

Press release, January 2009

Korean Pavilion, 53rd Venice Biennale  
**Haegue Yang selected to represent Korea**

Arts Council Korea is pleased to announce that commissioner Eungie Joo has selected artist **Haegue Yang** for a solo presentation of new work in the **Korean Pavilion for the 53rd Venice Biennale**.

**Haegue Yang** works primarily in sculpture, video, and installation. Her practice is engaged with history, human sentiment, lived experience, and memory. Yang's work seeks an emotional relationship to the audience predicated on a kind of vulnerability offered by the artist that in turn relies upon the participation and subjectivity of the viewer. In her video essay, *Squandering Negative Spaces* (2006), Yang expresses her position through a narrator: "There is a silence, then a vulnerable silence that has a story to it. It is like this, for example: any song that strikes a chord in our heart causes us to worry about its ending. A state where one dares not to listen to a song because of the fear of its ending is a silence, but it is a different kind of silence. I am looking for the state of the vulnerability that includes this very potential sound."

Yang's work is often described as "poetic," though that perhaps simplifies her investigations. In fact, Yang's work is subtle, contemplative. In her light sculptures and installations, Yang utilizes the invisible source of electricity, made tangible by artificial sources of light, scent, heat, air, and sound, as a metaphor for the potential connections between people and ideas, and across time and history. Because she is engaged with subjectivity and resonance, Yang frequently seeks to extend or expand a particular experience through time.

"Haegue Yang is a compelling artist whose work speaks to a complex struggle for context through the stimulation of human senses and the experience of the viewer. The project for the Biennale is a great opportunity for us to continue our ongoing conversation in the form of an international exhibition that echoes the artist's preoccupations with Europe and Asia," says Eungie Joo.

**Haegue Yang** received her B.F.A. from Seoul National University, Fine Arts College in 1994, and her Meisterschüler from Städelschule Frankfurt am Main, Germany, in 1999. Her works have been exhibited internationally including Anyang Public Art Project 2007; BAK, basis voor actuele kunst, Utrecht; the 55th Carnegie International, Pittsburgh; Cubitt Gallery, London; Kunsthalle Hamburg; Portikus, Frankfurt; REDCAT, Los Angeles; 2006 Sao Paulo Biennial; the 2008 Turin Triennale; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; and most recently, Sala Rekalde, Bilbao. Yang lives and works in Berlin, and Seoul.

**Eungie Joo**, Keith Haring Director and Curator of Education and Public Programs at the New Museum, New York, is the first non-national commissioner appointed by the Arts Council Korea for the Korean Pavilion at the Venice Biennale. Joo joined the New Museum in 2007, after a four-year tenure as director and curator of the Gallery at REDCAT in Los Angeles. Her essay, "An Encounter" was recently published in *Haegue Yang: Asymmetric Equality* (Los Angeles: CalArts/REDCAT 2008).

**About ARKO and the Korean Pavilion**

The Korean Pavilion at the Venice Biennale was established by ARKO (Arts Council Korea) in 1995, and has functioned as a bridgehead for Korea's contemporary art to enter the world stage. ARKO was established in 1973 in accordance with the Culture and Arts Promotion Act of Korea. Its ultimate goals are to raise the quality of cultural life for all Koreans and to provide a vision of a more promising future for Korea. Many of ARKO's programs aim to cultivate the artistic creativity of artists and to promote an appreciation of the arts among the public. The 53rd International Exhibition of Venice Biennale "**Making Worlds // Fare Mondi // Bantin Duniyan // 制造世界 // Weltenmachen // Construire des Mondes // Fazer Mundos**" organized Director Daniel Birnbaum, will take place 07 June to 22 November 2009.

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