

## Press Release

March 16, 2020

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### *Mind Stream* Hwayeon Nam

March 24 – May 10, 2020  
Art Sonje Center, 2, 3F

Curated by Haeju Kim (Deputy Director, Art Sonje Center)  
Organized by Art Sonje Center  
Supported by ISU Group, Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Seoul Metropolitan Government,  
Seoul Foundation for Arts and Culture, Arts Council Korea



Hwayeon Nam, *Larger than Life* (still), 2019-2020. 4-channel video, 25min 47sec.

Art Sonje Center proudly presents *Mind Stream*, a solo exhibition by Hwayeon Nam from March 24 to May 10, 2020. Hwayeon Nam draws the trajectories where historical time meets physical time. Using

choreographic methods, she has focused in particular on the influences that arise as that time passes through the body, exploring ways of giving visible form to the resulting fluctuations.

The exhibition is based on the artist's research into the dancer Seung-hee Choi (1911–1969) between 2012 and the present—and the journey of thought that this brought about. Born during Japan's colonization of Korea, Choi traveled to Japan at the age of 16 to study under the modern dancer Baku Ishii, before going on to undertake a new exploration of traditional Korean and Eastern dance. Both her dancing and her activities as a person illustrate the questions of identity and historical conflicts that confronted an artist situated between Korea and Japan, tradition and modernity, and East and West. Though records of Choi's life are quite scant; for her artistic project, Hwayeon Nam began by imagining one possible path on the basis of these fragmentary records and images.

Conceptually, this exhibition bears connections to the artist's performance *A Garden in Italy*, which drew parallels between the lack of archival materials about Seung-hee Choi and the inherent incompleteness of performance archiving in general. Her work at the time envisioned an alternative, ad hoc archive with minimal use of Choi's personal history or typical images, appearing and disappearing in the form of performance. In contrast, this exhibition presents information assembled by the artist about Seung-hee Choi, while also including new work created by the artist through that material, along with an archive of her working process. In particular, it includes videos and performances that offer diverse forms of interpretation based on records of Choi's different choreographic works.



Hwayeon Nam, *Study*, 2020, clay mixed with oil, wire, wood, Photo: Gim Ikhyun.

Most of the titles of the individual pieces are taken from the names of Choi's dance works. Video works with titles such as *Serenade* (the name of the first solo modern dance work performed by Choi in Kyungsung [Seoul] in 1927), *Study* (a 1935 "sculptural dance work inspired by Rodin's *The Kiss* [1882]"), and *The Night of Chilseok* (a 1941 work based on a widely known East Asian folktale about the seventh night of the seven month, which is also a piece connected to the controversy over Choi's collaborationist activities) are placed alongside archival materials and works of sculpture, drawing, and photography. *Against Waves* (2019) includes scenes of dancing by Zainichi Korean dance instructor Kyunghye Lee along with a story of how *Basics of Joseon's Folk Dance*, a dance textbook produced by Choi in 1958 following her defection, became introduced to the Zainichi Korean community from North Korea.



Hwayeon Nam, *Against Waves* (still), 2019, Single-channel video, sound, 14min 53sec.

A live performance of *Ehera Noara* (2020)—the first Korean dance performed in Japan by Choi, for which she dressed in a Korean gentleman's traditional outfit and hat—is presented both as archival material as a moving, functioning record. This format, with its interweaving of Choi's and Nam's work and archival materials, is focused less on empirically examining and explicating historical facts like an ordinary archive, and more on creating a setting for observing something indirect and deviating that arises as images and movements are assembled in a space devoid of reality.

The exhibition title *Mind Stream* was taken from one of Choi's choreographic works of the same name. Using two surviving photographs of the work and a critic's brief text about the performance from its day, the artist created a performative work in 2014—one that consisted of drawings, sounds, and a poster imagining the movements of the dance. For this exhibition, *Mind Stream* (2020) is an installation

incorporating light and sound, reappearing on the center's second floor with a different scale and form. Facing it is the four-channel video work *Larger than Life* (2020), which intercuts a painting of the sea by Realist painter Gustave Courbet, a sea journal sent from Japan by the artist's friend, and landscapes of the North Sea, limning a horizon that connects reality to memory, past to present—and at the same time deviates from them.



Hwayeon Nam, *Larger than Life* (still), 2019-2020. 4-channel video, 25min 47sec. Photo: Gim Ikhyun.

An old record of the work—which describes it as a “two women appear[ing] in shadow form, joining and separating, separating and joining in a painterly ‘duet’”—is applied more generally through this exhibition to the encounter between the two artists Hwayeon Nam and Seung-hee Choi. Just as that choreography brought two dancers face to face and then separated them, the exhibition is like circles drawn in the sand: between two different people, between different times and their associated histories, between fact and fiction, it reveals and conceals itself amid an exhibition setting divided between two floors.

**About the Artist**

Hwayeon Nam (b.1979) lives and works in Seoul. Along with her most recent exhibition *Abdominal Routes* (2019) at Kunsthal Aarhus, Denmark, Nam's solo exhibitions include *Imjingawa* (Audio Visual Pavilion, 2017) and *Time Mechanics* (Arko Art Center, 2015). Hwayeon Nam represented Korea at the 58<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale's Korean Pavilion with siren eun young jung and Jane Jin Kaisen in 2019. She has participated in group exhibitions *Reenacting History* (National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Gwacheon, 2017), *wellknown unknown* (Kukje Gallery, 2016), *All the World's Future* (56th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, 2015), and *Nouvelle Vague—Memorial Park* (Palais de Tokyo, 2015). She recently introduced her performance piece *Orbital Studies* (2018) at National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art - Seoul.

## ■ Images



Hwayeon Nam, *Larger than Life* (still), 2019-2020. 4-channel video, 25min 47sec.



Hwayeon Nam, *The Night of Chilseok: Archive* (still), 2020, performance documentation, sound, 3min 57sec.



*Study*, 2020, clay mixed with oil, wire, wood,  
Hwayeon Nam: *Mind Stream* (2020), Installation view, Photo: Gim Ikhyun.



*Serenade*, 2020, single-channel video, 7min 24sec,  
Hwayeon Nam: *Mind Stream* (2020), Installation view, Photo: Gim Ikhyun.



Hwayeon Nam: *Mind Stream* (2020), Installation view, Photo: Gim Ikhyun.



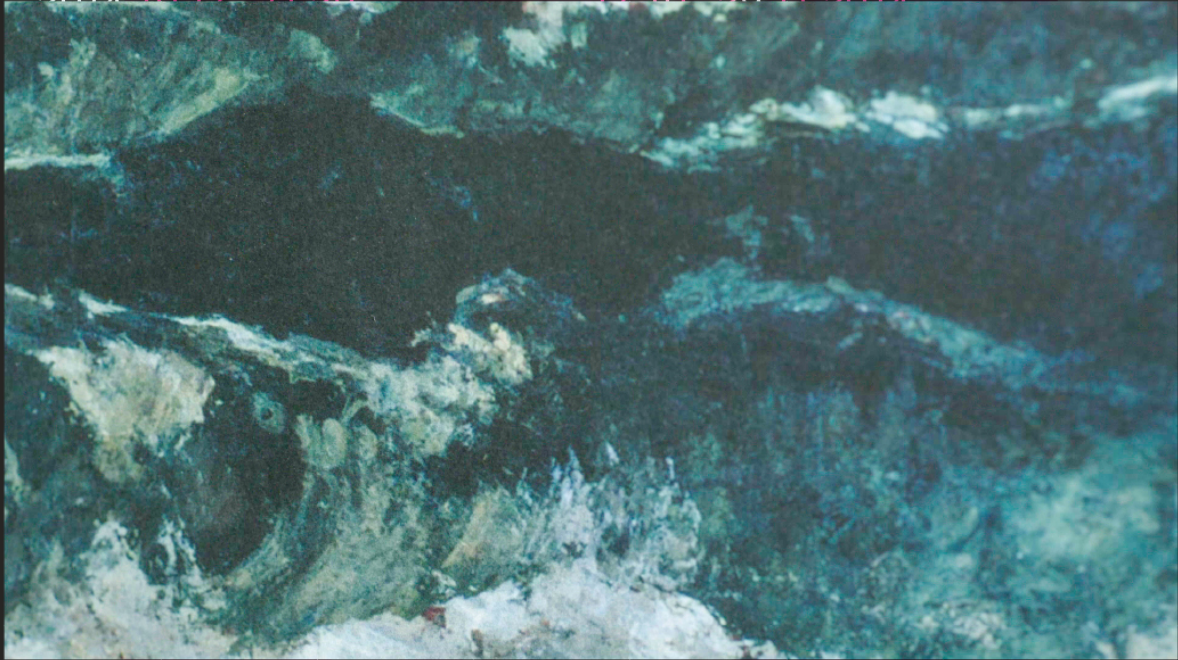
Documents, 2020, Hwayeon Nam: *Mind Stream*, Installation view, Photo: Gim Ikhyun.

남화연  
마음의 흐름

2014. 10.17 - 11.20

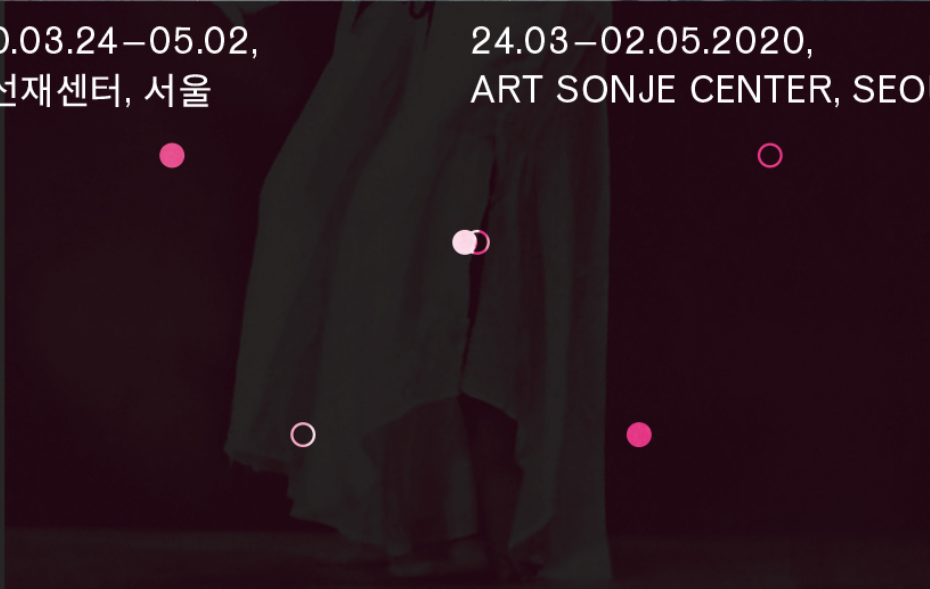
HWAYEON NAM  
MIND STREAM

17.10 - 20.11.2014



2020.03.24-05.02,  
아트선재센터, 서울

24.03-02.05.2020,  
ART SONJE CENTER, SEOUL



최승희  
청춘 또는 마음의 흐름  
1935, 장소 불명

사진 © 권수욱  
관람 시간  
오전 12-7시 (월요일 휴관)  
VISITING HOURS  
12-7 PM (CLOSED ON MONDAYS)

SEUNG-HEE CHOI  
YOUTH OR MIND STREAM  
1935, PLACE UNKNOWN

주최 아트선재센터  
후원 이수근 회, 문화체육관광부, 서울특별시,  
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AND TOURISM, SEOUL METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT,  
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Hwayeon Nam, *Mind Stream*, exhibition poster, Art Sonje Center. Designed by Sulki & Min.

## ■ Outlines, Hwayeon Nam: *Mind Stream*

<b>Artist</b>	Hwayeon Nam
<b>Dates</b>	March 24 – May 10, 2020
<b>Venues</b>	Art Sonje Center, 2, 3F
<b>Curated by</b>	Haeju Kim (Deputy Director, Art Sonje Center)
<b>Organized by</b>	Art Sonje Center
<b>Supported by</b>	ISU Group, Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Seoul Metropolitan Government, Seoul Foundation for Arts and Culture, Arts Council Korea

## ■ Performance

<b>Title</b>	Ehera Noara
<b>Performer</b>	Ji Hye Chung

\*Please check our website for further updates on the schedule of the events. In response to increasing concerns relating to the spread of COVID-19 (or Coronavirus), Art Sonje Center has decided to postpone the events until further notice.

<b>Hours</b>	Tuesday–Sunday 12–7pm
<b>Admissions</b>	General 5,000 KRW Students 3,000 KRW
<b>Contact</b>	+82-2-733-8944