

TINA KIM GALLERY



Park Chan-Kyong, *Child Soldier*, 2017.

Park Chan-Kyong *Citizen's Forest*

13 September – 13 October 2018

Opening Reception: Thursday, 13 September 2018 | 6 – 8 PM

Tina Kim Gallery is pleased to present *Citizen's Forest*, a solo exhibition by Park Chan-Kyong. The multi-disciplinary artist utilizes film, video and photography to examine the complex social and political history of South Korea. His work pays particular attention to Korea's enduring folk traditions and shamanism as well as the profound impact of the Korean War and subsequent partition of North and South. On view **13 September – 13 October 2018**, the exhibition includes two video works and a series of photographs by the Seoul-based artist. This is Park's second solo show in New York; his first exhibition at the gallery was in 2016.

Situated in the front gallery is *Child Soldier* (2017 – 2018), a series of photographs and film stills that depict North Korean soldiers doing everyday activities. While seemingly innocuous, Park's images suggest that young soldiers in the North Korean People's Army may not be as ideologically rigid as portrayed. Instead Park depicts the young men as ordinary, lazy and innocent, wandering in the forest, reading and listening to music. This reimagination of daily life

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forces the viewer to move beyond propagandistic depictions and confront the stark ideologies that govern contemporary Korean society. *Child Soldier* begs the question: Is there an image of North Korea that is free of ideology, politics, or war?

Gallery two features the critically acclaimed video *Citizen's Forest* (2016), a three-channel installation that serves as an allegory of modern-day Korea. Evoking literary genres ranging from Asian gothic to heavy metal, the video chronicles major tragedies in the nation's past such as the Donghak Peasant Revolution (1894), the Korean War (1950 – 1953), the Gwangju Uprising (1980) and the recent Sewol Ferry Disaster (2014). The work's panoramic structure evokes traditional "shan-su" (landscape) scroll paintings. This narrative format was inspired by two historical works by beloved Korean artists: Oh Yoon's incomplete work *The Lemures* chronicles the many forgotten victims in Korean history and the poem by Kim Soo-young *Colossal Roots*. In *Citizen's Forest*, viewers are invited to accompany this ragtag group as they walk slowly through the forest; mixing history and fiction, the actors play musical instruments and impersonate the dead as they mourn the loss of their fellow citizens.

The final work in the show is a newly commissioned video titled *BELIEVE IT OR NOT* (2018). Created by Park Chan-Kyong and his brother Park Chan-Wook under the moniker PARKing CHANce, *BELIEVE IT OR NOT* is a scripted narrative that tells a gripping story of State sponsored spying and deception through the eyes of defectors and those who help them escape. Confronting directly the disinformation that exists in both North and South Korea, the video is inspired by real individuals who have crossed the cultural and military borders that separate the two nations. Taking cues from people who have chosen to publicly denounce their country of origin, resettle and then sometimes return home again, Park tells a story where defectors may in fact be acting as spies and double agents and it is never clear what one's motives really are. In so doing, Park forces the audience to question the integrity and motivations of both North and South Korea, relaying the stark human cost of Cold War politics and propaganda, and confronting the fear and paranoia that still underlies the Korean peninsula.

ABOUT PARK CHAN-KYONG

Park Chan-Kyong (b. 1965) is a media artist, film director and writer. He graduated from Seoul National University in 1988 with a BFA in Painting, and the California Institute of the Arts with a MFA in Photography in 1995. Park served as the Artistic Director of the SeMA Biennale Mediacity Seoul in 2014. His major works include *Manshin: Ten Thousand Spirits* (2013), *Night Fishing* (2011, co-directed by Park Chan-wook), *Sindoan* (2008), *Power Passage* (2004) and *Sets* (2000).

Park's work has exhibited internationally in numerous solo and group exhibitions including Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin (2017), Taipei Biennial (2016), Anyang Public Art Project (2016), Iniva, London (2015), Art Sonje Center, Seoul (2013), and Atelier Hermès, Seoul (2008, 2012). Park was awarded the Hermès Korea Art Award in 2004, and the Golden Bear for best short film at the Berlin International Film Festival in 2011 for *Night Fishing*.

His works are included in the collection of major art institutions including the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea; KADIST, Paris and San Francisco; Musée des Beaux-Arts de Nantes, Nantes; Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art, Seoul; Seoul Museum of Art; Gyeonggi Museum of Modern Art, Ansan; and Art Sonje Center, Seoul.

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Located in New York, Tina Kim Gallery is celebrated for its unique programming that emphasizes international contemporary artists, historical overviews, and independently curated shows. Founded in 2001 by second-generation gallerist Tina Kim, it is noted for working closely with museums and institutions to expand the audience of its global roster of artists with a special emphasis on showcasing historically important, but lesser known Korean artists.

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