

ATELIER
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The Second Life: Short Thoughts on Changing Lives

Atelier Hermès is pleased to present *The Second Life*, a group exhibition of five Korean artists/groups including **Bokyung Kim, Minha Park, Hyunjin Bek, Yona Lee, and Han & Mona**. With the purposefully ambiguous title *The Second Life*, this exhibition invites artists/teams who are paving their own way in the corners of the art world. These artists come from different cities and work in different media with different interests, but what they have in common is that each as an individual contemplates self-awareness and changes in life. While the dominant discourse in today's cultural landscape stresses “others” and communities, this exhibition focuses on individual subjects and personal lives. In particular, the exhibition draws attention to the modes of self-reflection and self-care in the works that explore existential issues and the possibility of self-transformation based on a deep awareness of one's own life. Art serves as a meaningful filter for these artists to open new chapters as they each contemplate unexpected encounters in life and the aspects of existence that either voluntarily or inevitably change and expand due to chance.

The title of the exhibition intentionally misuses the title of the popular virtual world developed in 2003 by Linden Lab, to metaphorically allude to the reality of life as immensely diverse. Instead of imagining post-reality as some illusionary dimension or a fascinating spectacle, this exhibition attempts to reveal what already exists in our reality: that our lives have different nodes and layers, and can change direction through numerous turning points. The “second” that this exhibition speaks of is not an alternative realized by avatars, but the beginning of an ordinal number that tells us that our lives are moving beyond singularity and toward plurality.

Hyunjin Bek “paints as if to sing. [He] sings as if to act. ... [and] acts as if to paint,” wrote the novelist Andrés Solano. This is a very clear description of Beck’s life—its multifaceted developments and the intimate connections between them. The results of all that’s expressed through his body—whether it be voice, speech, facial expression or visual expression—have a particular originality that does not resemble anyone else’s. The originality seems to come from the eccentric rhythm of the body fashioned by his physical conditions, his intention to distance himself from any technical training, and his instinct to deviate from any order, harmony, or typicality.

That he constantly walks away from his achievements into a new, unfamiliar path is in part due to his will to maintain the raw, unrefined energy, and in part due to unexpected changes in life. Bek’s new paintings, which use Korean paper (*Hanji*) and look like drawings because of the relatively low density, are the result of his own physical and sensory experiences, and cannot be classified as figurative or abstract, nor can they be structured in language. After learning that the seemingly unfinished lines in Chusa’s *Sehando* (1844) actually render a snow-covered landscape, Bek began to pay attention to things that are less drawn, things that are light. And as he entered middle age with shoulder pain, that became his natural way of working as he has always tried to follow his physical condition and its rhythm.

Yona Lee’s work titled *In-Transit* originates from her personal life which can be described as always on the move and always in flux. Lee left her hometown of Busan for New Zealand when she was 11 years old, but because her father who remained in Korea, she grew up without a sense of being able to settle down in any one place. For her, life exists between what feels like complete opposites—language grammars, driving directions, seasons, and so forth. Her frequent experiences of moving across the equator and back and forth between the northern and southern hemispheres have always involved “non-places” such as airports, trains, and subways. Feeling completely anonymous in such gliding spaces became opportunities for her to reflect not only on her own life but also the widespread nomadic life of our time.

Lee’s stainless-steel structures are derived from handrails of transportation, stair railings, and turnstiles, which imply the minimum safety devices acting in opposition to the movement and speed of the body. Her contribution to *The Second Life* exhibition features an actual door for the first time. The work divides the space instead of using partitions, but it also connects the two spaces through the door. Added to the sleek and cold structure are a couch, a bench, and a bed, which give modest feelings of rest and warmth. The space is thus turned into something that is public and private at the same time, and alludes to contradictory physical and psychological experiences of movement and stillness, danger and safety, passing and staying, and inside and outside, ultimately pointing to the ambivalence of life.

Han & Mona is a collaborative duo formed by Hanqing Ma, a Chinese artist of Hui descent, and Mona Yoo, a Korean artist. They currently reside and work in Edinburgh, a source of diverse cultural, religious, historical, and spatial nutrients. The two seek to adjust to reach a single, holistic life by respecting each other's differences. To paraphrase Foucault, the self is not a substance, but the sum total of the self and its relationships. Hanqing Ma, whose main medium is photography, and Mona Yoo, who works mainly with space, are both interested in ruins where layers of time are visible. Each begins work by conducting research in his/her own way, and then they together build images and spaces, giving a physical reality to those departed times, and inviting contemplation about existence and absence.

Light is an important component in their work, as they often use light's brightness, color, and flickering to breathe warmth into spaces devoid of life and to convey messages. Mona Yoo first employed Morse code lighting in her work *I am the space where I am* (2022). By installing the old means of emergency communication on the window frame of the gallery, she expressed her psychological state—she feels placed on the border of a heterogeneous cultural environment. Han & Mona's new work *LISTEN, I KNOW* (2025) will be installed in the courtyard of Atelier Hermès as facing lights, to convey an intimate conversation between the two artists.

Having decided to live overseas, **Bokyoung Kim** moved to Berlin where she had no ties. It was while she was living like a complete foreigner that she encountered a visual motif that would motivate her anew. Wandering around the city and following the traces of time, she was particularly fascinated by the acanthus patterns used in Western architecture's capital decoration. Since the Corinthian order applied to the design of the Temple of Apollo in ancient Greece, the acanthus pattern became a major decorative motif for almost all of Western civilization's architecture, furniture, crafts, and household items. Kim started collecting archive images, pondering the symbiotic relationship and cultural expandability of architecture and also flora, using land as a common denominator. She thus pays more attention to the overwhelming vitality and reproductive power of seemingly insignificant plants than to architecture as signs of powerful civilizations. But as she has learned, weeds growing in barren land have also been adopted as emblems of colonial power after being designed into patterns and reborn as cultural motifs.

Kim began knitting, a "work" she can do with her own two hands in minimal space, thinking about vegetation as the subject of life and growth. Her *Synchronized Hands—5mm Back-and-forth Journey into Pairs #1* results from her performance of knitting with a single line of yarn. The yarn progressing through small movements created one by one and connecting with one another represents how plants root and how leaf veins grow. The soft, loose sculpture resembling the unharmed acanthus partakes in a new materialistic feminism as well.

Minha Park's video works have been driven by her interest in the genealogy of optics and media technology that affect our vision. In particular, she has paid attention to the audiovisual byproducts existing in the forms of objects, places, and online archives. Taking a look at what's behind media devices' functions and uses is a way of self-reflection, which leads us to examine the organization and design of media beyond its illusionism.

Having spent much time with generative AI, conversing and working with it frequently, Park recently began to feel its existence as close as a human being, and became curious about its unconsciousness. She ended up looking into a Black Box AI system. Following the experience, her new work gives the image of the 3D character Noa to AI, a bundle of neural networks, and visualizes the AI's exploration to find its own unconsciousness.

Ghost Anatomy (2025), produced using 3D animation, AI-generated images, and AI forensic programming data, tells a story about the second life of a generative AI. It begins with Noa suffering from a mental confusion of sorts due to sudden hallucinations. Hoping to treat the strange phenomenon of remembering what he has never experienced, he meets the mysterious figure H and begins hypnosis treatment exploring the depths of his subconscious...

These participating artists with little relationship to one another bring their own works to the exhibition, weaving a loose framework in response to the theme. While life/lives as common nouns may be roughly placed in a shared context, lives experienced by individuals may have nothing in common.

Bokyung Kim (b. 1988)

2014 BFA in Painting, Hansung University

Solo Shows

2024 "Wand, Route, Root and", Jungganjijeom II, Seoul, Korea

2023 "Following the String of a Peep", Buyeon, Incheon, Korea

2022 "Hyphen", Project Space Daseossure, Seoul, Korea

Selected Group Shows

2025 "Ringing Saga", DOOSAN Art Center DOOSAN Gallery, Seoul, Korea

2024 "Conversing with Nature", Higashikawa Cultural Exchange Center CentPure, Higashikawa Hokkaido, Japan

2023 "Ganghwa Research Archive", Heewarae, Ganghwa, Korea

"Denotation and Profundity", Incheon art platform, Incheon, Korea

"Memory-Space", ARKO Art Center, Seoul, Korea

2022 "The Hyperobject Invasion", Incheon Urban History Museum, Incheon, Korea

"Dead End: Archival Journeys", YPC SPACE, Seoul, Korea

2021 "How The Sea Thinks", space imsi, Incheon, Korea

"Gravity Shower-Presentation", N/A, Seoul, Korea

2014 "Flora Society", Gallery Factory, Seoul, Korea

2012 "The Anthology", Platform Place 629, Seoul, Korea

Duo Solo Shows (25hr sailing)

2020 "Double Curly Loop", Factory2, Seoul, Korea

2017 "Descend towards Vortex", Gallery Factory, Seoul, Korea

2012 "Coordinates Sent from Anchorage", Art Space Pool, Seoul, Korea

Minha Park (b. 1985)

- 2013 MFA. California Institute of the Arts (CalArts)
2008 BFA. Painting, Ewha Womans University

Solo Shows

- 2024 "Time Paradox", Cylinder 2 Gallery, Seoul, Korea
2023 "Shadow Planet", Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, Germany
2020 "Cartography of Night", Space Onsu, Seoul, Korea
2014 "Telecast Baghdad", Audiovisual Pavilion, Seoul, Korea

Selected Group Shows & Screenings

- 2025 "Dark Factory", MMCA Changdong, Seoul, Korea
"CPH:DOX 2025, NEW:VISION AWARD", competition, Kunsthal Charlottenborg, Copenhagen, Denmark
2024 "Ghost out of the Machine", Incheon International Airport, Terminal 2 Media wall, Incheon, Korea
"Foreverism: Endless Horizons", Ilmin Museum, Seoul, Korea
"Assemblage", Kimheesoo Art Center, Seoul, Korea
2023 "K-Artists", Archive Books x The Floorplan, Savvy Contemporary, Berlin, Germany
"Recontres Internationales Paris/Berlin 2023", Video Library, Paris/Berlin, France/Germany
2022 "Arecibo", TINC, Seoul, Korea
"Facing the Movement", Arko Art Center, Seoul, Korea
"Facing the Movement", Lux Moving Image, London, U.K.
2021 "Signaling Perimeters", Nam-Seoul Museum of Art, Seoul, Korea
"Flickering Homes", Insa Art Space, Seoul, Korea
"Orbiting & Oscillating", Windmill, Seoul, Korea
2020 "eek on air", Gallery Factory, Seoul, Korea
"Cream", Archive Bomm, Seoul, Korea
2019 "GoHyang: home", SeMA Seoul Museum of Art, Seoul, Korea
"Complete Technology", MoCA Museum of Contemporary Art Busan, Busan, Korea
"Ecological Sense", Nam June Paik Art Center, Gyeonggi-do, Korea
"Midnight Sun", Elephant Space, Seoul, Korea
2018 "72nd Edinburgh International Film Festival", Black Box-competition, Edinburgh, U.K.
"We are Star Stuff", Doosan Gallery, Seoul, Korea
"It's Snowing in LA", AALA Gallery, Los Angeles, U.S.
2016 "ARTSPECTRUM 2016", Leeum Samsung Museum of Art, Seoul, Korea
2015 "Film Montage", Coreana Museum, Seoul, Korea
"New Skin: Modeling and Attaching", Ilmin Museum of Art, Seoul, Korea
2014 "27th Images Festival", Double Nature-competition, Toronto, Canada
2013 "Ground Truths", Luckman Gallery, Los Angeles, U.S.
"Cinematic Divergence", National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art Film & Video, Seoul, Korea
2012 "The Unbound Archive", Arko Art Center, Seoul, Korea

Hyunjin Bek (b. 1972)

1997 Department of Sculpture, Hongik University (drop-out)

Selected Solo Shows

- 2025 "Seoul Syntax", Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, Los Angeles, USA (Upcoming)
2024 "IMA PICKS 2024: Composeduncomposed Lounge", Ilmin Museum of Art, Seoul, Korea*
2023 "Videos from Seoul", Kuandu Museum of Fine Arts, Taipei, Taiwan*
2021 "Public Hiding", Royal X, Hwaseong, Korea*
"Beyond Words", PKM Gallery, Seoul, Korea*
2020 "P-Ray", P21, Seoul, Korea*
2019 "Work Song: Soil, Mattress and Waves", PKM Gallery, Seoul, Korea*
2017 "In the Neighborhood", Perigee Gallery, Seoul, Korea*
2016 "Field, Bird, Dog and Talent", PKM Gallery, Seoul, Korea*
2013 "Hyunjin Bek", Choi & Lager Gallery, Cologne, Germany
2012 "Hyunjin Bek", 43 Inverness Street Gallery, London, U.K.*
"Paintings Next Door", Ggool & Ggoolpool, Seoul, Korea*
2011 "Thirteen Pieces + bonus", Doosan Gallery, Seoul, Korea
2010 "The End: The Linear Version", PKM Gallery, Seoul, Korea
2008 "Vagrant N' Substance", Arario Gallery, Seoul, Korea*
2007 "Adjective Look", Viafarini, Milan, Italy*

Selected Group Shows

- 2025 "Rolling, Action, ... Paint!", Vestfossen Kunstlaboratorium, Vestfossen, Norway
2023 "Chronicles of the Future Superheroes, Second edition",
National Museum of Contemporary Art of Romania, Palace of Parliament,
Bucharest, Romania*
"Kitchenism", Gallery Jiwooheon, Seoul, Korea*
2022 "Cloud Walkers", Leeum Museum of Art, Seoul, Korea
"Exhibition with Little Information", Museum of Contemporary Art Busan, Busan,
Korea
2021 "Chronicles of the Future Superheroes", Kunsthalle Bega, Timisoara, Romania*
2020 "Time in Space: The Life Style", PKM Gallery, Seoul, Korea
"Hotel Express 284", Culture Station Seoul 284, Seoul, Korea*
"Art of Love", Total Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul, Korea
"Solidarity Spores", Asia Culture Center, Gwangju, Korea
2019 "HILLARY: The Hillary Clinton Emails", Despar Teatro Italia, Venice, Italy
"Spring Coffee Club", Asia Culture Center, Gwangju, Korea*
"The 40th Anniversary Exhibition for Jung Tae-Chun and Park Eun-Ok: Again,
Crossing", Sejong Center, Seoul, Korea
2018 "Six Doors", The Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève (online), Geneva, Switzerland
2018 "Exhibition of Invite 17 Artists", Anseong Art Hall, Anseong, Korea
2017 "The 38th Parallel – Hyunjin Bek & Kelvin Kyungkun Park", Choi & Lager Gallery,
Cologne, Germany

* Delivered a performance tied to the exhibition

Yona Lee (b. 1986)

- 2010 MFA. University of Auckland, Elam School of Fine Arts
2009 BFA. University of Auckland, Elam School of Fine Arts

Selected Solo Shows

- 2025 "Wall, Floor, Ceiling", Fine Arts, Sydney, Australia
2024 "An Arrangement for a Room in Seoul", Art Sonje Center, Seoul, Korea
"Fountain In Transit", Christchurch Art Gallery, Christchurch, New Zealand
2023 "Objects in Practice", Physics Room, Christchurch, New Zealand
"Wall, ceiling and floor", Gertrude Contemporary, Melbourne, Australia
2022 "An Arrangement for 5 Rooms", Auckland Art Gallery, Auckland, New Zealand
2021 "Kit-set In-transit", Fine Arts, Sydney, Australia
"Proposition", Govett-Brewster Art Gallery (online), New Plymouth, New Zealand
2020 "Succession", Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, New Zealand
2019 "In transit (double-function form)", Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia
"In transit", City Gallery Wellington, Wellington, New Zealand
2018 "Perdendosi", SOMA Drawing Center, Seoul, Korea
2017 "Monochrome on Display", OCI Museum, Seoul, Korea
"In Transit (Arrival)", Te Tuhi, Auckland, New Zealand
"Turn of Phrase", Bowerbank Ninow, Auckland, New Zealand
2016 "In Transit", Alternative Space LOOP, Seoul, Korea
"Line on Display", West Space, Melbourne, Australia

Selected Group Shows

- 2025 "Direct Bodily Empathy", Govett-Brewster Art Gallery | Len Lye Centre, New Plymouth, New Zealand
2024 "The same crowd never gathers twice", Buxton Contemporary, Melbourne, Australia
"Between the lines", Openspace Bae, Busan, Korea
2023 "off-site", Art Sonje Center, Seoul, Korea
2022 "Hosting Fine Arts Sydney", Michael Lett, Auckland, New Zealand
"On the table", Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, New Zealand
2020 "Words at an Exhibition—an exhibition in ten chapters and five poems", Busan Biennale, Busan, Korea
2019 "Là où les eaux se mêlent", 15th Lyon Biennale of Contemporary Art, Lyon, France
"Yona Lee, Phillip Lai, Hany Armanious", Fine Arts Sydney, Sydney, Australia
2018 "Spacemakers and roomshakers", Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia
2016 "Korea Tomorrow", Sungkok Museum, Seoul, Korea
"We create things, things create us", Changwon Sculpture Biennale, Changwon, Korea
"Smooth Gravity", Seoul Art Space Geumcheon, Seoul, Korea
"Meeting in two circles", Seoul Museum of Art, SeMA Nanji Hall, Seoul, Korea

Han & Mona

Hangqing Ma (b. 1990)

- 2024 PhD. Fine Art, The University of Edinburgh
- 2015 MA. Photography, Royal College of Art

Mona Yoo (b. 1987)

- 2015 MA. Sculpture, Royal College of Art
- 2012 BFA. Fine Arts, Korea National University of Arts

Selected Shows

- 2026 City Art Centre, Edinburgh, U.K. (Upcoming)
- 2024 "Define Seoul", S Factory, Seoul, Korea
"Where Nature Stayed", Spatial Aesthetics, Gyeonggi-do, Korea
- 2023 "There Is Not Even Silence In The Void", Echo Correspondence, Vienna, Austria
"New Blood" Korea National Assembly Building, Seoul, Korea
"I am the space where I am", Push to Enter, Seoul, Korea
"SHOW UP", Museum of Contemporary Art in Antwerp, Antwerp, Belgium
"Paisajes de los dias cotidianos", Centro Cultural Coreano en Argentina, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 2022 "Between Futures", Gyeonggi Art Campus, Gyeonggi-do, Korea
"Meet me at the threshold", Talbot Rice Gallery, Edinburgh, U.K.
"Aggregate", Freelands Foundation, London, U.K.
- 2021 "SONGEUN Art Award", SONGEUN, Seoul, Korea
"Memory Wall", Red Gate Gallery, Beijing, China
- 2020 "Ecology: Nature and Human", Gyeonggi Cheonnyeongil Gallery, Gyeonggi-do, Korea
- 2019 "Gilbert Bayes Award", Royal Society of Sculptors & Grizedale gallery, London & Cumbria, U.K.
"SSA|VAS", Royal Scottish Academy, Edinburgh, U.K.
"Place in Reverse", Yamakiwa gallery, Niigata, Japan
- 2018 "Site as Place", Show and Tell, Seoul, Korea
"Sediment, Patina, Displacement", OCI Museum of Art, Seoul, Korea
"Satellite", Summerhall, Edinburgh, U.K.
"Trading Zone" Talbot Rice Gallery, Edinburgh, U.K.
- 2017 "New Hero", Jaeneung Culture Center (JCC), Seoul, Korea
"We Existed Here", Red Gate, Beijing, China
- 2016 "CICA Contemporary Photography", CICA Museum, Gyeonggi-do, Korea
"Riptide", Korean Cultural Centre, London, U.K.



Installation view of *The 2nd Life*, 2025
Photo by Sangtae Kim © Fondation d'entreprise Hermès



Bokyung Kim, *Synchronized Hands-Vine Column*,
Cotton yarn, brass rod, 2025
Photo by Sangtae Kim © Fondation d'entreprise Hermès



Installation view of *Ghost Anatomy* by Minha Park, 2025
Photo by Sangtae Kim © Fondation d'entreprise Hermès



Hyunjin Bek, *Conundrum*, Oil on paper, 2025
Photo by Sangtae Kim © Fondation d'entreprise Hermès



Installation view of *Roomwall* by Yona Lee, 2025
Photo by Sangtae Kim © Fondation d'entreprise Hermès



LISTEN, I KNOW by Han & Mona, 2025
Photo by Sangtae Kim © Fondation d'entreprise Hermès

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