

NEW WORK BY:

# Von Kommanivanh AND Sang-Mi Yoo

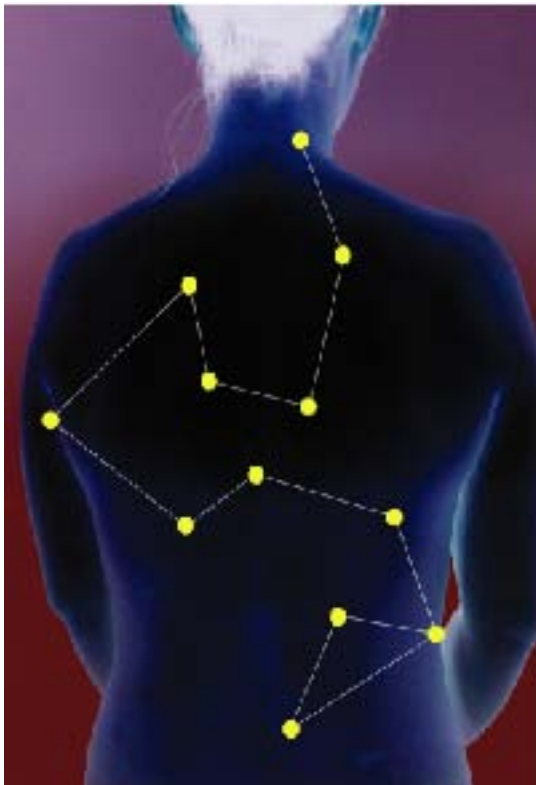
walsh  
GALLERY

118 N. Peoria St., 2nd Floor  
Chicago, IL 60607  
p 312/829.3312 — f 312/829.3316  
T — SA 10:30–5:30 www.walshgallery.com



ABOVE: Von Kommanivanh, 13 Spliffs, 59" x 70.5", oil on canvas, 2003.

BELOW: Sang-Mi Yoo, Constellation, 18" x 13", pigment-based inkjet print, 2003.



JANUARY 16–FEBRUARY 14

opening reception: JANUARY 16, 5–9pm

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## New works by SANG-MI YOO and VON KOMMANIVANH

Contact: Julie Walsh, Director  
312/829.3312

Chicago, Illinois: **Urban street stories meet the night sky.**

Walsh Gallery will be exhibiting "Encounters," an installation by Sang-Mi Yoo of the artist's body as the night sky, and "Drawn Inward," a palindrome suitable for Von Kommanivanh's new paintings, an uncensored recollection of urban street stories. In addition, "Relative Reality," a continuous reel of video from eight Korean video artists will be shown in the project room. The opening reception is on Friday, January 16 from 5 to 9pm. **Both artists will be present at the opening reception.**

### Sang Mi-Yoo:

Sang Mi-Yoo is fascinated by the ordinary as it becomes extraordinary. She will be creating within the gallery an embodiment of the night sky, using a tent, the walls, cricket sounds, and nightglow stickers and paint. Ms. Yoo sites the influence of a Chinese philosopher who says: Only through the appreciation of nature can man become one with it. Thus, Ms. Yoo will pay tribute to her body as a constellation, another vehicle of transformation. She will also exhibit a series of prints that celebrate her body as a constellation.

As Ms. Yoo explains: "Once while I was tracing a journey I made around the U.S. on a map, I realized it resembled a constellation. Around the same time, I found the skin of my body resembled the sky with its speckles and texture, especially when the colors were inverted. Thus my body's tracings on the map became a constellation in the sky. The sky became my body."

### Von Kommanivanh:

Von Kommanivanh's figurative narratives tell biographical stories about growing up in an urban street environment. There are few painters today that are able to create an uncensored recollection of urban street stories as successfully as this former graffiti artist. Mr. Kommanivanh's paintings manage to have a raw emotional quality about them, while still maintaining a playfulness with text and palindromes. Mr. Kommanivanh's figures and narrative are never to be taken at face value. Myriads of meanings and symbols exist for the viewer to find.

For example, in the painting titled "13 Spliffs", the artist depicts his mother arm in arm with her neighbor and the neighbor's young son, painted on a bold red and yellow field. The faces are oddly white. The neighbor is now dead. She was the first person who befriended Mr. Kommanivanh's family when they emigrated from Laos to the United States. She taught them basic coping skills for surviving in America, as well as some not-so-obvious skills, like how to salvage from a recycling drop-off behind their apartment building (thus the painting has cans painted around the perimeter.) The neighbor's son is now serving a life-sentence in prison for being an accomplice to a murder. There is a stark contrast between the recollection of the moment and the people depicted in the scene's current reality.