



# EXHIBITION

## NEGOTIATING BORDERS

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From September 12 to October 31, 2020

The Fondation Fiminco invites French and foreign art centers and institutions to take over its exhibition space, called “La Chaufferie”, to present exhibitions addressing contemporary issues and showing different artistic scenes.

A first carte blanche is given to the Real DMZ Project, a contemporary art and research project initiated in 2011 by Sunjung Kim, curator and artistic director. The Real DMZ Project was conceived with hope to raise awareness and bring the Korean border issues to our everyday consciousness, focusing mainly on exploring issues of border. As Sunjung Kim recalls :

“The Korean Peninsula was first divided in 1945 by the United States and the Soviet Union seeking to diminish the Japanese army then occupying Korea. After the Korean War (1950-1953), the Armistice Agreement created the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) by ordering both South and North Korea to move their troops back an equal distance of 2km from the Military Demarcation Line. Initially just a ‘line,’ the border thus became a 4km-wide, 248km-long ‘zone.’ Since the Korean War ended with a truce agreement rather than a peace treaty, continuing conflicts between North and South Korea have seen the DMZ evolve paradoxically into one of the world’s most heavily fortified areas.

Especially in the 1960s and 1970s, the military confrontation and ideological conflicts provided legitimacy for both countries to use them politically. The continuing tensions and threat of “war” helped establish the foundation of governing ideologies of both states. For example, starting in 1974, underground tunnels dug by the North to use for invasion into the South have been discovered on the southern side of the DMZ, reminding us of a pending war. The fact that it takes only three minutes for a North Korean combat plane to reach Seoul is another threatening reality.

But such haunting threats of war elicit from us not only a sense of crisis but also oblivion, so that we can continue with our daily lives. We have learned to forget, rather than remember, about the division and the tragic war, but they have instead become internalized as part of our society and individual lives. Though invisible, the traumas are ubiquitous and haunting us in our daily lives.

We have organized and mounted exhibitions in locations in the Civilian Control Zone and along the DMZ Security Tour route, annually from 2012 to 2015. The Real DMZ Project also runs a residency program in Yangji-ri, a village situated inside the Civilian Control Line, to provide artists and researchers with opportunities to live near the border and take a closer look at the reality of the division of Korea. Collaborations with artists and scholars have been culminated into permanent and impermanent art works as well as various programs.”

# IN BETWEEN

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The Real DMZ Project settles for the first time in France for an exceptional exhibition, *Negotiating Borders - Paris*, curated by Sunjung Kim. *Negotiating Borders - Paris* presents selected works by artists that explore issues surrounding the division of Korea. The exhibition is held in two different places, at the Centre Culturel Coréen in Paris and at the Fondation Fiminco. Just as the North and South reflect each other, exhibitions taking place at Fondation Fiminco and Centre Culturel Coréen mirror the other. Works presented at Fondation Fiminco reveal the constructed reality devised to maintain the status quo and speak to the contradictory militarization of the demilitarized zone. In the meantime, artists at Centre Culturel Coréen speculate on the upcoming age of peace as well as the nature of the place after humans left.



Soyoung Chung, *Watchhouse*, 2019. View of exhibition : *Negotiating Borders* (2019). Courtesy of the artist, Korean Cultural Centre UK et the Real DMZ Project. © Dan Weil

The exhibition also questions the reconciliation between regional particularities and universality, of which the theme of the border is an eloquent symbol, both physically and psychologically. These considerations also feed the exhibition, first thought as a space for questioning. The exhibition presented at the Fondation Fiminco, entitled *In between*, embraces the different levels of understanding of DMZ, through the creations of Korean and international artists who confront their sensitivities, their perceptions and their vision of the divided Korean peninsula.

On the threshold of the exhibition, **Dongsei Kim** retraces in video the history of the DMZ, and recalls that the DMZ dynamically mutates over time contradicting its common prejudice as a fixed fortified border.

In the first part of the exhibition, **Suntag Noh** portrays North Korea, implying that inevitably the two Koreas are mirrors of each other.

**Jane Jin Kaisen's** immersive lightbox installation juxtaposes recent photographs she took in 2015 related to the Korean War with the Danish journalist Kate Fleron's 1951 black-and-white documentary photographs of North Korea, thus shuttling back and forth between the two time periods. The red light filling the space seemingly indicates communism as well as the Cold War Era but at the same time, is pointing us to look beyond the reality of the divided Korea which is often seen through the lens of old ideology.

The 2-channel video work from **Mischa Leinkauf** shows the border crossing from a bird's eye view: with a drone, Leinkauf crosses the border of the Han River and refers to the river's water as the connecting element of the two ideologically opposing systems.

The exhibition continues with **Seung Woo Back's** work consisting of photographs taken by the artist in North Korea in 2001. **Kyungah Ham** turns our eyes to the cars returning to South Korea from Kaeseong Industrial Region, a South Korean free economic zone that was located in North Korea, after it was shut down for political reasons. Cars covered with piles of luggage, driving back without any promise of returning, let us confront the risk and danger of war that actually drift across our everyday lives.

Through photographs of the lives of civilians and soldiers in the region, **Joongho Yum** captures the mundane but unusual and strange scenes that we often miss.

**Heinkuhn Oh** engages with soldiers in a more direct manner as his photographs brings attention to their subtle expressions of anxiousness and traces of collective trauma, departing from the stereotypical images of soldiers associated with masculinity, strength and heroism. **Soyoung Chung's** sculpture and installation use shade nets that can be often seen in the DMZ area. Farmers use them to cover light and similar ones are also used by soldiers who need to take cover. Designed as a guard post for one person, the light and shadow it blocks and creates resemble how those exist together in the time-space.

**Hayoun Kwon's** *489 Years* consists of a transcription of an account of the zone by a former South Korean soldier, Kim. We gain access to the DMZ as he immerses us in his personal memories as if in a tale retold. The viewer enters into and discovers this site from a subjective point of view as they listen to Kim's voice-over narration. Hayoun Kwon's work dialogues with a sculpture by **Alain Declercq** which takes place in the monumental nave. In the manner of a plotting table, Alain Declercq shows the engraved relief map of a border area between South and North Korea where "Imjin gak" is located, an emblematic place of memory of the Korean War.

## THE CURATOR ————— ————— OF THE EXHIBITION

**Sunjung Kim** (b.1965) is a curator and the current president of the Gwangju Biennale Foundation, as well as the artistic director of the *Real DMZ Project*. Most recently she was chief curator of the 2018 Gwangju Biennale, *Imagined Borders*, and curated the Francis Alÿs (2018) exhibition at Art Sonje Center. From 1993 to 2004, Kim was the deputy director of Art Sonje Center in Seoul, where she later served as the director from 2016 to 2017. At Art Sonje Center, Kim curated solo exhibitions showcasing Martin Creed (2009), Haegue Yang (2010), and Abraham Cruzvillegas (2015). In 2005, Kim was appointed the commissioner of the Korean Pavilion at the 51<sup>st</sup> Venice Biennale, and has held positions at the following institutions: Platform Seoul (Artistic Director, 2006-2010), Media City Seoul at SeMA (Artistic Director, 2010), *Roundtable* at the 9th Gwangju Biennale (Artistic co-director, 2012), and the ACC Archive and Research department at the Institute of Asian Cultural Development in Gwangju (Artistic Director, 2014-2015).

## THE ARTISTS ————— ————— OF THE EXHIBITION

**Suntag Noh** (b. 1971, Seoul) is a contemporary artist working in documentaries and photography. "I learned photography on the streets. I learned, but I know nothing since I learned it the wrong way. I make up my mind to study but then I'm lost because I don't know what to study. I've been curious about the Northern puppets since I've heard about them so much since childhood. As I got older, I became more curious about who we are, wanting to destroy those Northern puppets any chance we get. I'm collecting the scenes of functions and malfunctions derived from the division. I've been gathering with both my camera and my hands, but I think upon them for a long time because I don't know what I've collected." NOH Suntag has held solo exhibitions such as *Fragrance of the Division*, *Strange Ball*, *Red Frame*, *Good Murder*, *State of Emergency*, and *The Forgetting Machine*, and has published photography books under the same titles.

**Mischa Leinkauf** (b. 1977, Berlin) deals with the limitations of spaces through boundaries, borders, rules, architectures and barriers, usually working where there are "limits on spaces — architectural limits, something blocking me from freely moving, or systemic limits, like not being allowed to pass a security barrier." Leinkauf describes his approach as one of "creating temporary irritations that allow new perspectives on everyday situations" and of "crossing the boundaries" of prescribed individual freedom in order to "question common standards and constraints". In recourse to Situationist theory and practice, Mischa Leinkauf reveals the permeability and absurdity of border fortifications. Neither the natural resources of water, air and earth nor social lifestyles, solidarity and intimate relationships suggest spatial demarcation. Against this background, his works put the objectification and naturalness of boundaries up for discussion. Through practices of physical appropriation, he visualises the dichotomies of violence and peace, use and abuse, and fundamentally questions subjectivity against the background of territorial classifications. His body becomes a body of resistance in the sphere of borders: by withdrawing himself, walking, circling and roaming, Mischa Leinkauf resists the architectures of isolation and subtly opens up a limitless space of possibilities for connection. Previously self-evident perspectives are broken up, and the underlying structures of demarcation are radically exposed as an artificial order. His major exhibitions are *Fiction of a Non-Entry* (PYLON-Lab, Dresden, Germany, 2020), *Fiktio n einer Nicht-Einreise*, (alexander levy, Berlin, Germany, 2019), *Endogenous Error Terms* (The Container, Tokyo, Japan, 2019) and *Hörweiten*, a cityscape intervention in public space (Puhlheim, Germany, 2018). His work was also featured in several exhibitions at key galleries and museums, including the Bonn Kunstmuseum in Germany and the art gallery signs and symbols in New York, United States.

**Dongsei Kim** (b. 1979, Seoul) is an architect, urbanist, and educator. He served as an assistant professor at Korea University and an adjunct assistant professor at Columbia University, GSAPP before joining NYIT. Additionally, he has taught architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design studios and seminars at Carleton University (Canada); Kyung Hee University (Korea); Monash University (Australia); RMIT University (Australia); and Victoria University of Wellington (New Zealand). His current research, focusing on architecture and urbanism's relationship to nation-state borders across multiple scales, examines the notions of "inclusion" and "exclusion" and how "us" and 'them' are defined through various spatial practices. His research on the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) has been internationally recognized through multiple exhibitions and publications. Dongsei's research on the DMZ border contributed to the Golden Lion award-winning "*Crow's Eye View: The Korean Peninsula*" exhibition curated by Minsuk Cho, Hyungmin Pai and Changmo Ahn at the 14th International Architecture Exhibition directed by Rem Koolhaas (Venice, 2014). Recently, his work has been invited to exhibitions such as the "*Active Archive*" at the Seoul Biennale of Architecture and Urbanism (Seoul, 2017); "*(im)positions*" at Melbourne School of Design (Melbourne, 2017); "*Over the Boundary*" at the State Library of Queensland (Brisbane, 2016); "*REAL DMZ PROJECT*" at Art Sonje Center (Seoul, 2015); "*Making Border*" at DNA Gallery (Berlin, 2015); and "*Cold War, Hot Peace*" at Slought (Philadelphia, 2015).

**Seung Woo Back** (b. 1973, Daejeon) studied photography in Korea. In 2001, he moved to London and later received degrees in Fine Art and Art Theory from Middlesex University. Starting with his first solo exhibition, *Real World*, held at Gana Insa Art Center in 2007, he has held various solo exhibitions in New York, Paris, Tokyo and Seoul. His representative solo exhibitions include *Artist of the Year 2016* (National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea, 2016), *Walking on the Line* (Center A, Vancouver, 2015), *Gaps, Unrealistic Generals* (Gana Art Gallery, Seoul, 2012), *Memento* (Doosan Gallery, New York, 2012), *Deferred Judgement* (Art Sonje Center, Seoul, 2011), and *Blow Up* (Misashin Gallery, Tokyo, 2011). His works are in the collections of over 30 museums around the world, including the Getty Museum, National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art Gwacheon, Seoul Museum of Art and Houston Museum of Fine Arts. His publications include *Nobody Reads Pictures* (Hyunsil Culture Studies SAMUSO, 2011) among others. He has recently held a solo exhibition, *Volatile Judgement*, in Kyoto (Chiten, 2018) and presented new works at the 2018 Gwangju Biennale. He is a professor in the Department of Visual Communication & Design at Hongik University.

**Heinkuhn Oh** (b. 1963, Seoul) majored in photography and film at Ohio University's graduate school of art and started his career as a documentary photographer, capturing social landscapes on the streets. In 1999, his solo exhibition *Ajumma, Portraits of Middle-aged Women in Korea* helped create the "Ajumma Syndrome" in Korean society through its distinctive theme and style.



Jane Jin KEISEN

Apertures | Specters | Rifts, 2016, 508,4 x 52,8 x 10 cm.

Handcrafted white oak boxes, 36 black & white photographs taken in North Korea in 1951 and 2015. Printed on inkjet screen film, inserted between a transparent and a red acrylic sheet, LED lights, electrical cords. Courtesy of the artist

Since then, he has focused on documenting specific groups of people revealing common desires and anxieties that prevail in Korean society. In 2005, he was featured in the Korean Pavilion at the 51<sup>st</sup> Venice Biennale and published five monographs—*Ajumma* (1999), *Girl's Act* (2004), *Cosmetic Girls* (2008), *Unfinished Portrait* (2009), and *Middlemen* (2012). His works are currently owned by numerous museums including the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul and the Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art, Seoul.

**Kyungah Ham** (b. 1966, Seoul) is a contemporary artist based in Seoul and her works constitute an inquiry into the structural contradictions and injustice of modern society. Her major solo exhibitions include *Phantom Footstep* (Carlier Gebauer Gallery, Berlin, 2017), *Phantom Footstep* (Kukje Gallery, Seoul, 2015), and *Desire and Anesthesia* (Art Sonje, Seoul, 2009). She has also participated in many international projects, including *Material Connection* (Jane Lombard Gallery, New York, 2017), the *Asian Corridor of Culture City in East Asia 2017* (Kyoto Art Center, Nijo Castle, 2017), *Artists of the Year 2016* (Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul, 2016), *Taipei Biennale* (Taipei National Museum of Art, Taipei, 2016), and *Asia Time, 1<sup>st</sup> Asia Biennale and 4<sup>th</sup> Triennale* (Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou, 2015).

**Soyoung Chung** (b.1979, Suresnes ), spent her childhood in both France and Korea then graduated from Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris, France. While she has experience in both cultures, Seoul has been the artist's base for the last ten years. She has been asking questions about the politics of space through installations in specific places, video and public interventions. Leveraging geology, she delves into the underlying layers of time within her surroundings by visualizing each aspect of history. In 2016, she participated in the DMZ Project featuring the demilitarized zone between South and North Korea, expanding her work scope from material and space to society and the environment.

Moving beyond installation art, she is broadening her artistic horizon by collaborating with artists in different areas. Chung has held many private exhibitions including at Art Sonje (2016), D Project Space (2013), OCI Museum (2011), Project Space Sarubia (2008); and joined in many group exhibitions at home and abroad such as the Nottingham New Art Exchange (2017), Songeun Art Space (2016), Ortakoy Yetimhanesi in Turkey (2016), Amore Pacific Museum (2016), Seoul Museum of Art (2015), Tripostal in Lille, France (2015), Ilmin Museum of Art (2012), Plateau Museum of Art (2011). Furthermore, she was selected to participate in renowned residency programs including the Delfina Foundation Residency Program (2017), Berlin ZK/U (2017), Le Cyclop and Milly-la-Forêt Residency in France (2014), SeMA Nanji Residency (2012) etc. Chung also won the Songeun Art Awards in 2016.

**Jane Jin Kaisen** (b. 1980, Jeju Island), works with video installation, film, photography, performance, and text. Recurring themes involve memory, migration, and translation at the intersection of personal and collective histories. Kaisen received an MFA from the University of California Los Angeles, an MA from The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, and she attended the Whitney Independent Study Program. She has exhibited her work in a wide range of contexts internationally, including: the 58<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale Korean Pavilion (IT) the 68<sup>th</sup> Berlin International Film Festival and Haus der Kulturen der Welt (DE); Kunsthal Aarhus and Kunsthallen Brandts (DK), Seoul Museum of Art, the Leeum Samsung Museum of Art and Asia Culture Center (KR). Other venues include the Liverpool Biennale (UK), ParaSite (HK), Gana Art New York (US), Malmö Konstmuseum (SE), and Townhouse Gallery (EG).

**Joongho Yum** (b. 1965, Seoul), depicts the marginal place that is usually overlooked, instead of the glittering facade and breathtakingly refined structure of the metropolis. In the unreachable corners of the city, Yum uses his keen observation to microscopically

scrutinize our lives for trivial things. But he does not empathize with the objects in his pictures, and rather takes an indifferent stance in expressing them in his pictures. Everyday scenery that usually just pass us by become strange and doubtful subjects in his work. Yum majored in photography at Chung-Ang University and art theory at Université Paris VIII and now works in Seoul and Paris. Some of his solo exhibitions include, *Joongho YUM. Private life* (Seonam Art center, Seoul, 1999), *Millionaire and a lady* (Il Ju Art Center, Seoul, 2001), *Nouvelles Frontières* (One And J Gallery, Seoul, 2007), *Now that I don't know* (One And J Gallery, Seoul, 2009), *The Taste of Others* (One And J Gallery, Seoul, 2012), *Let's Remain Courteous* (Hite Collection Art center, Seoul, 2013), *I didn't see anything but the blue window-blind* (SSmadang gallery, Cheonchun, 2014) and some of his group exhibitions are Sungkok art museum (Seoul, 1999), Busan museum of modern art (Busan, 1999), 3<sup>rd</sup> Gwangju Biennale (2000), Seoul museum of art (2001), Nagoya art center (Nagoya, 2002), Seoul museum of art (Seoul, 2004), *A positive view* (Somerset House, London, 2010), *One And J at Pierre Koenig Case study House21* (LA, 2010), *Moments Unfolded* (Shinsegae Gallery, Seoul, 2011), *Art Sunje Center* (Seoul, 2014), *Somewhere out There* (space bm, Seoul, 2014), *Neutre Era* (Space Boan 1942, 2015).

**Hayoun Kwon** (b. 1981, Seoul), lives and works between France and South Korea. Two recurring elements in Kwon's work are present here: on the one hand, the border, and on the other, the immaterial story, the purely human production, the creation of fictions. Of particular interest to her is the border that divides North and South Korea, which she perceives as a kind of mirror that reflects similar images back to both the watcher and the watched, or as a theatre stage whose limits the spectator cannot transgress. The border becomes a conceptual one that poses the question of the physical and mental limits of the individual. Hayoun Kwon's work was notably shown at the Cinéma du Réel festivals at the Center Pompidou (Paris, France) in 2014 and Doc Fortnight at MoMA (New York, United States) in 2017.



Kyungah HAM

Reprinted *Jet lag bet.17 and 17:30*, ex.3-3-1, 2020, 382(h) x 529cm, Laser Print. Courtesy of the artist

Reprinted *Jet lag bet.17 and 17:30*, ex.3-2-1, 2020, 354(h) x 500cm, Laser Print. Courtesy of the artist, *Embrace*, 1981. Courtesy of the artist

**Alain Declercq** (b. in 1969, Moulins) is a French visual artist. In his installations, photographs, drawings and films, Alain Declercq explores the structures of power and the forms of oppression that they engender – security schizophrenia, surveillance and media manipulation. Declercq's technique of inversion transforms him into an image hunter, an instigator of dysfunction, a turner of tables and general troublemaker. What is definitely pivotal in his work is still the (photographic) shot, and the act of taking it. This should not be understood just in its usual sense, but much more like a hold in judo: how to use power by

reversing it, by using the force of the other to play with it, turn it inside out, or merely expose it where it doesn't want to be display. This shot is no longer focused on the split second of the shutter release, but rather on the conditions underlying what will permit this action and operation. Alain Declercq has participated in numerous group exhibitions and group exhibitions and solo shows in France and abroad, in France and abroad, including a retrospective of his work, in 2010, at Villa Tamaris (La Seyne-sur-mer, France).

## PRACTICAL INFORMATIONS

Exhibition « *Negotiating borders - In between* »  
from from September 12 to October 31, 2020  
at the Fondation Fiminco

**Curator of the exhibition :** Sunjung Kim

**Opening Times :** Tuesday to Sunday, 11 AM to 7 PM

Free admission

**43 Rue de la Commune de Paris 93230 Romainville**

**Métro :** Line 5 – Stop Bobigny-Pantin-Raymond Queneau

**Bus :** 147 – Stop Église de Pantin-Métro, 145 and 318 –

Stop Louise Dory

**Velib :** Station n°32303 – Gaston Roussel – Commune de Paris

Exhibition *Negotiating Borders - The Ecology and Beyond the Borders* at the Korean Cultural Center from September 10 to November 6

20 Rue de la Boétie 75008 Paris

## CONTACT

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## AROUND THE EXHIBITION

### **Videoconference “Re-imagining the DMZ after COVID-19 : Immunity, Community, and Mobility”**

This conference is the occasion to confront the analyses of scholars specializing in architecture, philosophy, cultural studies, and border studies.

**Videoconference on Thursday, October 15, 2020**

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