



**Alpenweg (Mountain Trail)**  
130×130×10cm (panel size), glass, laminated, 2015



**B6614**  
150×300×10cm, glass, laminated, 2014



**O0315**  
34×130×10cm, glass, laminated, 2015

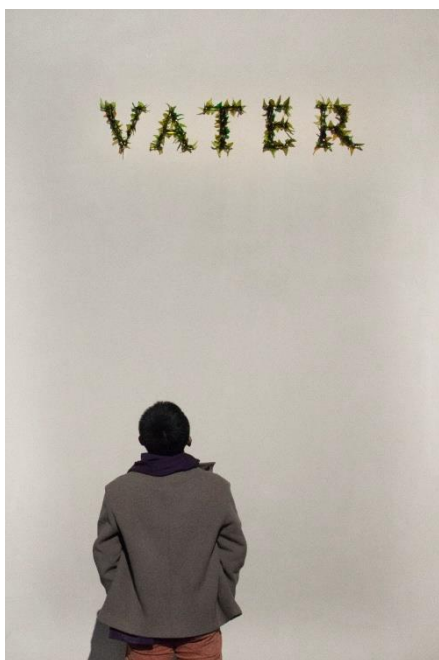


**Flow**  
76×105×10cm (panel size), glass, laminated, 2017

Bongchull Shin makes art a physical experience. His artworks bring nature and the effects of physics into exhibition spaces. Glass, bright colours and either natural or artificial light and its resulting shadows and reflections are elements which occur repeatedly in his works. As the name suggests, Bongchull Shin's *cubes and stripes* series concerns cubic shapes and long slim glass stripes in which the artist's focus on light, colour and shape is evident.

The work *B6614* covers a wall space of 150x300cm. Endless identical blue shimmering cubes appear in regular intervals. By contrast *Alpenweg (Mountain Trail)* is dominated by numerous differently sized and coloured glass blocks with no concrete arrangement. Spanning an area of 130x130cm, these shapes project colours of blue, yellow, pink, red and green. Both structured and unstructured light beams passing through both artworks create colour-intensive reflections on the wall, the floor and in the immediate area. When presenting his installations in exhibition spaces with little natural light, the artist uses several differently positioned sources of artificial light to imitate the natural movement of the sun. The reflections appear like a colourfully woven carpet and change position depending on the way the light falls and the position of the observer. At first glance this work might remind one of Danish-Icelandic artist Olafur Eliasson's *Your solar nebula*. This work is a cluster of 328 different sized glass spheres clinging to the wall like water pearls. In contrast to this well-known work which only takes on colourful form through reflection of its surroundings, Bongchull Shin controls the colour intensity of his glass works through wafer-thin coloured layers inserted into the spaces between the glass sheets within the cubes and stripes. So depending on the vantage point the glass blocks appear both coloured as well as transparent and translucent. The overlapping of different coloured shadows and projections causes new colour tones to emerge. The movement of the observer is therefore inherent in Bongchull Shin's *cubes and stripes* works. They only come to life when movement occurs.

By concentrating on the medium of light and resulting colourful reflections, the artist eludes to his affinity with the artistic impressionism of early modernism. Bongchull Shin strives to present his works using sun and daylight. His work therefore ideally becomes public art, developed in dialogue with urban and contemporary architecture in the public realm.



Vater (Father)  
125×25×7cm, broken glass, 2014



Love Faith Hope  
130x130x7cm (panel size), broken glass, 2013



Protect me from what I want (Jenny Holzer)  
147×110×7cm (panel size), broken glass, 2016

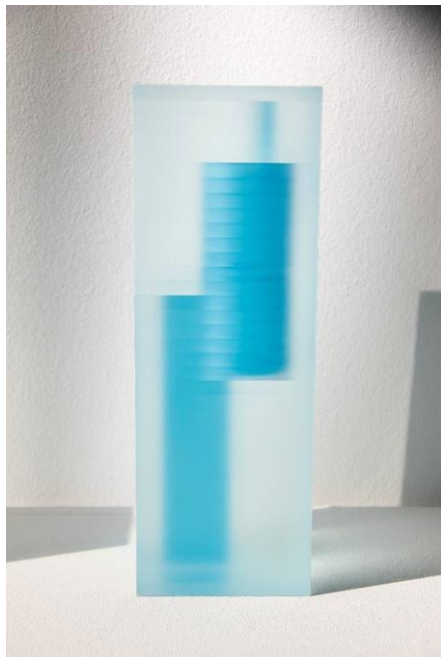


YES  
60×170cm, broken glass, 2014

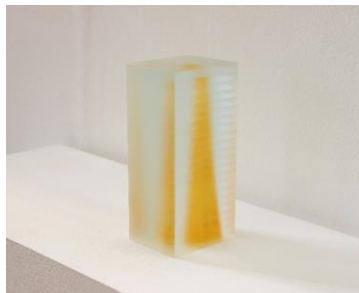
Glass and light are at the forefront of all Bongchull Shin's works. Both elements complement each other in his room and wall installations. The series *broken glass* is dominated by the theme of antagonism. For a long time the origin of glass was considered mysterious, being developed under god's influence. Its fragile nature was another reason why glass was a valuable merchandise. Simultaneously glass is seen as a symbol of destruction due to its dangerously sharp edges. Günter Grass reinterpreted Rolf Breitenstein's view of glass "as the seismograph of vandalism" when referring to the "Night of Broken Glass" during the Nazi era in 1938, seeing glass as the revolutionary instrument of power in the hands of little Oskar in the novel *Die Blechtrommel*. Opposed to the traditional Vanitas-symbol, the destruction of glass however is not a gradual natural process, but is rather a one-off powerful loss of form, normally at the hands of man.

It is precisely these antagonistic associations that Bongchull Shin utilises in his wall texts. Positive statements such as *Love, Faith, Hope* or *Yes* appear to the observer at first glance soft and harmonious. The artist contrasts these poetic statements, words and quotes like *Protect me from what I want*, with his use of sharp, jagged sherds of green glass. These sherds, cut and shaped with a glass knife, remain unpolished, thus retaining their dangerous edge.

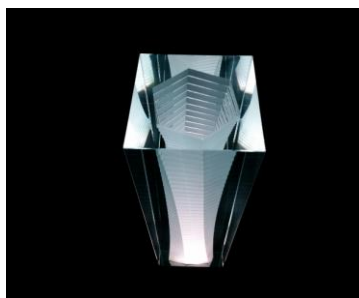
Only after close analysis do the individual letters reveal themselves as a composition of glass sherds. As such Bongchull Shin summarises the antagonism and ambiguity of all things. On one level the beauty and simultaneous brutality of the glass. On the other the power of words which can summon up the most wonderful but also the most hurtful associations. Moreover his use of green glass in this series invokes the popular South Korean drink Soju which, as an alcoholic drink, portrays feelings of enjoyment but also dependence.



**Geometry**  
12×12×40cm, glass, laminated, 2016



**House Pagoda**  
8×10×20cm, glass, laminated, 2016



**Hexagon**  
12×12×40cm, glass, laminated, 2016



**Rice Pagoda**  
10×10×30cm, glass, laminated, 2016

The concept of space relates to the unfilled. Such empty space may – both in the associated logic and in the pictorial representation – only manifest itself and becomes visible through the separation of this space from another. Only then does space become a visual experience.

Bongchull Shin is concerned with the visualisation of space using a material which in everyday life visually eliminates the separation between two spaces – glass. In the series *void in solid*, the artist examines the portrayal of empty space and its architectural manifestation. Using an extremely complex glass cutting technique, Bongchull Shin removes a single shape from numerous sheets of glass. He ensures that each cut-out shape in every sheet differs to only the tiniest degree in shape or layout from the one before it. Finally he glues the countless sheets horizontally on top of one another up to the desired height. By doing this he moves and influences the structure of the inner space; corners and edges emerge creating rhythm and shapes. Inside this glass tower an empty space emerges. By shunning unnecessary decoration and using only glass, Bongchull Shin creates a series of artworks resembling contemporary skyscraper architecture. By reflecting the surrounding environment in large glass facades, the several hundred-metre high towers almost appear invisible, disappearing into the background.

Glass in the form of a window or facade separates the external and internal world. It blocks out all senses except for vision. While spaces separated from each other by a glass wall for instance cannot be experienced via smell, taste or touch, the eye registers such separated spaces. Glass and the window or facade respectively is almost invisible so long as the eye focuses on the space behind the glass surface; with regard to a *void in solid* sculpture this would be the inner space. However, if the viewer concentrates on the outer surface rather than the inside of the sculpture, varying reflections of himself appear depending on the viewing angle; the inner space – the void – becomes blurred. With this the glass becomes a mirror and throws back questions at the watching subject who through the recognisable, reflected view (of himself) feels trapped as a voyeur.