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The Guggenheim Museum Presents *Only the Young: Experimental Art in Korea, 1960s–1970s*

The historic presentation will examine artistic production from an era of remarkable transformation in Korea.

Exhibition: *Only the Young: Experimental Art in Korea, 1960s–1970s*
Venue: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Avenue, New York
Location: Tower Galleries 2, 4, and 5
Date: September 1, 2023–January 7, 2024

(NEW YORK, NY–April 25, 2023) In the fall of 2023, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum will present *Only the Young: Experimental Art in Korea, 1960s–1970s*, the first North American museum exhibition dedicated to Korean Experimental art (*silheom misul*) and its artists, whose radical approach to materials and process produced some of the most significant avant-garde practices of the twentieth century.

This historic presentation will examine artistic production from an era of remarkable transformation in South Korea, when young artists who came of age in the decades immediately following the Korean War reflected and responded to the changing socioeconomic, political, and material conditions that accompanied the nation's rapid urbanization and modernization. The exhibition will center on a network of key artists, including Ha Chong-Hyun, Kim Kulim, Jung Kangja, Lee Seung-taek, Lee Kang-So, Lee Kun-Yong, and Sung Neung Kyung, who, in addition to creating boundary-pushing works of art, pursued exhibitions, performances, publications, and public seminars, often under the rubric of self-organized collectives. Porous in nature, groups such as the Korean Avant Garde Association, Space and Time, and the Fourth Group, as well as nationwide exhibition platforms such as the Daegu Contemporary Art Festival and international biennials, provided fertile grounds for innovative – and often provocative – practices that broke definitively with those of their predecessors. While the artists never formally announced a movement, the term "Experimental art" was first historicized in a landmark publication by Gim Mi-gyeong based on her doctoral dissertation *Experimental Art and Society in 1960s and 1970s Korea* (2000), which has since propelled a reexamination of this influential but understudied group of artists.

Only the Young: Experimental Art in Korea, 1960s–1970s will be thematically sequenced and feature approximately eighty works across various mediums, including painting, sculpture, ceramics, photography, video, installation, and film, most of which are being presented for the first time to an international audience. It offers visitors an unprecedented opportunity to experience the creativity and breadth of this generation of Korean artists, illustrating how they harnessed the power of contemporary visual languages to explore pressing issues shaped by an authoritarian state at home and a globalizing world beyond.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a full-color scholarly publication, the first in the English language on Experimental art, with contributions by Cho Soojin, art historian; Joan Kee, Professor of Art History, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; Yoon Jin-sup, artist, curator and critic; and curators Kyung An and Kang Soojung, among other leaders in the field. In addition to incisive new scholarship and lavish photography of works drawn from public and private collections across the globe, the volume also brings together translations of articles, artist manifestos, and other primary sources that offer a firsthand perspective on the ideas then shaping artistic discourse in South Korea.

Only the Young: Experimental Art in Korea, 1960s–1970s is co-organized by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, and the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea. The exhibition is cocurated by Kyung An, Associate Curator, Asian Art, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and Foundation, New York, and Kang Soojung, Senior Curator, National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea. The exhibition will open at the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea, on May 26 and close on July 16, 2023. It will travel to the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, from February 11 to May 12, 2024, following the Guggenheim presentation this fall.

Funders

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About the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation

The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation was established in 1937 and is dedicated to promoting the understanding and appreciation of modern and contemporary art through exhibitions, education programs, research initiatives, and publications. The international constellation of museums includes the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice; the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao; and the future Guggenheim Abu Dhabi. An architectural icon and "temple of spirit" where radical art and architecture meet, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum is now among a group of eight Frank Lloyd Wright structures in the United States recently designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site. To learn more about the museum and the Guggenheim's activities around the world, visit guggenheim.org.

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For press image requests, contact pressoffice@guggenheim.org.

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