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Haegue Yang Summer Exhibitions

30 June 2015



Series of Vulnerable Arrangements - Voice and Wind, 2009.
Image courtesy of Kukje Gallery, Photo: Pattara Chanruechachai.

Scenes for a New Heritage: Contemporary Art from the Collection | 2015.03.08 – 2016.04.10 | Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, USA Contemporary Galleries, second floor

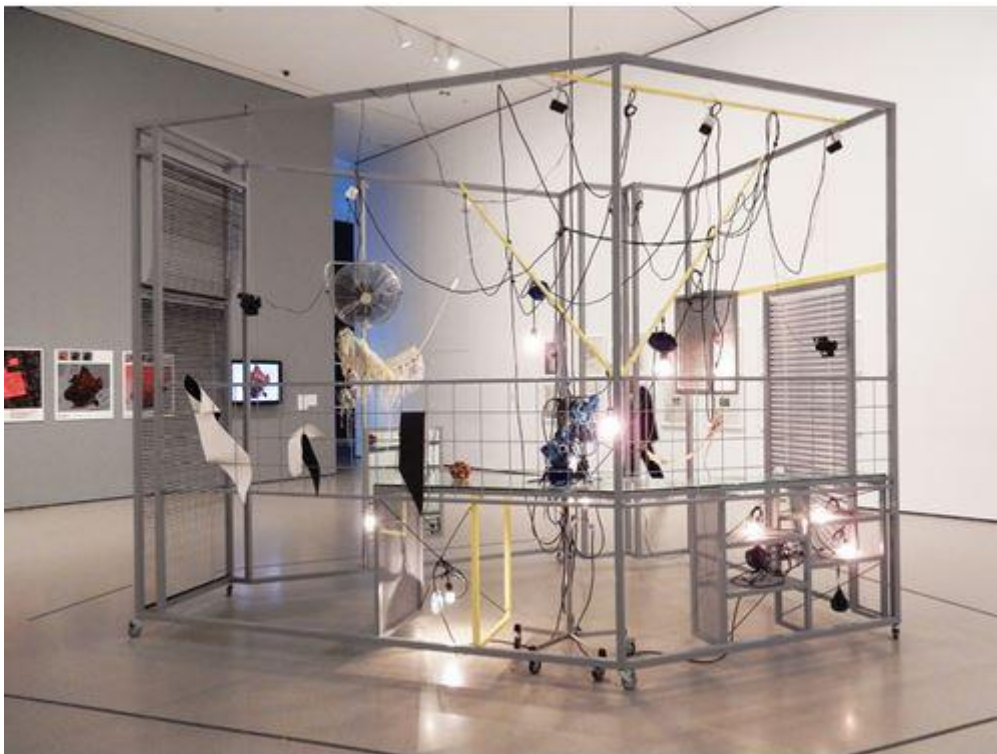
Scenes for a New Heritage: Contemporary Art from the Collection is a sweeping reinstallation of MoMA's Contemporary Galleries. This cross-medium selection of works, created in the past three decades by more than 30 international artists, represents a wide range of approaches to the political, social, and cultural flux that have shaped the current global landscape. Some of these artists use the lens of history - reflecting on past events or centuries-old artistic traditions - as a means of assessing current conditions. In Scene for a New Heritage, the project that lends the exhibition its title, Croatian artist David Maljković uses an abandoned socialist monument to imagine an alternate future, one informed by events of the past but never realized.

Other artists fight to stave off collective amnesia through projects of commemoration; trace the crosscurrents of trade; follow patterns of migration to swelling urban centers; or explore channels for capturing, circulating, and distributing images in today's highly digitized society- from mobile phones to online platforms. Made under a diverse range of geographic, political, social, and aesthetic circumstances, the works in the exhibition propose one perspective on the Museum's collection; seen alongside one another, they allow for a reflection not only on their discrepancies, differences, and contradictions, but also on their shared concerns.

A number of works return to the galleries after extended absences - Cai Guo-Qiang's monumental *Borrowing Your Enemy's Arrows*, a fishing boat pierced by several thousand arrows, is displayed at the Museum for the first time in over a decade - while some 20 works are on view for the first time at MoMA. The latter group includes *Gamepieces*, a multimedia installation by Nalini Malani that deftly blends mythology and history; Haegue Yang's *Sallim*, a sculptural reinterpretation of the artist's Berlin kitchen; and Alfredo Jaar's landmark project *Lament of the Images*. Other featured artists include Luis Camnitzer, Camille Henrot, Feng Mengbo, Rabih Mroué, Allan Sekula, and Kara Walker.

Organized by Quentin Bajac, the Joel and Anne Ehrenkranz Chief Curator of Photography; Eva Respini, Curator, Department of Photography; Ana Janevski, Associate Curator, Department of Media and Performance Art; and Sarah Suzuki, Associate Curator, Department of Drawings and Prints; with Katerina Stathopoulou, Curatorial Assistant, Department of Photography.

The exhibition is supported by the MoMA Annual Exhibition Fund.



Sallim, 2009, Photo: Pattara Chanruechachai.

Storylines: Contemporary Art at the Guggenheim | 2015.06.05 – 2015.09.09 | Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, USA

Visual art has always been closely associated with storytelling. In Western culture, painting and sculpture initially evolved to illuminate narratives of religion, patronage, and power. Over the centuries, genre scenes, still lifes, and portraits - often created as intricate allegories for religious or historical subject matter - became popular as the narrative role of art expanded. In the 20th century, with the advent of abstraction as a radical break with the past, many artists associated with the avant-garde rejected the figurative and, hence, eliminated explicit narrative content. In the United States and Europe, this tendency culminated during the 1960s and 1970s in Minimal painting and sculpture that foregrounded geometric abstraction and in Post-Minimalism's examination of process and materiality. The 1980s witnessed a resurgence of figurative art, much of which harked back to expressionistic styles of the 1920s and 1930s.

During the 1990s, a generation of younger artists embraced the concept of storytelling to articulate the politics of identity and difference, investing both abstract and representational forms with narrative content. Storylines opens with key examples from that decade, which serve as thematic anchors and highlight the museum's own exhibition history. Most of the works on view, however, were created after 2005 and offer an expansive view of the new paradigms for storytelling forged during the past ten years to communicate ideas about race, gender, sexuality, history, and politics, among other trenchant themes.

Bringing together over one hundred works from the Guggenheim's contemporary collection, Storylines examines the diverse ways in which artists today engage narrative through installation, painting, photography, sculpture, video, and performance. For these artists, storytelling does not necessarily require plots, characters, or settings. Rather, narrative potential lies in everyday objects and materials, and their embedded cultural associations. In projects created through extensive research, acts of appropriation, or performance, the artists in Storylines uncover layers of meaning, turning to individual experience as a means of conveying shared stories, whether real or fictional.

The recent narrative turn in contemporary art cannot be separated from the current age of social media with its reverberating cycles of communication, dissemination, and interpretation. Seemingly every aspect of life is now subject to commentary and circulation via digital text and images. These new narrative frames highlight the roles that each of us can play as both author and reader, foregrounding the fact that meaning is contingent in today's interconnected and multivalent world. As a means of celebrating this dynamic, the museum has invited writers to contribute reflections - in prose or poetry - on selected works in Storylines. Engaging the rich historical relationship between literature and art, the resulting polyphony signals the diverse interpretive potential that lies within each object on display. Visitors may access these texts using this website, the Guggenheim app, or booklets located throughout the museum.



Series of Vulnerable Arrangements – Voice and Wind, 2009, Photo: Pattara Chanruechachai

Future Light | 2015.06.12 – 2015.10.04 | Vienna Biennale 2015: Ideas for Change | MAK, Vienna, Austria

How come some features of the old Enlightenment have crept back and are now being revisited in art, activism, and theory? Why now, after just about a century problematizing, questioning and opposing its legacy? Perhaps it is an ever more economized, fragmented, privatized, and surveilled existence where, for instance, taxpayers are forced to compensate for the crimes of financial speculation and the gap between the rich and the poor is rapidly increasing. It now becomes enticing to return to some fundamental notions and phenomena inherited from the struggle for universal emancipation: the light of reason and rationality, the individual subject, and the public sphere. They point to a wish to explore vision from its very basics—as if to try to see anew, to radical transformations of desire and to challenges to ownership and property relations as we know them. And to do so while not losing sight of the future, in the midst of parallax views, in light of the hyper-contradictions of our time. A future beyond pre-emptive and algorithmic forecasting. Art has after all this capacity to function as part seismograph and part sniffer dog, detecting things not yet seen, gelled and shaped in other parts of society, creating new imaginaries. Whether utopian or dystopian, or an unclear mix of the two.

These basic notions in radically mutated forms seem to indicate a future affected by an emerging movement toward a new enlightenment, conscious of the violent heritage of the old one in whose name atrocities have been committed over the centuries. It is post-enlightenment, not as in “radical rupture” but as in “working through” some of its characteristics. This time it is acknowledging the tensions and contradictions of the enlightenment baggage, trying not to give up on the future while being embedded in the current condition of “retrotopia” where the past in general and “memorialism” in particular loom large. Thus, three strands of thought and action have crystallized within the framework of Future Light: non-penetrating light, the individual subject as reworked by the politics of queer-feminism and its polymorph desires, and the public sphere reconceived through and as commons and commoning. Each strand is taking shape in a different institutional and spatial setting, accompanied by a reader entitled Future Light and the mini-symposium Politics of Shine, and partly prepared in a closed workshop in October 2013 as well as in a series of public MAK Nite Labs at the MAK.

Within contemporary art, instead of the penetrating light that gives clarity and transparency, there is the reflected and refracted light that creates opacity, abstraction, and shadows. It is the light that goes on and off, that does not serve as a searchlight and yet is able to nurture new beginnings. Besides conditioning human visual perception, its new forms - for example the low-power LED light - are having other literal effects on the look and taste of plants as well as the physical and medical conditions of humans and animals. Furthermore, the future remains a point of orientation in many of the artworks. All this is being played out in the group exhibition at the MAK. Existing paintings, videos, sculptures, and drawings by seventeen artists is making up an installation without walls but with plenty of natural light.

Theory and practice in the name of LGBT and queerness have for some time reshaped notions of the individual, subjectivity, and desire. If traditional notions of gender rely on heteronormative patriarchal formations of desire, then this linchpin is now being challenged in ways hitherto unseen, affected by synthetic extensions of identity such as hormonal drugs. Under the rubric of LOVING, REPEATING, Pauline Boudry and Renate Lorenz are presenting three film-based works at Kunsthalle Wien. The installations convey filmed performances where the tensions between the individual and the collective carry a high degree of theatricality. While curtains and fumes create opacity, glitter and wigs indicate glamour. The characters who feature in these dramas are consciously multi-sided, defying normality, including the law and economy. Neither being entirely historical nor present, they project ahead in a truly anachronistic manner, to new and unrealized forms of enjoyment. Today many artistic and other

projects revive the notions of “commons” and “commoning” in response to failures of capitalism and the increasing withdrawal of the welfare state. How will the Vienna Biennale of 2049 resurrect the voices of the citizens’ initiatives that have appeared during the past 130 years? With The Report, STEALTH.unlimited and Stefan Gruber together with Paul Currion shed light on how the achievements of these initiatives have been essential to the development of the city, yet have often been obscured by the political requirements of Vienna’s urban ambitions. Straddling the line between fiction and non-fiction, The Report will ask what it means to be a citizen of the smartest of all smart cities. It will be released as a limited printed edition in September 2049.

In a new film Marysia Lewandowska is exploring the commons as experienced through the kindergarten as an early testing ground for sharing, belonging, privacy and withdrawal. The project was triggered by the work and life of the Viennese architect Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky (1897–2000), in which many of the contradictions of the 20th century are played out, and involves the voice of Di Zhang, a young architect in Beijing for whom “the communism of commerce” is a lodestar. Ayreen Anastas and Rene Gabri are arranging an “unworkshop” around the politics of food and food production, which have been central concerns for the artists in their work on commons and commoning. The design, research and art studio Metahaven, who have developed the notion of “black transparency”, have co-conceptualized and designed the e-reader Future Light and the handout which connects the various parts of the overall project Future Light.



Escaping Transpaerncy, 2009, Photo: Stuart Whipps.

After Babel | 2015.06.13 – 2015.08.30 | Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Sweden

After Babel is a major group show about the many languages that form part of contemporary art. The common denominator for the participating artists is that they build bridges between different languages and continents.

There really is a tower at the heart of the show. It is based on a concept by Simon Denny (New Zealand/Germany) in collaboration with Alessandro Bava (Italy/ United Kingdom), that provides a tangible form for the ideas of the legendary exhibition Poetry Must Be Made By All! Transform the World! (MM1969). In the twenty-first century version poetry is written and produced “on demand”

and the tower becomes a place for readings, discussions and conversation. Grouped around the Babylonian tower are works by George Adéagbo (Benin/Germany), Etel Adnan (Lebanon/France), Kader Attia (Algeria/France), Yael Bartana (Israel/Netherlands), Paul Chan (Hong Kong/USA), Rivane Neuenschwander (Brazil/Great Britain), Michelangelo Pistoletto (Italy) and Haegue Yang (Korea/Germany).

Several of the artists are represented in the museum's collection and some of the works have also been installed elsewhere as corresponding parts of a larger context that allows the museum to widen the view beyond the standard western perspective of art history.

After Babel serves as a hub for this building of bridges between languages and traditions in which the multifaceted works of the artists can create new meanings and openings to a wider world.

Curators: Daniel Birnbaum and Ann-Sofi Noring

URL: <http://ocula.com/magazine/art-news/2015/06/haegue-yang-summer-exhibitions/>