

Special Permanent Exhibition of GanaArt Collection: Herstory Review

Seoul Museum of Art

2020. 7. 22 –

Participating artist: Ahn Sung-keum, Hahn Ai-kyu, Jin-me Yoon, Jung Jungyeob, Kim Djinsuk, Kim In Soon, Kim Wonsook, Nho Wonhee, Park In-kyung, Park Youngsook, Song Hyun-sook, Song Mae-Hee, Yong Soon Min, Yun Suknam

An exhibition presenting works by women artists set in the politically and socially confusing era of the 1980s, *Herstory Review* takes an in-depth exploration into the personal and social perspectives interwoven in the background and everyday life of women artists at the time. The exhibition features works by women artists in the GanaArt Collection, which is a collection of 200 works donated to the Seoul Museum of Art in 2001 by Gana Art Chairman Lee Ho-jae. The collection includes Minjung Art and Realism works that dynamically reflect the social realities of Korea in the 1980s – 90s. In the exhibition, Kim Wonsook, Park In-kyung, Song Mae-Hee, Song Hyun-sook, Ahn Sung-keum and Hahn Ai-kyu express their reflections of their reality and their own conflicts with a society that they face in everyday life. These works shed light on the roles of women defined in the family at the time, perceive the perplexing image of the times, and allude to the oppression enforced upon women.

1980s was period when the feminist art movement had officially kicked off in Korea, as women artists practicing Minjung Art began to question the reality of women through their exhibitions. *Herstory Review* presents works by artists who explored and made manifest feminist issues in the context of Minjung Art, which was a movement directed at social reform. *Baneseo hanaro (From Half to One)* (1986), the exhibition considered to be the inception of feminist art in Korea, to the *Yeoseonggwa hyeonsil (Women and Reality)* exhibitions held annually from 1987 to 1994, and a poetry painting exhibition by women *Uri botmurül tŭja: yŏsung heabang-si-wa kŭrimŭi eu man'nam* held in 1988 were important feminist art exhibitions that played a central role in the cultural dimension and feminist movement. Artists who showed their works in these exhibitions—Kim In Soon, Kim Djinsuk, Yun Suknam, Jung Jungyeob and Park Youngsook, etc.—demonstrated a different aspect from other women artists in the GanaArt Collection.

Exploration into self and identity are more evidently discovered in other Korean women artists from abroad at the same time, such as Yong Soon Min and Jin-me Yoon. As non-Western immigrant women living in the Western hemisphere and as an “other” who doesn’t belong anywhere, they explore the diaspora sentimentality in race, gender, nation, history and memory, bringing identity as the main focus of their work.

As feminist issues continue to surface today, this exhibition aspires to look back on the pivotal moments in feminist art in Korean modern art history, centering on the Seoul Museum of Art collection which has been acquiring works steadily since 2000. Ultimately, the exhibition wishes to rediscover these women artists by shedding light on the intersection of their perspectives on the time period and society in the 1980s.