

PRESS RELEASE

OCTOBER 2015

Press Contact

Rachel Eggers
Seattle Art Museum P.R.
rachele@seattleartmuseum.org
206.654.3151

PARADOX OF PLACE: CONTEMPORARY KOREAN ART OPENS AT THE ASIAN ART MUSEUM OCT 31

Presenting leading-edge new media art from six Korean artists active in the global contemporary art scene

October 31, 2015–March 13, 2016

SEATTLE
ART
MUSEUM

ASIAN
ART
MUSEUM

OLYMPIC
SCULPTURE
PARK

1300 First Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101

206.625.8900

seattleartmuseum.org



SEATTLE, WA – SAM's Asian Art Museum presents *Paradox of Place: Contemporary Korean Art*, showcasing six prominent Korean artists active in today's global art scene. The first major exhibition of contemporary Korean art in Seattle in a decade, the exhibition features intriguing new media art in diverse forms—video and mixed-media installations, photography, and sculpture—that all address paradox in Korean society: division and unification, Korea and the world, self and others, past and present, beauty and ugliness, reality and fantasy.

The artists of *Paradox of Place* share a common ground: they each take the political, social, historical, and cultural situations of Korea fully into account and add their personal experiences to their work. To illuminate this mix of the personal and political, three of the six artists featured—Jung Yeondoo, Lim Minouk, and Yee Sookyung—will travel to Seattle to speak about their work and connect with museum patrons. Artists Lee Yongbaek, Noh Suntag, and Yang Haegue round out this group of leading-edge artists.

"I'm thrilled to bring this fascinating exhibition to Seattle," said Kimerly Rorschach, SAM's Illsley Ball Nordstrom Director and CEO. "It represents a wonderful collaboration between two curators: our own Xiaojin Wu and Choi Eunju, our first in-residence visiting curator sponsored by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation."

SEATTLE
ART
MUSEUM



Because of its political division, Korea is infused with paradox. While the economically vibrant southern half brings the world “Korean Wave”—cool popular culture—the isolated and militaristic northern half generates unsettling worldwide news daily. The North-South Korea division is not the only socio-political context contemporary Korean artists live in; they’ve also experienced military dictatorships and democratization, modernization, and globalization. Their life experiences, however unsettling they might be, provide rich subject matter for their work.

Paradox of Place was curated by Xiaojin Wu, SAM’s Curator of Japanese and Korean Art, in collaboration with Ms. Choi Eunju, former chief curator of the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea.

“Korean artists have been at the forefront of contemporary video art for years,” says Xiaojin Wu, Curator of Japanese and Korean Art. “This show includes incredible examples of video while expanding to display the wide range of new media work these artists are engaging in. There’s also photography, mixed-media installation, and sculptures created with non-traditional methods—including a piece made with a 3D printer. This group of artists each reveal something personal—but together, they also capture an expression of contemporary Korean life and of the global world we live in now.”

The exhibition is co-organized by the Seattle Art Museum and National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea. The exhibition is made possible with generous support from the Korea Foundation and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Endowment support was provided by the Anne Gerber Endowment. Media sponsor is The Stranger.

Image credits: *Angel-Soldier* (video still) (detail), 2011, Lee Yongbaek, Korean, b. 1966, HD Video Projection, 23:14 min. Courtesy of the artist. *Bewitched #2 Seoul*, 2002, Jung Yeondoo, Korean, b. 1969, digital silver print, 62 5/8 x 51 9/16 in. each. Courtesy of the artist. Installation view of *The Great Acceleration*, Taipei Biennial 2014, Taipei, Taiwan, 2014, Yang Haegue, Korean, b. 1971, mediums and dimensions variable. Photo: © Taipei Fine Arts Museum. *strAnge ball*, 2006, Noh Suntag, Korean, b. 1971, pigment print, 29 15/16 x 39 3/4 in. Collection of MMCA, Korea. *The Possibility of the Half*, 2012, Lim Minouk, Korean, b. 1968, 2 channel video projection, objects. Courtesy of the artist.

ABOUT SEATTLE ART MUSEUM

As the leading visual art institution in the Pacific Northwest, SAM draws on its global collections, powerful exhibitions, and dynamic programs to provide unique educational resources benefiting the Seattle region, the Pacific Northwest, and beyond. SAM was founded in 1933 with a focus on Asian art. By the late 1980s the museum had outgrown its original home, and in 1991 a new 155,000-square-foot downtown building, designed by Robert Venturi, Scott Brown & Associates, opened to the public. The 1933 building was renovated and reopened as the Asian Art Museum. SAM’s desire to further serve its community was realized in 2007 with the opening of two stunning new facilities: the nine-acre Olympic Sculpture Park (designed by Weiss/Manfredi Architects)—a “museum without walls,” free and open to all—and the Allied Works Architecture designed 118,000-square-foot expansion of its main, downtown location, including 232,000 square feet of additional space built for future expansion.

From a strong foundation of Asian art to noteworthy collections of African and Oceanic art, Northwest Coast Native American art, European and American art, and modern and contemporary art, the strength of SAM’s collection of more than 25,000 objects lies in its diversity of media, cultures and time periods.

ABOUT NATIONAL MUSEUM OF MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ART, KOREA

The National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art (MMCA) is one of Korea’s representative cultural institutions. With the recent addition of the Seoul branch of the museum in 2013, the MMCA has established an organic network of venues to serve the development of artistic culture in Korea and the cultural welfare of the public.

Established in 1986, MMCA Gwacheon provides a place for rest with diverse genres of visual art and a rich natural environment around the museum. MMCA Deoksugung is located in a historical modern building in Deoksugung Palace, offering perspectives on modern art from both Korea and abroad. The building was reopened as a branch of the MMCA in 1998. Located next to Gyeongbokgung, MMCA Seoul is a venue for contemporary art and a wide variety of artistic content that crosses the boundaries of genres. All three branches pursue the essential role of a museum to collect, preserve, and research artworks. To reach a broader audience, the three branches of the MMCA also put much effort in realizing excellent exhibitions and educational programs. In addition, the MMCA is establishing itself as a hub for communication and interaction between various disciplines and contemporary art.