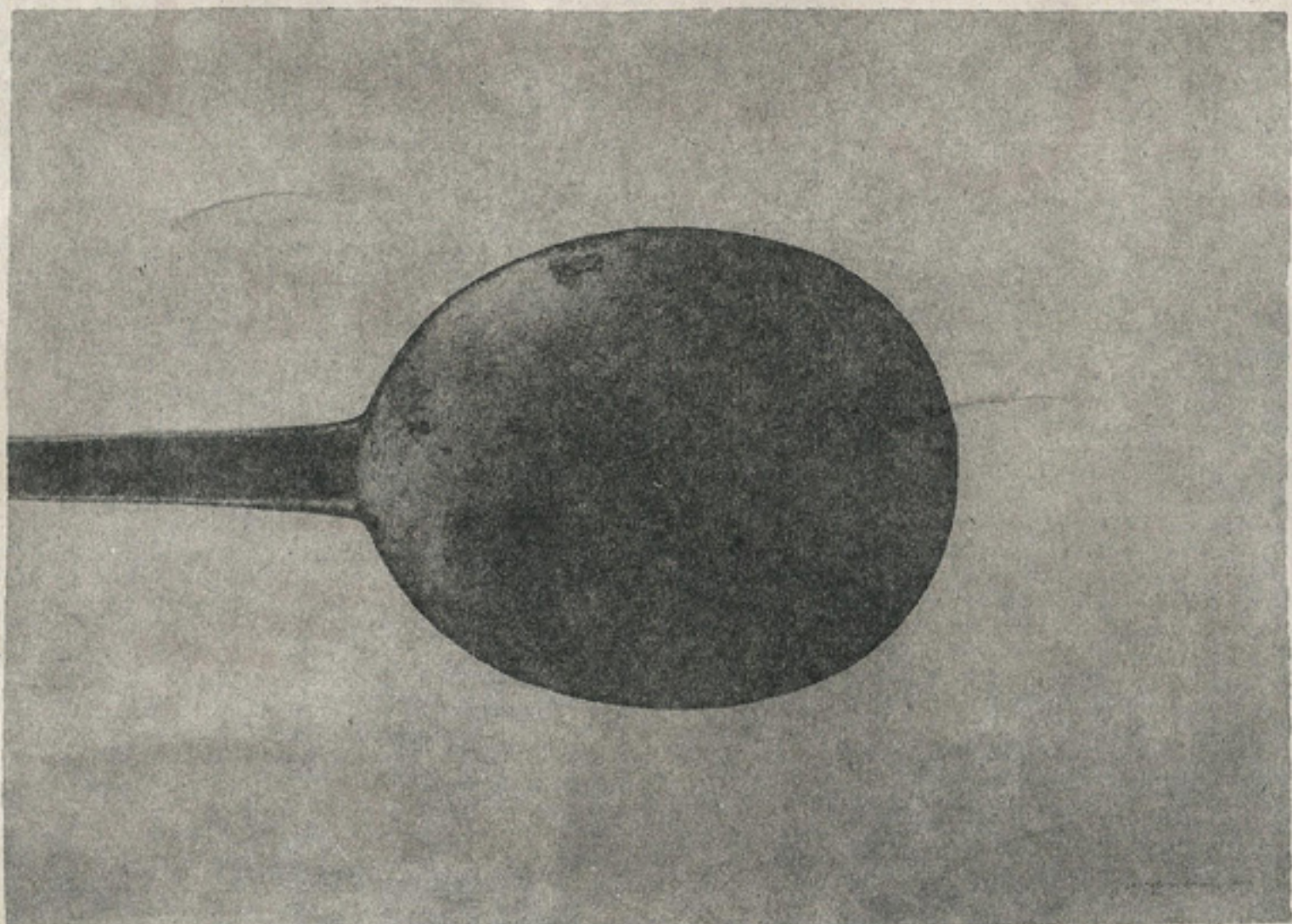


## ART



Jungjin Lee's "Thing 03-02" is a photograph that is hand-printed on hand-made rice paper.

## Photos infuse the ordinary with extraordinary feeling

By Alan G. Artner

Tribune art critic

The title of Jungjin Lee's first exhibition at the Andrew Bae Gallery is "Beyond Photography," and while going to the farther side of anything may imply the unknown, here what we see turns out to be familiar.

About a century ago, a battle was waged that determined the course of how photographs would look in the modern period. The soft focus and handwork that sometimes made photographs of the period appear like paintings, drawings or prints were ultimately rejected, and photography's capacity for clarity became essential to the medium.

In the last 40 years, however, the strictures of modernism waned and many artists have embraced the very techniques that their forebears rejected. Lee, a former painter and ceramist who works in Seoul, is one of those artists. She hand-coats sheets of rice paper with photo emulsion and creates immense works that look as soft as prints or charcoal drawings.

Selections from three series—wall, ocean and thing—are on view. The "wall" pieces resem-

### REVIEWS

**Jungjin Lee** at Andrew Bae Gallery, through Aug. 13

**Bob Burdette** at Ann Nathan Gallery, through Aug. 27

ble Abstract Expressionist lithographs. The "ocean" pictures show a kinship with Vija Celmins water drawings. Several of the "thing" images are in the line of Irving Penn's platinum prints of urban detritus many times magnified.

All the "things" are simple objects—pot, chair, spoon, shoes—with which Lee feels a connection. Because her process does not yield strong blacks or whites, she often retouches, and that inevitably strengthens the connection. So each unique print is at once a super-real exploration of the objects' surface and an expressionistic projection of the artist's feelings about the objects.

That gives commonplace things an aura of romance and strangeness. You scarcely sense it through reproductions, but it's there in direct encounter, though some pieces—the chair, shirt, spoon and shoes—convey it more strongly than others.

This aura, seemingly given off naturally by the things themselves, is what Lee's pictures set out to capture, and as often as not her backward-looking process conveys it with authority.

At 300 W. Superior St., 312-335-8601.