



UNIVERSITY MUSEUM
OF CONTEMPORARY ART
University of Massachusetts Amherst

NEWS RELEASE

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KIMSOOJA

Performance/Video

September 21 – December 11, 2011

As an artist, one becomes a mirror of the complexity of the universe, facing the viewer. In this, Kimsooja is a master. -- Ingrid Commandeur*

The University Museum of Contemporary Art (UMCA) is proud to present renowned Korean artist Kimsooja's performance/video exhibition opening September 21 and continuing through December 11, 2011. Kimsooja's work combines performance, video, and installation, addressing issues of the displaced self. Kimsooja brings together a conceptual and structural investigation of performance through immobility that inverts the notion of the artist as the predominant actor. This exhibition includes five of her major works.

A Needle Woman, composed of four simultaneous videos, documents the artist as she stands motionless in the crowded streets of Lagos, Tokyo, New York, and Delhi, putting the viewer at the center of a global space. The world weaves past the artist's needle-like figure, acting as an instrument, a medium that establishes connections, relationships and experiences, expands time and seeks universal truths.

A Laundry Woman-Yamuna River, India, considers nature, stillness and movement and the cycle of life and death as the river slides by, picking up flotsam and washing away the earth.

In *A Needle Woman - Kitakyushu* set on a rocky ledge in Japan, the artist lies motionless, with her body as its own landscape connecting earth and sky. As clouds roll by, this minimal image evokes the cosmic proportions of time and space, contrasting with the ephemeral and superficial excesses of the city streets. Through her gesture of stillness, the artist transcends cultures.

An allusion to the theme of suffering is apparent in *A Beggar Woman (Lagos, Nigeria)*, where the artist sits on the pavement with her arm outstretched in supplication. A few people stop and press money into her hand, while later a man takes it out of Kimsooja's cupped hand. The artist's apparent lack of desires makes the theft completely irrelevant, and we are left to wonder what this "beggar woman" is asking for.

Sewing Into Walking (Istanbul), one of Kimsooja's early seminal works, is a 2 channel video, one with street sound and the other with a Tibetan monk chant, locating the spiritual in the urban world.

High Resolution Video Stills Available Upon Request

Related Events:

Wednesday, September 21, 2011

Opening Reception: 5:00 – 8:00pm

In Conversation: 6 – 7pm, Fine Arts Center Lobby

Kimsooja discusses her work with NY art critic Robert C. Morgan (MFA UMass 1975)

Wednesday, October 19, 2011

Panel Discussion: 4:30 – 6:00 pm

UMass Professors Anne Ciecko (Global Film Studies), Susan Jahoda (Video/Art), Miliann Kang (Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies), and Smith College Professor Jina Kim (East Asian Studies) will talk about the work of Kimsooja.

**Kimsooja: Black Holes, Meditative Vanishings and Nature as a Mirror of the Universe*, an essay by Ingrid Commandeur, will be printed by the UMCA with permission of the Kroller Muller Museum, The Netherlands, from its catalogue in connection with the exhibition *Windflower: Perceptions of Nature* premiering in October 2011. Ingrid Commandeur is an international art critic and art historian based in Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

Kimsooja was born in Taegu, Korea in 1957. Her work has been exhibited in group and solo exhibitions around the world. Solo exhibitions took place at Yong Gwang Nuclear Power Plant, Korea, 2010; Atelier Hermes, Seoul, Korea 2010; Johanniterkirche Feldkirch, Austria, organized by Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein, 2010; BOZAR, Brussels, Belgium, 2008; Crystal Palace, Reina Sofia Museum, Madrid, Spain, 2006; La Fenice, Venice, Italy, 2006; Kunsthalle Wien, Austria 2002; MoMA PS1, New York, New York, 2001; Kunsthalle Bern, Switzerland, 2001; Rodin Gallery, Seoul, 2000; ICC, Tokyo, Japan, 2000; and CCA Kitakyushu, Japan 1999, among others. Her work was featured in a traveling solo show to the Museum of Contemporary Art, Lyon, France, Museum Kunst Palast, Düsseldorf, Germany, PAC Milan, Italy, 2003-04, and at the 2011 Venice Biennale.

Kimsooja lives and works in New York, Seoul, and Paris.



**KOREAN CONSULATE GENERAL
IN BOSTON**



This exhibition is a co-presentation between the UMCA and the Korean Consulate General in Boston, with the support of the Korea Foundation.

Museum Hours: Beginning September 9, 2011

Tuesday – Friday, 11:00 AM – 4:30 PM, Saturday/Sunday 2 – 5 PM

Closed Mondays and University holidays