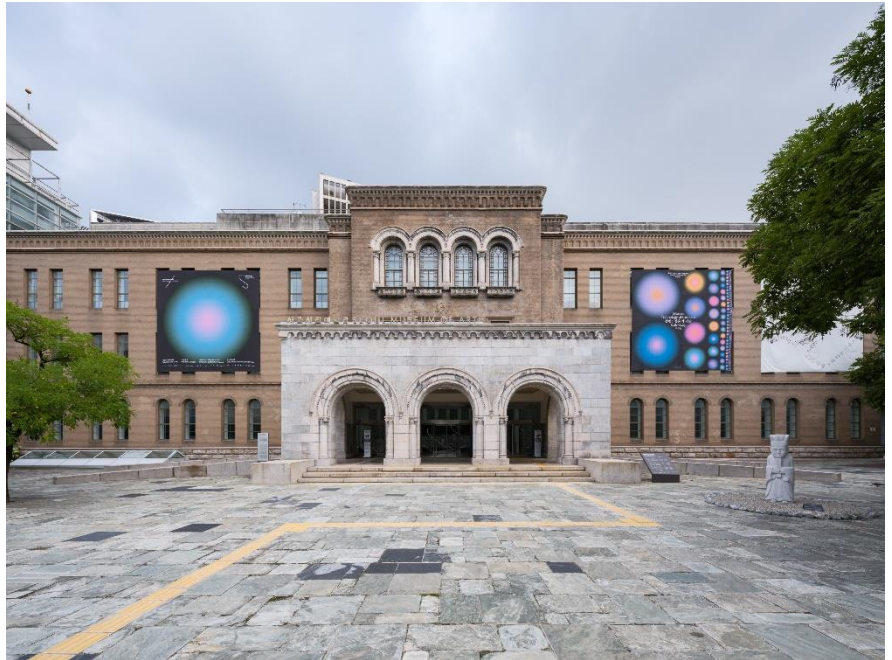


The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale (SMB13) *Séance: Technology of Spirit*, opening on 26 August 2025.



The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale *Séance: Technology of the Spirit*, Seoul Museum of Art, 2025. Photo: Hong Cheolki. Courtesy of the Seoul Museum of Art

SeMA, Seoul Museum of Art (Seosomun-dong) 61
Deoksugung-gil, Jung-gu, 04515 Seoul, South Korea

Opening on 26 August 2025, The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale *Séance: Technology of the Spirit* begins with a question: what role has spiritual experience played in the development of modern and contemporary art?

Over the past decade, it has been impossible to ignore the number of artists turning for inspiration to alternative forms of knowledge. The mystic, visionary, or arcane—often as enshrined in suppressed cultural traditions—has come to occupy a central place in the artistic discourse. This renewed interest in spiritual practice seems to us to respond to a broader crisis in how we make sense of the world.

Seoul—a city shaped as much by its rich spiritual traditions as modernity—offers the ideal platform for an investigation into the social, political, and historic contexts for this cultural shift. Not only to showcase the relevant works being

made today, but to situate them within a tradition dating back to the nineteenth century.

To that end, we start with the explosion of popular interest in spiritual practice that played a formative role in the birth of modern art, and that links those unsettled times to our own. One expression of that spiritual revolution was the proliferation of séances, literally “sittings” in which mediums connected their audience to the spirit realm.

In the following decades, rituals as varied as cinema screenings, psychoanalytic sessions, and experimental theatrical performances also came to be referred to by this term. And so we adopted the séance as metaphor and model for the exhibition: a mediated experience by which to access worlds beyond the everyday.

Amidst the disorienting transformations of the present day, artists are rediscovering these buried traditions. Mystics such as **Helena Blavatsky**, **Annie Besant**, **Georgiana Houghton**, and **Hilma af Klint** emerge as prophetic figures in the secret histories of abstract art. **Onisaburō Deguchi**’s ceramics function not as art objects for our disinterested aesthetic contemplation so much as condensed spiritual transmissions.

Emma Kunz and **Joseph Beuys** proposed art as a vehicle for healing and the restoration of balance. **Nam June Paik**, through his integration of shamanistic ritual and contemporary media, showed that traditional cosmologies are not opposed to technological advancement, but can reframe its purpose. Indeed, art itself is presented as a means of accessing worlds beyond conventional human experience and attuning ourselves to them: we call this a “technology of the spirit.”

Our exhibition connects these emancipatory practices to anticolonial, feminist, ecological, and anti-capitalist movements in the present. Seung-taek Lee’s celebrated Reenactment of the *Burning Performance* (1989/2025) expands the spiritual possibilities of art by liberating it from material support, an impulse that finds new expression in the work of artists including **Wing Po So** and **Zai Nomura**. A renewed awareness that modernity’s separation of the mind from the body is damaging to ourselves and the planet is apparent in work as different as the watercolors of **Suzanne Treister**, the films and performances of **Jane Jin Kaisen**,

and the “healing instruments” of **I Ching Systems and Artworks**.

New commissions by **Hiwa K, Anocha Suwichakornpong**, and **Kivu Ruhorahoza and Christian Nyampeta** reflect on the persistence of the past into the present and protest the suppression of historical narratives that are inconvenient to the dominant power of the day. In these works, as throughout an exhibition which is structured by overlapping chromatic zones, is a rejection of the idea that art can exist in any perfectly “neutral” or “universal” space and a commitment to the principle that reality is to some degree constructed and contextual. That this world is more various than any one system of knowledge can account for; that this world contains many worlds.

This is reflected in the exhibition’s commitment to forms of art that are invisible or immaterial. An extensive cinema program at **Cinematheque Seoul Art Cinema**, running for the duration of the Biennale, sets out the capacity of moving image to unsettle the boundaries between image and reality and to mediate between the living and the dead. A dedicated **Sound Room** at the NAKWON SANGGA uses sound and experimental music to move the listener out of themselves, while a performance by **ORTA (Alexandra Morozova and Rustem Begenov)** harnesses the unseen and ephemeral power of creativity as a means of processing historical trauma.

This is a space for spiritual encounter, for perceptual expansion, for dreamlike communion. A space for exceptional works of art to speak, summon, and transform.

More Information

Please visit the Biennale’s website for full program details and ticketing for *Séance: Technology of the Spirit*.

FULL LIST OF ARTISTS

Main Exhibition (50 artists/collective)

Aki Onda, Amit Dutta, Angela Su, Annie Besant and C.W. Leadbeater, Anocha Suwichakornpong, Anri Sala, Byungjun Kwon, Colectivo Los Ingrávidos, Corita Kent, Emma Kunz, Ernest A. Bryant III, Georgiana Houghton, Guadalupe Maravilla, Haroon Mirza, Hilma af Klint, Hiwa K, Hsu Chia-Wei, Hyung-Min Yoon, I Ching Systems and Artworks, Jane

Jin Kaisen, Joachim Koester, Johanna Hedva, Jordan Belson, Joseph Beuys, Kara Ditte Hansen, Karrabing Film Collective, Kivu Ruhorahoza and Christian Nyampeta, Kray Chen, Laura Huertas Millán, Lucile Olympe Haute, Manuel Mathieu, Maya Deren, Mike Kelley, Minjeong An, Mohamed Gaber, Nam June Paik, Onisaburō Deguchi, ORTA (Alexandra Morozova and Rustem Begenov), Park Chan-kyong, Rafael Queneditt Morales, Rudolf Steiner, Seung-taek Lee, Shana Moulton, Sky Hopinka, Suzanne Treister, Tamar Guimarães and Kasper Akhøj, Violette e a, Wing Po So, Yin-Ju Chen, Zai Nomura

Sound Room (16 artists/collective)

Areum Lee, Aki Onda, Annea Lockwood and Ruth Anderson, Antonina Nowacka, Breyer P-Orridge, Carl Michael Von Hausswolff, Jerry Hunt, Jocy de Oliveira, Jung Hee Choi, La Monte Young, Laurie Spiegel, Li Chin Sung (Dickson Dee), Matana Roberts, Meredith Young-Sowers, Walter Smetak, Yara Mekawei

Cinematheque Seoul Art Cinema (21 artists)

Abbas Kiarostami, Alice Rohrwacher, Apichatpong Weerasethakul, Camilo Restrepo, Caroline Déodat, Go Takamine, Jean-Luc Godard, Ken McMullen, Lee Jang-ho, Luis Buñuel, Marcel Camus, Mati Diop, Maya Deren, Naomi Kawase, Nina Menkes, Pedro Costa, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Raúl Ruiz, Roberto Rossellini, Souleymane Cissé, Trinh T. Minh-ha

SMB13 X Frieze Film Seoul 2025 (12 artists/collective)

Amit Dutta, Angela Su, Anocha Suwichakornpong, Colectivo Los Ingrávidos, Hsu Chia-Wei, Jane Jin Kaisen, Joachim Koester, Karrabing Film Collective, Laura Huertas Millán, Sky Hopinka, Tamar Guimarães and Kasper Akhøj, Zheng Yuan.

Seoul Artists' Platform_New&Young

ORTA (Alexandra Morozova and Rustem Begenov)

Press Inquiries | contact@mediacityseoul.kr

For high-resolution images, please follow the below

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1vB-XNYy7-fggjRq0e5f8pNzLStbt1fyg?usp=sharing>

The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale Website <http://mediacityseoul.kr>

Seoul Museum of Art Website <http://sema.seoul.go.kr>

SMB Social Media channels

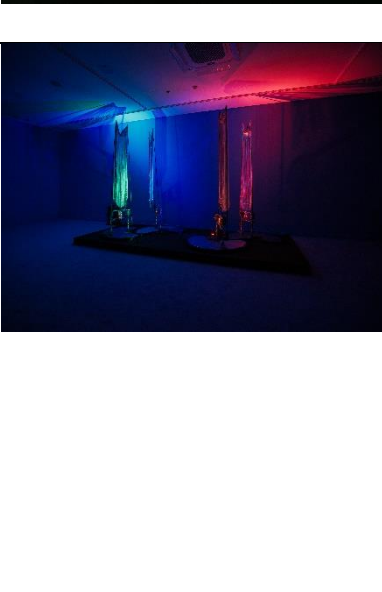
Instagram: [instagram.com/seoulmediacitybiennale](https://www.instagram.com/seoulmediacitybiennale)

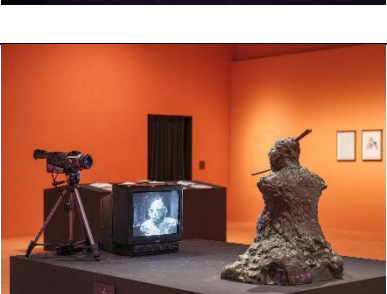
X(Twitter): [x.com/mediacityseoul](https://twitter.com/mediacityseoul)

Facebook: [facebook.com/mediacityseoul](https://www.facebook.com/mediacityseoul)

Youtube: [youtube.com/seoulmediacitybiennale](https://www.youtube.com/seoulmediacitybiennale)

[Appendix A] Images and credit

	The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale <i>Séance: Technology of the Spirit</i> exhibition view, Seoul Museum of Art; NAKWON SANGGA, 2025. Photo: Hong Cheolki. Courtesy of the Seoul Museum of Art
	The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale <i>Séance: Technology of the Spirit</i> exhibition view, Seoul Museum of Art; NAKWON SANGGA, 2025. Photo: Hong Cheolki. Courtesy of the Seoul Museum of Art
	Anocha Suwichakornpong, <i>Narrative</i>, 2025. single-channel video. 49 min. Commissioned by The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale. Courtesy of the artist. The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale <i>Séance: Technology of Spirit</i>. Seoul Museum of Art, 2025. Photo: Hong Cheolki. Image Courtesy of the Seoul Museum of Art
	Byungjun Kwon, <i>Opening Blooming from the center; Golden Flower of Potential</i>, 2025. 4 Ahae robot shamans in mixed media (motor, electromagnet, aluminum profile, control board, 3D printed PLA, fishing rod, decorative tassel, unpan, computer). 400 × 300 × 350 cm each, dimensions variable. Production assistant: Suhee Yoon. Commissioned by The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale. Courtesy of the artist. The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale <i>Séance: Technology of Spirit</i>. Seoul Museum of Art, 2025. Photo: Hong Cheolki. Image Courtesy of the Seoul Museum of Art
	Emma Kunz, <i>Untitled</i>, unknown date. pencil and color pencil drawing on brown graph paper. 75 × 75 cm (77.3 × 77.3 × 4.3 cm framed). Collection and courtesy of Emma Kunz Stiftung, Würenlos. The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale <i>Séance: Technology of Spirit</i>. Seoul Museum of Art, 2025. Photo: Hong Cheolki. Image Courtesy of the Seoul Museum of Art

	Georgiana Houghton, <i>The Strength of the Lord</i> and others, 1860s. The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale <i>Séance: Technology of the Spirit</i>, Seoul Museum of Art, 2025. Photo: Hong Cheolki. Courtesy of the Seoul Museum of Art
	Hilma af Klint, <i>Fiery Flames (Eldslågor)</i>, 1930. watercolour on paper. 47 × 31 cm. Collection and courtesy of Firestorm Foundation, Stockholm. The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale <i>Séance: Technology of Spirit</i>. Seoul Museum of Art, 2025. Photo: Hong Cheolki. Image Courtesy of the Seoul Museum of Art
	Hiwa K, <i>You Won't Feel a Thing</i>, 2025. single-channel video. 12 min. Commissioned by The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale. Courtesy of the artist. The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale <i>Séance: Technology of Spirit</i>. Seoul Museum of Art, 2025. Photo: Hong Cheolki. Image Courtesy of the Seoul Museum of Art
	Nam June Paik, <i>TV Buddha</i>, 1989. bronze sculpture, TV monitor, camcorder. 105 × 140 × 70 cm. Collection and courtesy of Jeonnam Museum of Art, Gwangyang. The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale <i>Séance: Technology of Spirit</i>. Seoul Museum of Art, 2025. Photo: Hong Cheolki. Image Courtesy of the Seoul Museum of Art
	Seung-taek Lee, <i>Reenactment of the Burning Performance</i>, 1989/2025. performance and remaining "non-sculpture." 30 min (performance), dimensions variable (remaining "non-sculpture"). Reenactment research and installation: Artlab ban (Jo Jaehong, Yeom Chulho). Reproduction supported by The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale. Courtesy of the artist; and Gallery Hyundai, Seoul. The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale <i>Séance: Technology of Spirit</i>. Seoul Museum of Art, 2025. Photo: Hong Cheolki. Image Courtesy of the Seoul Museum of Art

	(from left) Seung-taek Lee, <i>Burning Performance</i> documentation, 1989. paint on c-print. 52 × 61 cm each (2 pieces). Courtesy of the artist; and Gallery Hyundai, Seoul; <i>Untitled(Burning Canvases Floating on the River)</i>, ca.1988. chromogenic print on paper. 81.5 × 116 cm. Collection and courtesy of National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea; <i>Untitled</i>, 1990s/2025. c-print. 56.44 × 81 cm; 81 × 56.44 cm. Reproduction supported by The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale. Courtesy of the artist; and Gallery Hyundai, Seoul. The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale <i>Séance: Technology of Spirit</i>. Seoul Museum of Art, 2025. Photo: Hong Cheolki. Image Courtesy of the Seoul Museum of Art
	Kivu Ruhorahoza and Christian Nyampeta, <i>Whispers</i> 2025. single-channel video. 29 min. Co-commissioned by The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale and École du soir. Courtesy of the artist. The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale <i>Séance: Technology of Spirit</i>. Seoul Museum of Art, 2025. Photo: Hong Cheolki. Image Courtesy of the Seoul Museum of Art
	Zai Nomura, <i>Fanto ^me</i>, 2024/2025. photographs of the departed, dye ink, water, inkjet printer, water tank, ozone water generator, water pump, mini PC, LCD monitor, single board computer, keyboard, tablet computer, internet cloud. 152 × 102 × 60 cm. Technical support by Shusaku Goto, Ryosuke Ikeda, Takahisa Nagao, Tatsuya Nii, Yusuke Nozaki, Takashi Oki. New production supported by The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale and IHI Corporation, Japan. Courtesy of the artist. The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale <i>Séance: Technology of Spirit</i>. Seoul Museum of Art, 2025. Photo: Hong Cheolki. Image Courtesy of the Seoul Museum of Art
	The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale <i>Séance: Technology of the Spirit</i> exhibition view, Seoul Museum of Art; NAKWON SANGGA, 2025. Photo: Hong Cheolki. Courtesy of the Seoul Museum of Art

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	SMB13 X Frieze Film Seoul 2025. SeMA Rooftop, 2025. 09. 01 – 09. 04. Photo: Hong Cheolki. Courtesy of Seoul Museum of Art
	The 13th Seoul Mediacity Biennale Artistic Directors Hallie Ayres, Anton Vidokle and Lukas Brasiskis (from left to right). Photo: Hong Cheolki. Courtesy of the Seoul Museum of Art

[Appendix B] About Seoul Mediacity Biennale

Since its inauguration in 2000 as an initiative of the Seoul Metropolitan Government, Seoul Mediacity Biennale (SMB) has earned international recognition for its experimental engagement with the contemporary condition, new developments in media, and the changing fabric of the city. These themes were first explored in the Biennale's precursor exhibition, SEOUL in MEDIA, which was held three times between 1996 and 1999. Since then, SMB has presented twelve editions, each embodying ideas and activities that resonate with their time.

Each edition of SMB features approximately 50 artists/teams and attracts an average of 140,000 visitors, mediating various forms of participation through exhibitions and programs held at the Seoul Museum of Art (SeMA) and other satellite venues throughout the city. The pre-Biennale program, operated by SeMA since 2022, explores SMB's identity through the museum's permanent collection and digital archives as a means of reiterating SMB's foundational characteristics.