

For Immediate Release: Tuesday, November 14, 2023

Press preview: Friday, February 9, 2024

Contact: Santiago Pazos, spazos@hammer.ucla.edu

Emma Jacobson-Sive, emma@ejs-media.com

Hammer Museum Presents West Coast Premiere of *Only the Young: Experimental Art in Korea, 1960s–1970s*

February 11–May 12, 2024



Featuring approximately eighty works, *Only the Young* examines the artistic production from an era of remarkable transformation in Korea.

(Los Angeles, CA) —The Hammer Museum at UCLA is pleased to announce *Only the Young: Experimental Art in Korea, 1960s–1970s*, a groundbreaking 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. The Hammer Museum’s presentation, on view February 11–May 12, 2024, is the exhibition’s first and only venue on the West Coast. Prior to the Hammer, the exhibition debuted at the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea (May 26–July 16, 2023) and traveled to the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (September 1, 2023–January 7, 2024).

Ann Philbin, Director of the Hammer Museum, said, “We are tremendously excited to bring this exhibition to Los Angeles—a city with deep connections to Korean culture and home to the largest population of Korean descendants in the nation. The artists featured in this exhibition represent a particularly important and compelling era within the recent history of Korean art and add greater dimension to the study of art made around the world in the last 60 years.”

Image captions (L-R): Lee Kun-Yong, *Logic of Hand*, 1975/2019. Four C-Prints (33 7/16in. (85 x 85 cm.) each. Courtesy of the artist and the Leeum Museum of Art, Seoul. Installation view, *Only the Young: Experimental Art in Korea, 1960s–1970s*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, September 1, 2023–January 7, 2024. Photo: Ariel Ione Williams © Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation. [Jung Kangja, *Kiss Me*, 1967/2001]. Kim Kulim, *The Meaning of 1/24 Second*, 1969. 16mm color film, silent, 9.41 min. Courtesy of the artist and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York.

Only the Young examines artistic production from an era of remarkable transformation in South Korea, when young artists who came of age in the decades 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 centers on a network of key artists, including **Ha Chong-Hyun, Jung Kangja, Kim Kulim, Lee Kang-So, Lee Kun-Yong, Lee Seung-taek,** 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 Kim Mikyung, which has since propelled a reexamination of this influential but understudied group of artists.

Only the Young is thematically sequenced and features approximately eighty works across various mediums, including painting, sculpture, ceramics, photography, video, installation, and film. 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 is accompanied by a full-color scholarly publication, the first in the English language on Korean 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. In addition to incisive new scholarship and photography of works drawn from public and private collections across the globe, the volume also brings together translations of primary source materials published together for the first time, including critical and theoretical writing as well as artist manifestos. Together they offer a firsthand perspective on the ideas then shaping artistic discourse in South Korea.

CREDITS

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 co-curated by Kyung An, Associate Curator, Asian Art, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and Foundation, New York, and Kang Soojung, Senior Curator, The National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea.

The presentation at the Hammer is organized by curator Pablo José Ramírez with curatorial assistant Nika Chilewich.

Lead support *Only the Young: Experimental Art in Korea, 1960s–1970s* is provided by an anonymous donor. Generous support is provided by the Kukje Art & Culture Foundation. Additional support is provided by Cindy and Howard Rachofsky, Eric Kim, Tina Kim Gallery, and The Korea Foundation.

Media Sponsors LAist and Cultured.

ABOUT THE HAMMER MUSEUM

The Hammer Museum is part of the School of the Arts and Architecture at UCLA, and offers exhibitions and collections that span classic to contemporary art. It holds more than 50,000 works in its collection, including one of the finest collections of works on paper in the nation, the Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts. Through a wide-ranging, international exhibition program and the Made in L.A. biennial, the Hammer highlights contemporary art since the 1960s, especially the work of emerging and under-recognized artists. The exhibitions, permanent collections, and nearly 300 public programs annually—including film screenings, lectures, symposia, readings, music performances, and workshops for families—are all free to the public.

HAMMER MUSEUM INFORMATION

Admission to all exhibitions and programs at the Hammer Museum is free. Hours: Tuesday–Sunday 11 a.m.–6 p.m. Closed Mondays and national holidays. Hammer Museum, 10899 Wilshire Boulevard at Westwood, Los Angeles. Onsite parking is \$8 for the first 3 hours (maximum \$22), or \$8 flat rate after 5 p.m. Valet parking is available at the Lindbrook Drive entrance for \$10. Visit hammer.ucla.edu for details or call 310-443-7000.

Free Admission at the Hammer Museum is courtesy of Marcy Carsey, the Erika J Glazer Family Foundation, and the Anthony & Jeanne Pritzker Family Foundation.