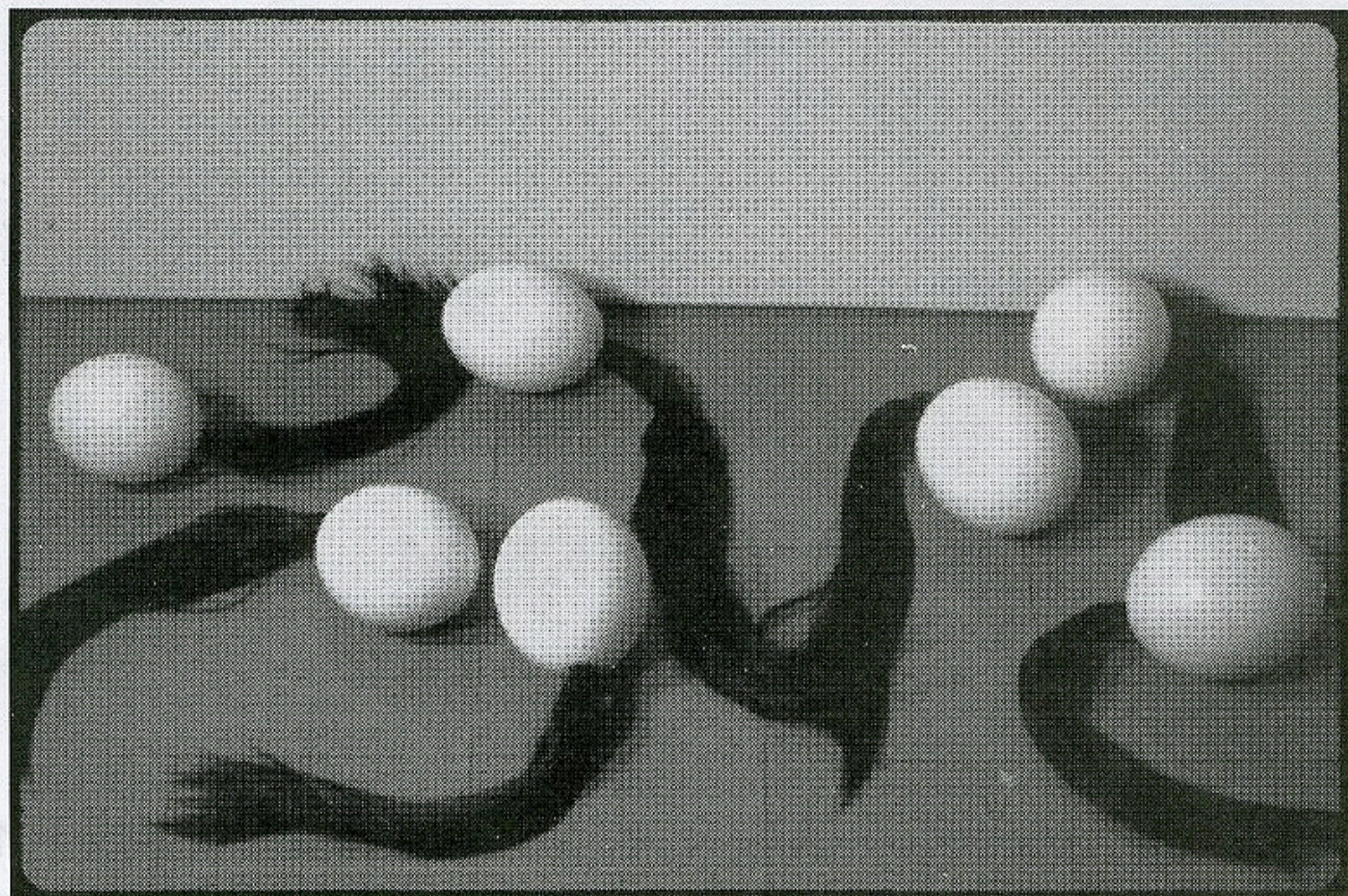


A row of ostrich eggs levitates above the gallery floor, anchored by manes of long pale human hair.



*Birdy #2*, mixed media, 1995.

## Stretching the Dream **HYUN-MI YOO** CRISTINEROSE GALLERY

**T**HROUGH an alchemical mist of visual metaphor, the dreamer hovers in the space between heaven and earth, fettered by the wings of birds that cannot fly. In her dreams Hyun-Mi Yoo floats to the ceiling, maneuvering towards the window and the vast bright space beyond.

In her one-person show at Cristinerose Gallery, Yoo stretches her dreams into sculpture, recreating these eerie nocturnal flights into the material reality of objects that mediate between the real and the marvelous.

Using feathers from birds that are not known for flying (chickens, ducks and geese) she fashions a dress, white and oversized, that hangs suspended — sleeves outstretched like wings, its long skirt sweeping the floor. A row of ostrich eggs levitates above the gallery floor, anchored by manes of long pale human hair. In *Birdy #3*, a woman's torso is constructed like a birdcage. Hanging from the ceiling, its hinged door is left open — empty now.

Yoo, a young artist born and educated in Korea, who received her graduate education at New York University, speaks of flying as a symbol of desire: all

kinds of desire. Drawing upon Korean dream books and Freud, she sees in her work an exploration of both the unconscious and the polarities of inner and outer reality.

Wearing clothes that echo the soft creams and whites of her sculptures, Yoo describes her work, dwelling on its contradictions. "When I fly in my dreams I feel good, but I also feel afraid. Always there is the positive and the negative. When I made chairs with feathered seats (*Birdy #4*), I wanted the chairs to be symbols of four-legged animals, who, like humans, cannot fly."

A wing and a chair — evocative juxtaposition, like a fur-lined tea cup, like a melting watch. Yoo's affinity to Surrealism, with its poetic roots and uneasy displacements, is not surprising given her interest in the unconscious. Her objects, however, have a lighter touch, an elegant understatement of mission that strikes a familiar chord without pulverizing it.

— Kay Kenny

# ART