



EAST ASIAN VIDEO FRAMES: SEOUL

12 June – 13 September 2015



Curator: Minna Valjakka

Im Heung-soon: *Memento* (2003)

Our last stop of the journey: Seoul. The three-year video project which started in January 2013 has travelled through Hong Kong and Tokyo to the capital of South Korea. As in many cities in East Asia, rapid urbanization and globalization have irreversibly reshaped the urban landscape and social patterns. As the result, the notions of alienation, dislocation and inequality are widely shared among citizens and artists alike. Social change and its repercussions have continued to be one of the current themes in contemporary art in Seoul and these questions are also addressed in the five art works and documentaries to be screened in 2015.

Im Heung-soon (b. 1969, Seoul) majored in painting and received his MFA in 1998 in Kyoungwon university. In the same year he started using video as his medium and to explore the society through highly personal perspective to bring forward the hidden and erased issues. In his oeuvre, Im investigates the continuous processes of urbanization and globalization in Korean society through critical realism and with special focus on older generations. Im's works often combine elements of photography, urban geographic research, documentary, experimental movie, and most recently, installation. In addition to short films, such as *Basement My Love* (2000), *Memento* (2003), *Goodbye* (2006), *Long Goodbyes* (2011), Im has also created films such as *Jeju Prayer* (2012, 93 min) and *Factory Complex* (2015, 95 min). During the past years, Im's work has been screened in numerous art exhibitions, biennials and film festivals both in Korea and abroad. This year his works can also be seen in Sharjah Biennale 12, Venice Biennial, and in the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

A two-channel *Memento* (2003) illustrates Im's personal approach. It offers an intriguing historical perspective to the development of Seoul, to artist's career and to the value of image in the past. Made before the era of smart phones and flood of constant selfies in social media, it reminds us how photographs, and especially family portraits, used to be appreciated as mementos. The slideshow of family photographs taken in the areas of Seoul where Im grew up, in Jangan-dong and Dapsimni, also provide an illuminating contrast to the current city image of Seoul. Besides showing two divergent modes of physical image production, a stream of snapshots and a detailed production of a single family portrait, the work also provokes us to reconsider our own image production in today's visual culture.

In co-operation with: Im Heung-soon

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