

PERROTIN

Park Seo-Bo

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Public Domain: Laying New Foundations

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AWARDS

Sara Sejin Chang (Sara van der Heide) won the biannual, EUR 100,000 (USD 110,000) Theodora Niemeijer Prize, the largest art prize in the Netherlands. Often likened to poetry and intimate gestures, her rich body of work—encompassing film, text, sound installations, performance, and painting—encourages inclusive approaches to modernity.



Portrait of SARA SEJIN CHANG (SARA VAN DER HEIDE).
Courtesy Theodora Niemeijer Prijs.

The inaugural Park Seo Bo Art Prize was awarded to Korean artist Oum Jeongsoo at the opening ceremony of the 14th Gwangju Biennale in April. She received a golden dove emblem and a USD 100,000 prize for her distorted elephant-like sculpture *Elephant Without Trunk* (2023).

OBITUARIES

Vivan Sundaram, a leading artist of the post-1968 generation in India, died on March 29 in New Delhi. Throughout his artistic life, Sundaram responded to major societal events in his artworks, which spanned paintings, digital photomontages, and multimedia projects.



Portrait of VIVAN SUNDARAM. Courtesy Chemould Prescott Road, Mumbai.

Japanese composer and music producer Ryuichi Sakamoto passed away in Tokyo on March 28. Known for his scores written for award-winning films, Sakamoto also collaborated with artists in the recent decades, including *Dumb Type* for the Japan Pavilion at Venice Biennale 2022.

John Olsen, an Australian landscape painter and winner of the Archibald Prize, died at age 95 on April 11. His commissions included a 1971 mural at the Sydney Opera House. He was a recipient of the Order of Australia in 2001.

Ullens Center for Contemporary Art Co-Founder Killed



Portrait of MYRIAM and GUY ULLENS at “85 New Wave: The Birth of Chinese Contemporary Art,” the opening exhibition of Ullens Center for Contemporary Art in Beijing, 2007. Courtesy UCCA Center for Contemporary Art.

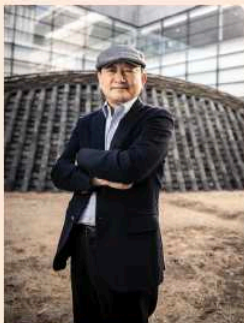
Philanthropist and art collector Myriam Ullens, who together with her husband Guy Ullens established the first private museum of contemporary art in Beijing, was shot dead by her stepson Nicolas Ullens on March 29 in Ohain village near Lasne, Belgium. Guy was also wounded in the leg but survived the attack, which reportedly took place after a dispute over the family's inheritance; Nicolas turned himself in to Belgian authorities the following day. In addition to potential criminal charges, Nicolas is also facing a civil suit brought by his father. Myriam's killing sparked an outpouring of shock and grief from the worlds of art, fashion, and the Belgian aristocracy, including Queen Mathilde of Belgium, who announced her devastation at losing a close friend.

With a family fortune from beet-sugar production, Guy Ullens had been collecting traditional Chinese art since the 1960s. Together, Myriam and Guy shifted their focus to contemporary Chinese art in the 1990s as the couple traveled to China and discovered that, in Myriam's telling, “artists [had] hid themselves in the aftermath of 1989.” Their collection eventually grew to more than 1,500 artworks including early examples by painters Zhang Xiaogang, Yu Youhan, and Wang Guangyi as well as many other Asian artists' works, including the Japanese icon Yayoi Kusama.

The couple opened the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA) in Beijing's 798 Art District in 2007. The inaugural exhibition, “85 New Wave: The Birth of Chinese Contemporary Art,” curated by Fei Dawei, is credited with establishing a generational canon. UCCA would later introduce foreign artists such as Robert Rauschenberg to the broader Chinese public. UCCA would later introduce foreign artists such as Robert Rauschenberg to the broader Chinese public. UCCA would later introduce foreign artists such as Robert Rauschenberg to the broader Chinese public. UCCA would later introduce foreign artists such as Robert Rauschenberg to the broader Chinese public.

Born in 1952, Myriam Ullens had two children from her first marriage. She ran a pastry business before meeting Guy and turning to art and philanthropic projects. She established an orphanage and care facilities for malnourished infants in Nepal in 1993, and later, in 2006, the nonprofit Ullens School in Lalitpur, in the Kathmandu Valley. A cancer survivor, Ullens also set up a foundation active in cancer wards at eight large hospitals in western Europe. In 2009, she launched her own luxury fashion brand, Maison Ullens. The couple continued their support of the arts through the Swiss-based Fondation Guy & Myriam Ullens.

CONTROVERSY: DAMAGES



Portrait of **YOUN BUMMO**. Courtesy the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, South Korea.

During a private, after-hours cocktail event held in late February at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) Australia in Sydney, a reportedly tipsy visitor “stumbled” and fell, damaging two of Do Ho Suh’s major fabric installations. The impacted pieces, *Hub, 260-10 Sungbook-dong, Sungbook-ku, Seoul, Korea* (2016) and *Hub-2, Breakfast Corner, 260-7, Sungbook-Dong, Sungboo-Ku, Seoul, Korea* (2018), were part of the *Hub* series, on display as part of the artist’s solo exhibition. In an official media statement, MCA Australia stated that “museum protocol was followed, and no one was hurt.” While the museum had a conservator assess the impacted artworks before reopening the gallery to the public, they did not issue any further statement on the works’ current condition or its follow-up actions. The total value of the damage remains unknown, though Suh’s works have reached six-figure sums in past auctions.

Karen Lo, the heiress to iconic beverage company Vitasoy, has sued Hong Kong gallerist Pearl Lam for fraudulent misrepresentation and deceit. Lo paid GBP 500,000 (USD 621,000) for Banksy’s painting *Show Me the Monet* (2005), a riff on Claude Monet’s *Water Lilies*, but never received the artwork. The painting was sold for GBP 7.6 million (USD 9.8 million)

in an October 2020 auction at Sotheby’s London, and according to the lawsuit, Lam purchased the painting on Lo’s behalf. In response to the accusation, Lam’s office stressed that the sale was a “private matter” and they had already offered a full refund to Lo. Separate from this matter, the collector is also suing Lam for another HKD 5 million (USD 637,000) for an unpaid loan.

Youn Bummo, director of the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art (MMCA) in South Korea, resigned from his position amid political pressure before the end of his term in 2025, according to reports by Korean media on April 13. Five days later, the country’s Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MCST) confirmed that it had accepted his resignation. Youn was first named as the director of the MMCA in 2019 and reappointed in February 2022, during the last month of the Moon Jae-in administration. While the exact reasons behind Youn’s resignation have not been announced, the museum has been scrutinized due to Youn’s liberal-leaning political stance and alleged connections with the Moon Jae-in government. In January 2023, an audit by MCST revealed illegal practices within the MMCA, which also mounted pressure that led to his resignation.

CAREER MOVES: CLEAN SLATE

Mami Kataoka, current director and chief curator of Japan’s Mori Art Museum, will helm the National Center for Art Research (NCAR) as its inaugural director. The art hub is the first of its kind in the country linking art museums, research institutions, and other arts organizations across Japan and abroad. Kataoka expressed her intent for NCAR to “foster a greater permeation of art in society, while . . . deepening expertise in the field.”

International curator and professor of contemporary art, Ute Meta Bauer, has been appointed artistic director of

the 2024 Diriyah Contemporary Art Biennale. Bauer previously led a number of curatorial projects at international festivals, and held executive positions in leading cultural and academic institutions worldwide. She co-chairs the Master’s program in museum studies and curatorial practices at the Nanyang Technological University School of Art, Design and Media in Singapore.



Portrait of **MAMI KATAOKA**. Photo by Ito Akinori. Courtesy Mori Art Museum, Tokyo.

PUBLIC DOMAIN: LAYING NEW FOUNDATIONS

Renovation is underway at The Gunnery, a three-story, brown-brick building in Sydney that houses the interdisciplinary arts center, Artspace. The transformed space will see Artspace occupy all three floors with access to improved facilities such as larger exhibition galleries, a new learning space, and more rent-free artist studios.

Days after announcing an expansion in Saudi Arabia, the Centre Pompidou unveiled

plans to open a branch in Seoul in early 2025. Tentatively named “Pompidou Center Hanwha Seoul,” the new museum is a collaboration with the South Korean petrochemicals conglomerate, Hanwha Corporation. French architect Jean-Michel Wilmotte, recognized for his design contributions to the Musée d’Orsay and the Louvre, will design the center.

Spanish architect Fernando Menis revealed on March 14 his design for a private museum for revered Korean painter Park Seo-Bo on the southern Korean island of Jeju. Located in the city of Seogwipo, the museum reflects the introspective nature of Park’s abstract paintings as well as the volcanic formation of Jeju Island and Tenerife, on the Canary Islands, where the architect is based. Run by the Gizi Foundation, the museum will oversee the artist’s legacy.

Seoul Museum of Art (SeMA) opened the newly built Art Archives, Seoul Museum of Art on April 4. Part of SeMA’s expansion plan, the institution comprises three buildings and houses a collection of more than 57,000 archival materials, a library, a research lab, and exhibition spaces, dedicated to the preservation and research of Korean modern art.

Hong Kong’s nonprofit Para Site is also expanding—to the tenth floor of its current Quarry Bay building. Dubbed “PS,” the space will host experimental, process-driven projects starting in May with Kong Chun Hei.

For more news, see our website: artasiapacific.com/news.



Model of the future Park Seo-Bo Museum (tentative name) in Jeju, South Korea. Copyright and courtesy Fernando Menis.

Weekly News Roundup: April 6, 2023

BY THE EDITORS



Model of the future Park Seo Bo Museum of Contemporary Art in Jeju, South Korea. Copyright and courtesy Fernando Menis.

Designs Revealed for Park Seo Bo Museum of Contemporary Art

A dedicated private museum for the revered Korean painter Park Seo-Bo has been designed by Spanish architect Fernando Menis for the southern Korean island of Jeju. The foundation stone was laid on the site on March 14 in a ceremony, with the 91-year-old artist and architect in attendance. Located on the JW Marriott Jeju Resort and Spa in the city of Seogwipo, the museum reflects the introspective nature of Park's abstract paintings as well as the volcanic formation of Jeju Island and Tenerife, on the Canary Islands, where the architect is based. The museum's design embodies Menis's "zero kilometer" approach to architecture—meaning that materials are obtained from local sources and can be returned to the natural environment after they have served their purpose. With a Korean-influenced garden for contemplating the landscape and sky, the museum will blend into the surrounding landscape, with shafts bringing natural light to underground galleries where Park's works and collection will be displayed. The Park Seo Bo Museum of Contemporary Art is run by the Gizi Foundation, which manages the artist's legacy. The museum is expected to open in mid-2024.



Exterior view of the Art Archives, Seoul Museum of Art. Courtesy Seoul Museum of Art.

Seoul Museum of Art Debuts Archive Building

The Seoul Museum of Art (SeMA) opened the [Art Archives, Seoul Museum of Art](#) (SeMA, AA) on April 4, after a three-year construction project. As the first public institution dedicated to the preservation and research of Korean modern art, it boasts a collection of over 57,000 archival materials. In December 2022, a research forum titled “Art Museum that Archives, Remembering Future” was held to gather perspectives for its future development. The main building of SeMA, AA features exhibitions and operates a library and contains around 20,000 original items. To mark the opening, two special exhibitions are being held. The first, “Cheerful Learning, Delightful Knowledge, Joyful Knowledge,” showcases donations from renowned art critic Choi Min (1944–2018), while the second, “Archive Highlight: Kim Yong-ik, Kim Tchah-Sup, Rim Dong Sik” features notes and sketches by 50 artists that reflect the rapidly changing sociopolitical climate of 1970s Korea. Additionally, the display “[SeMA-Project A](#)” features eight installations and other artworks installed at spaces throughout the new building. The opening of SeMA, AA marks a significant step in constructing an expansive art map of SeMA complexes in Seoul, which will eventually include 11 destinations by 2024.



Installation view of **NABILAH NORDIN** and **MERRIC BOYD**'s *Fantastic Forms* (2023) at Bundanon Art Museum, Illaroo. Photo by Zan Wimberley. Courtesy Bundanon.

Australian Labour Government Plugs Deficits in Museum Budgets

The Labour government of Anthony Albanese announced it would address the deficits of nine major collecting museums and cultural institutions, including the National Gallery of Australia (NGA) and the National Portrait Gallery, in its upcoming federal budget. The arts minister Tony Burke and finance minister Katy Gallagher revealed on April 5 that the government will distribute AUD 535 million (USD 538 million) over the next four years to these major institutions to address years of budget shortfalls under the previous coalition government. The NGA has previously stated it needs AUD 265 million over the next decade to pay for urgent repairs on its 40-year-old building. Bundanon, in Shoalhaven, New South Wales, a 30-year-old institution donated to the Australian people by the artist Arthur Boyd and his wife Yvonne, was also among those nine institutions and will be the recipient of AUD 33 million (USD 22 million) from the federal government.

<https://artasiapacific.com/news/weekly-news-roundup-april-6-2023>