

# Boomoon *Waterfalls*

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Flowers Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition that draws together works from South Korean artist Boomoon's *Skogar* and *Waterfall* series. Both explore a waterfall in the tiny village of Skógafoss, Iceland, as part of his ongoing investigation into the infinite and ungovernable character of the natural world.

For over four decades Boomoon has engaged deeply with the medium of photography, producing large format images of expansive landscapes devoid of human presence. He sees this as a means of considering perception and the self, focusing on the present moment and liberating himself and the landscape from its history and geopolitics. Since the 1990s Boomoon has referred to this activity as "*photographic respiration*", a tripartite relationship that has been described by author Catherine Grout as corresponding "*to a phase, a dynamic exchange between the artist, a moment in the world and (...) the image being made.*" This desire for complete disassociation with the connotations of a place is what draws him to Northern countries, such as Iceland, as he believes they offer "*landscapes that are the least contaminated by words and meaning.*"



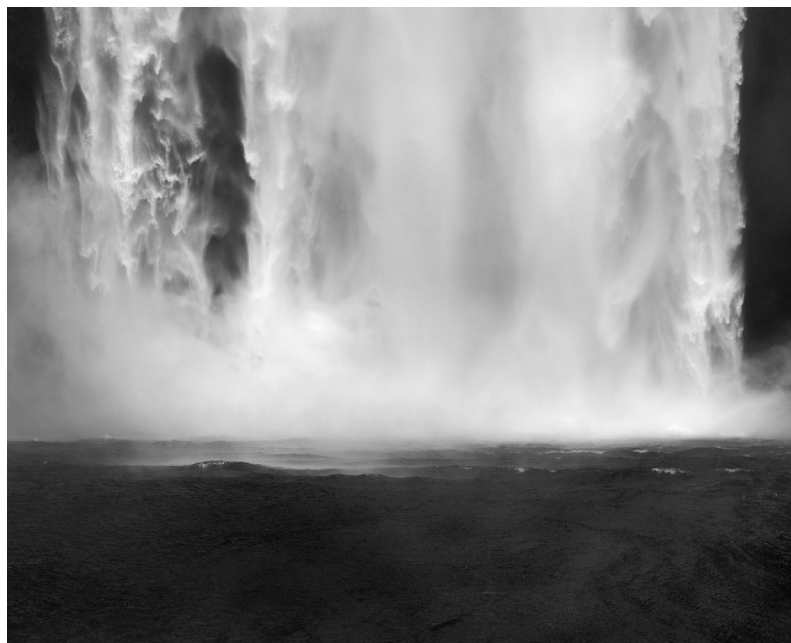
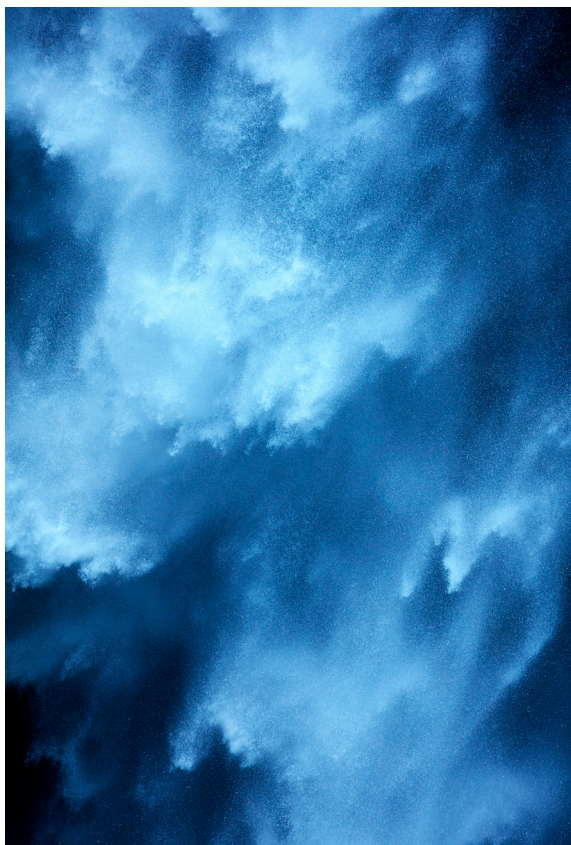
*Waterfall #7803*, 2017, Archival pigment print

Boomoon has explained that he is less interested in photographs that only express the beauty or power of the subject in front of his lens and more inspired by the resonances in himself that result from his physical encounters with phenomena in the world: "*My photographs are not self-expression, nor do they carry a message. They are simply the embodied result of my interactions with my surroundings.*" In the case of the series included in this exhibition, Boomoon plunged into the icy pool below the waterfall in order to absorb himself in the scene and gain the fixed frontal perspective seen throughout.

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The *Waterfall* series presents tightly-cropped lucent blue water with no horizon, drawing the viewer's focus to the abstract beauty and shape-shifting forms created by the highly focused, celestial veils of spray and dark cascading water hitting the rocks behind. Boomoon attributes the crystalline clarity of these reductive monochromes to the stark purity of northerly light. In contrast, *Skogar*, a series of 300 exposures shot in black and white captures the turbulent junction between the two axes, exactly two thirds falling water and a third horizon. In this series, the waterfall appears more recognisable and highlights the magnitude and elemental force of the falling water.

In both series Boomoon excludes all peripheral context, eliminating any sense of scale and time. This offers the viewer an immersive experience that appears to extend beyond the limits of an individual standpoint or subjective encounter. Poet and critic Shino Kuraishi believes that the minimal waterfalls dispense with continuity or a sense of passage between past and future. He says: "*The destination of the end of time is permanently postponed. The waterfall keeps falling self-recursively, aimlessly, and meaninglessly carrying the undetermined present. The waterfalls descend defying associations of any other place and any other time.*"



Images, left: *Waterfall #4545*,  
2017 Archival pigment print;  
right: *Skogar #0558*, 2015  
Archival Pigment Print

## ABOUT BOOMOON

Born in Daegu, Boomoon lives and works in Toseong, South Korea. Having commenced his artistic studies as a painter, Boomoon began to explore photography in the early 1970's and enrolled in the Photography department at Chung-Ang University, Seoul. Throughout the 1970's Boomoon passionately recorded the rapid transformation taking place in Korean society, looking at deserted villages and the heightening contrast between rural and urban communities. Since the 1980's he has been engaging with the natural landscape in his work as a means of self-reflection, producing large format photographs of vast expanses of sea, sky and land. Devoid of human presence, the central emphasis of his work is the experience of the infinity of nature and the representation of its presence.

Boomoon has exhibited internationally, including in South Korea, Japan, Istanbul, New York, London and Paris and his work is in the collections of the Yokohama Museum of Art, the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul, the Borusan Contemporary, Istanbul and the Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, MA. From October 2013 to January 2014, a retrospective exhibition of Boomoon's major landscape series was held at the Daegu Art Museum in South Korea. Entitled *Constellation*, the show gave a comprehensive overview of Boomoon's practice and confirmed his significance as a photographic artist.

## NOTES TO EDITORS

Opening hours: Tuesday - Saturday, 11am - 5pm (bookings recommended).

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