

## Press Release

July 23, 2020

Press materials: <http://shorturl.at/ktC14>

Contact: Hyo Gyoung Jeon (curator)

[press@artsonje.org](mailto:press@artsonje.org)

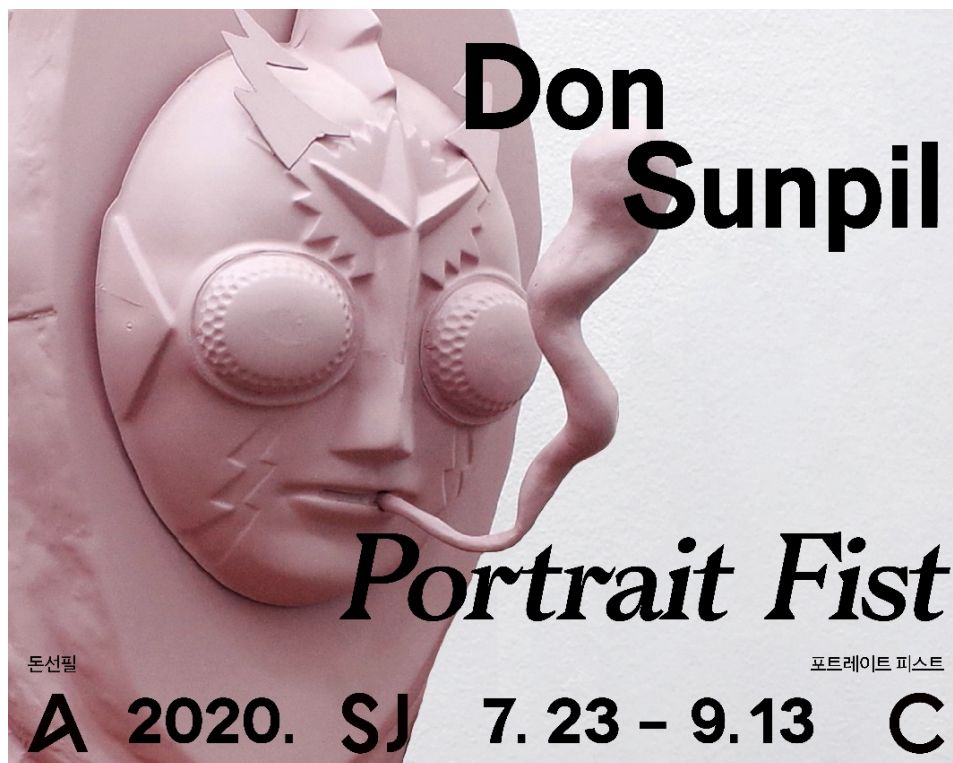
T. +82-2-733-8944

### Don Sunpil *Portrait Fist*

July 23 – September 13, 2020  
Art Sonje Center, 1F

Organized by Art Sonje Center

Supported by Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Seoul Metropolitan Government,  
Seoul Foundation for Arts and Culture



Art Sonje Center presents *Portrait Fist*, a solo exhibition by Don Sunpil from July 23 to September 13, 2020. Don Sunpil explores how objects and characters come to being and the diversified ways of

consuming them. His three-dimensional structures and narratives in video rethink social phenomena and events through the unique lens of the figurine.

*Portrait Fist* explores how we understand and consume images of *faces*. From people, celebrities, virtual characters, and highly schematized symbols, we encounter countless faces in daily life. From them, we interpret how familiar we are with them, one's identity, nationality, political stance, or even the course of life and fate. It stands askew, always substituting for something else.

In many cases, a face attests to the person or the substance to which it is connected. However, there are particular types of images that are perceived as faces, but in a state of non-face. It is none other than the face of *Kyara*. The term *kyara* comes from an abbreviation of the Japanese pronunciation of the word *character* – キャラクター, generally meaning personality or a person from an animation. A *kyara*'s face does have ears, eyes, a mouth, and a nose, but they do not stop it from looking somewhat empty. Nevertheless, we recognize a character when we see one. A *kyara*'s face does not represent a particular face from the real world. Rather, it evolves to an object-like state.

*Portrait Fist* demonstrates faces in various states or the process of becoming a face and attempts to rethink the nature of figurines that render abstract being into a concrete state. In most cases, a figurine is a derivative product from an original character, inviting us to reflect on what involves a *character*. As a character is a soul that dwells within synthetic resin structures, the setting of the character determines the specific features of a figurine. The degree of realness is one of the determining factors of such settings. The face, among other features, explicitly illustrates the relationship between the character and its reality. *Portrait Fist* amounts to a story about the power of the face that we, whether knowingly or not, manipulate or are taken advantage of as the title suggests. It is also an observation of the state of the figurine: how are portrait images that we often call faces objectified? And how do they compel other objects?

## About the Artist

Born in 1984, Don Sunpil lives and works in Seoul. Solo shows include *Kitsutaiten* (Arario Museum, Seoul, 2019), *METAL EXP: The Loner's Moving Time* (Tastehouse, Seoul, 2018), *Minmay Attack Re-Re-Cast* (Audio Visual Pavilion, Seoul, 2016). He has participated in group shows *New Spaces – New Korean Art since the 2010s* (Chaos Lounge, Tokyo, 2019), *Remembering or Forgetting* (Arario Gallery, Seoul, 2018), *Image-Manipulate-Play* (The Print Room (the Coronet), London, 2017) among others. He is the author of *Figure TEXT: Wonder Festival Report* (Seoul: Kitsutaiten, 2019) and *2016 Figure TEXT* (Seoul: YOUR-MIND, 2016).



## ■ Images



Don Sunpil, *Portrait Fist*, 2020, installation view, Art Sonje Center, Photo: Hong Chulki.



Don Sunpil, *Portrait Fist*, 2020, installation view, Art Sonje Center, Photo: Hong Chulki.





*Portrait Fist (no.2)*, 2020, ABS, resin, acrylic, figure, Polyurethane Foam, 550x400x450mm, Photo: Hong Chulki.



*Portrait Fist (no.12)*, 2020, ABS, resin, acrylic, figure, Polyurethane Foam, 550x400x450mm, Photo: Hong Chulki.

**■ Outlines, Don Sunpil: *Portrait Fist***

<b>Artist</b>	Don Sunpil
<b>Dates</b>	July 23 – September 13, 2020
<b>Venues</b>	Art Sonje Center, 1F
<b>Organized by</b>	Art Sonje Center
<b>Supported by</b>	Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Seoul Metropolitan Government, Seoul Foundation for Arts and Culture

**Hours** Tuesday–Sunday 12–7pm

**Admissions** General 5,000 KRW  
Students 3,000 KRW

**Contact** +82-2-733-8944