

Park Yuna, "Philippe Parreno Invites You to Play at Illusionary Show," *The Korea Herald*, March 14, 2024



Philippe Parreno invites you to play at illusionary show

By Park Yuna

Published : March 14, 2024 - 14:38



"Membrane" by Philippe Parreno (Courtesy of the Artist and Leeum Museum of Art)

As you approach the Leeum Museum of Art in Hannam-dong, the venue for South Korea's first solo exhibition of French artist Philippe Parreno, you may hear an unfamiliar sound, as if aliens were speaking to visitors.

The sound comes from the 14-meter-tall tower "Membrane" installed on the outdoor deck of the museum.

The structure functions as a control tower that breathes life into objects inside the museum. The cybernetic character is equipped with a sensing system that collects all kinds of environmental data such as temperature, humidity, wind speed and even minute vibrations of the ground. This information collected by the tower structure is sent inside the museum, manipulating other works by the artist.



An installation view of "Philippe Parreno: VOICES" at Leeum Museum of Art in Seoul (Courtesy of the Artist, Leeum Museum of Art)



An installation view of "Philippe Parreno: Voices" at Leeum Museum of Art in Seoul (Courtesy of the Artist, Leeum Museum of Art)

The fish balloons floating around the exhibition hall might baffle visitors as they negotiate their way around them, and a piano plays on its own. In another room, the lights flicker, the walls installed at the center move out of the blue and projections of light emerge here and there. These may seem like an illusion -- and, it is "Membrane" behind how it functions.

Across the exhibition, a voice that speaks the language "∂A" echoes, which also interacts with the cybernetic character, as though the voice oversees the exhibition like a puppet master.

"We have 42 different sensors in the tower and those 42 substances are correlated together through a really simple mathematical operation," the artist said on Feb. 28 at the museum.

Parreno has pushed the boundary of art, radically redefining the exhibition experience by taking it as a medium rather than as a collection of individual works. The artist sees his exhibitions as a "scripted space where a series of events unfolds."

"I want to see how I can produce an exhibition without an exhibition space," he said.

In 2022, Kim Sung-won, deputy director of Leeum Museum of Art, had a talk with the artist about hosting the exhibition to introduce the artist to Korean audiences. The show includes work that spans his 30-year career, as well as new pieces created for the exhibition.

"It took about a year and a half to prepare the exhibition. I was worried about the exhibition, since Philippe Parreno is not yet widely known to Korean audiences. But I was so surprised to see many people visiting the exhibition as soon as it opened," she said.

The exhibition, which opened on Feb. 28, has swept art fans in Seoul with the online pre-registration for the exhibition closing quickly every day, according to the museum.

Public programs to be held in conjunction with the exhibition include a special lecture by Nicolas Bourriaud (Artistic Director of the 15th Gwangju Biennale) exploring Philippe Parreno's oeuvre along with examining important artists in the 1990s. The lecture's date will be announced when it's settled, according to the museum. The exhibition runs through July 7.