MASILugano

MASI Lugano
Museo d'arte
della Svizzera italiana,
Lugano

Via Canova 10
CH – 6900 Lugano

comunicazione@masilugano.ch
+41 (0)58 866 42 40
www.masilugano.ch

K-NOW!
Korean Video Art Today

Chan-kyong Park, Jane Jin Kaisen, Ayoung Kim, 업체eobchae, Sungsil Ryu, Heecheon Kim, Onejoon Che e Sojung Jun

8 March 2026 – 19 July 2026
Museo d'arte della Svizzera italiana, Lugano

Curated by Francesca Benini and Je Yun Moon

PRESS RELEASE
Lugano, 12 February 2026

Museo d'arte della Svizzera italiana opens its 2026 season with "K-NOW! Korean Video Art Today". The exhibition takes a look at South Korea's contemporary art scene through video art, an art form that is deeply intertwined with the country's history and society. The project at MASI aims to highlight the originality of artistic practices that, despite developing in a relatively small area, have established themselves in recent years as one of the most dynamic, attracting international acclaim.

The immersive experience on the underground floor of the LAC venue presents the work of eight new generation artists and collectives that came of age in the shadow of an unresolved war, amidst the rapid transformations that have revolutionised Korean society: Chan-kyong Park, Jane Jin Kaisen, Ayoung 업체Kim, eobchae, Sungsil Ryu, Heecheon Kim, Onejoon Che and Sojung Jun.

Although rooted in the history and reality of the country, the works address some of the pressing issues – cultural, historical and existential – that define the *Zeitgeist* of our globalized present: from the relationship between **technology and the human body**, to that between **history, memory and tradition**, from **migration** to the **accelerating**, increasingly demanding world of work.

"In an era in which cultural geographies are forging connections and the boundaries between local and global are becoming increasingly fluid, the works on display at MASI not only reveal how these themes apply across contemporary societies, but also highlight the transnational power of video art as a tool for perceiving, bearing witness to and recounting the contemporary period," explained the curators of the project **Francesca Benini** (MASI) and **Je Yun Moon**, former deputy director of the Art Sonje Center in Seoul. "K-NOW! Korean Video Art Today" also offers a key opportunity to explore the various ways in which video art can be experienced, from traditional screening methods to virtual reality viewers. This variety reflects the evolution of a global medium profoundly transformed by technological innovations that continue to redefine its boundaries and expressive scope.

Main Partner
UBS

"Exploring the video art scene in Korea today invites reflections on the geographies of the contemporary period. While many countries are in the process of tightening their borders, these video works remind us that "seeing" is not a neutral act: it can involve a change of perspective, a broadening of the gaze, the possibility of intertwining our experience with that of others", concluded the curators Francesca Benini and Je Yun Moon.

K-NOW! Korean Video Art Today: the exhibition

The exhibition has a fluid, pacy layout that unfolds among contrasting imaginaries, perceptions and dimensions. The opening piece, ***Citizen's Forest*** (2016) by Chan-kyong Park, immerses viewers in a dilated flow of time. The multi-channel video installation has an elongated panoramic format, which recalls the horizontal scrolls used in traditional Asian painting. In this suspended, layered dimension, shamanic ceremonies are interlaced with the commemoration of tragic events in recent Korean history such as the Sewol ferry tragedy in 2014, showing how this medium has the potential to effect a profound, subversive form of historical recovery.

A response to Park's work comes from the videos ***Offering*** (2023) and ***Wreckage*** (2024) by the artist Jane Jin Kaisen, presented with a double screening at the end of the show. These powerfully evocative, poetic images reveal the artist's bond to the island of Jeju and the historical memories submerged in its waters, such as the massacre of civilians by the South Korean army in 1948. Kaisen also explores the forms of female resistance this place is known for, as home to the female freedivers of the Haenyeo culture.

From video as historical memory to speculative narratives and (post)technological visions, the exhibition goes on to present a number of works that investigate life in interconnected, interfaced, data-driven environments, as can be seen in ***Delivery Dancer's Sphere*** (2022) by Ayoung Kim. In the video, screened on a monumental led wall in the centre of the exhibition space, the viewer follows the motorbike journeys of a young courier through a Seoul transformed into a glittering algorithmic landscape. Created during Covid, the work prompts reflections on the gig economy, a system based on temporary jobs and the increasingly accelerated, demanding nature of the world of work.

The audiovisual collective **업체eobchae**, founded in Seoul in 2017 by Nahee Kim, Cheonseok Oh and Hwi Hwang, also tackles the dominant economic models and technological transformations, projecting speculative visions and possible scenarios; some disturbing, some extremely telling. The ironic, dystopian digital aesthetic of ***ROLA ROLLS*** (2024) imagines a future without fossil fuels through the story of the character "R", a symbol of the oil industry who becomes a member of an ecological cult that turns humans into self-sufficient hybrid systems. The stages in this process are shown in the futuristic sculpture ***TREE OF ROLA*** (2024), exhibited by the video.

Sungsil Ryu mingles satire and social criticism in her work, which examines the way society in Korea and beyond is marked by strong hierarchies, competition and ambiguous expectations around status. ***<BJ Cherry Jang 2018.9>*** (2018) revolves around the fictional character Cherry Jang, a virtual streamer who capitalizes on people's social climbing aspirations by encouraging them to pursue "first-class citizenship" - a status that visitors can actually buy by scanning the QR code built into the wallpaper in the show.

Heecheon Kim's work uses video as a mental space, place and tool of perception that he uses to reflect on how technology has transformed the way we live, view things and feel present. In ***Ghost1990*** (2021), which is shown through a VR headset, the viewer sees the world through the eyes of an injured athlete, and is thus immersed in conflicting emotions of vulnerability, desire for control and obsession with physical performance.

Onejoon Che, on the other hand, uses video to investigate communities and borders. In ***Made in Korea*** (2021), produced with the Nigerian musician Igwe Osinachi, the artist uses the medium of music videos to address the issue of African emigration to Korea. The work, which is presented on a screen built into a wall-mounted installation featuring two rows of LP covers, takes a light but profound look at the social transformation of the country and its contradictions.

The political dimension of places is also explored by Sojung Jun in *Green Screen* (2021), presented in the museum foyer. Shot along the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) between the two Koreas, the video reveals a place that is rich in history, expectations and separations, but also regeneration - nature has taken over once more. It invites us to rethink not only geographical borders, but also symbolic ones.

Video durations range from 5 to 26 minutes. The total viewing time of the exhibition is approximately 1 hour and 40 minutes.

The exhibition is accompanied by an illustrated catalogue published by Mousse Publishing in Italian and English. It includes critical essays by Francesca Benini, Je Yun Moon and Adeena Mey, a preface by Tobia Bezzola and interviews with the eight featured artists.

Featured artists

Chan-kyong Park (Seoul, 1965)
Jane Jin Kaisen (Jeju, 1980)
Ayoung Kim (Seoul, 1979)
업체eobchae
Sungsil Ryu (Seoul, 1993)
Heecheon Kim (Seoul, 1989)
Onejoon Che (Seoul, 1979)
Sojung Jun (Busan, 1982)

MASILugano

Press contacts

MASI Lugano
Press office
+41 (0)58 866 42 40
comunicazione@masilugano.ch

Exhibition venues

LAC
Piazza Bernardino Luini 6
CH – 6900 Lugano

Palazzo Reali
Via Canova 10
CH – 6900 Lugano

MASILugano

In collaboration with

Repubblica e Cantone Ticino

Città di Lugano

Founders

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Dipartimento federale dell'interno DFI
Ufficio federale della cultura UFC

Institutional Partner

UBS

Main Partner

IBSA FOUNDATION for scientific research

With the support of

FONDAZIONE LUGANO PER IL POLO CULTURALE

Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism

KOFICE
Korean Foundation for International Cultural Exchange

K-GO

Sponsor

AL EVENT
eventi per passione

EMME3
Tecnologie per eventi, spettacoli e congressi

Press Images

01.
Chan-kyong Park,
Still image from *Citizen's Forest*
2016
© Courtesy of the artist

02.
Chan-kyong Park,
Still image from *Citizen's Forest*
2016
© Courtesy of the artist

03.
Jane Jin Kaisen
Still image from *Offering*
2023
© 2026, ProLitteris, Zurich. Courtesy of the artist

04.
Jane Jin Kaisen
Still image from *Wreckage*
2024
© 2026, ProLitteris, Zurich. Courtesy of the artist

05.
Ayoung Kim
Still image from *Delivery Dancer's Sphere*
2022
© Courtesy of the artist

06.
Ayoung Kim
Still image from *Delivery Dancer's Sphere*
2022
© Courtesy of the artist

07.
업체eobchae
Still image from *ROLA ROLLS*
2024
© Courtesy of the artist

08.
업체eobchae
Still image from *ROLA ROLLS*
2024
© Courtesy of the artist

09.
Sungsil Ryu
Still image from *<BJ Cherry Jang 2018.9>*
2018
© Courtesy of the artist

10.
Heecheon Kim
Still image from *Ghost1990*
2021
© Courtesy of the artist

11.
Onejoon Che
Still image from *Made in Korea*
2021
© Courtesy of the artist

12.
Onejoon Che
Still image from *Made in Korea*
2021
© Courtesy of the artist

13.
Sojung Jun
Still image from *Green Screen*
2021
© Courtesy of the artist

14.
Installation view
“K-NOW, Korean Video Art Today” MASI Lugano, Switzerland
Photo © MASI Lugano, photographer Luca Meneghel

15.
Chan-kyong Park
Citizen’s Forest, 2016
Installation view
“K-NOW, Korean Video Art Today” MASI Lugano, Switzerland
© Chan-kyong Park
Photo © MASI Lugano, photographer Luca Meneghel

16.
Jane Jin Kaisen
Offering, 2023 and *Wreckage*, 2024.
Installation view
“K-NOW, Korean Video Art Today” MASI Lugano, Switzerland
© 2026, ProLitteris, Zurich. Jane Jin Kaisen
Photo © MASI Lugano, photographer Luca Meneghel

17.
Ayoung Kim
Delivery Dancer's Sphere,
2022
Installation view
"K-NOW, Korean Video Art
Today" MASI Lugano,
Switzerland
© Ayoung Kim
Photo © MASI Lugano,
photographer Luca
Meneghel

18.
업체eobchae
ROLA ROLLS, 2024
Installation view
"K-NOW, Korean Video Art Today"
MASI Lugano, Switzerland
© 업체eobchae
Photo © MASI Lugano, photographer Luca
Meneghel

19.
Sungsil Ryu
<BJ Cherry Jang 2018.9>, 2018
Installation view
"K-NOW, Korean Video Art Today"
MASI Lugano, Switzerland
© Sungsil Ryu
Photo © MASI Lugano, photographer Luca
Meneghel

20.
Heecheon Kim
Ghost1990, 2021
Installation view
"K-NOW, Korean Video Art Today" MASI Lugano, Switzerland
© Heecheon Kim
Photo © MASI Lugano, photographer Luca Meneghel

21.
Onejoon Che
Made in Korea, 2021
Installation view
"K-NOW, Korean Video Art Today" MASI Lugano, Switzerland
© Onejoon Che
Photo © MASI Lugano, photographer Luca Meneghel

22.
Sojung Jun
Green Screen, 2021
Installation view
"K-NOW, Korean Video Art Today"
MASI Lugano, Svizzera
© Sojung Jun
Photo © MASI Lugano, photographer Luca Meneghel