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41 Essex street
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Nam June Paik standing up to greet President Clinton at a White House State Dinner for South Korean President Dae Jung Kim on June 9, 1998

August 12, 2010

Nam June Paik Art Center

Trickster Makes This World

31 August – 21 November 2010

85 Sanggal-dong, Giheung-gu
Yongin-si, Gyeonggi-do
446-905 Korea

www.njpartcenter.kr

A Trickster is the agent provocateur between different worlds. He, who is hardly ever a she, is a slick mediator that utilizes their considerable powers of persuasion to conjure great fortune and courage.

The most influential "Tricksters" are the ones in the highest echelons of power who influence political and technological machinations to make their world. Using the subtle methodologies of different media formats, from the news to advertisements to entertainment, they execute their soft powers to achieve their personal goals. Such 'mystification' is evident in all societies, but differs in affect, infiltrating everything from cultural representations to business decisions, celebrity culture, or broad political relations.

Connecting Nam June Paik, who was always interested in the tight links between media and power, with Lewis Hyde's renowned book *Trickster Makes This World*, the exhibition looks at the different philosophies and strategies to negotiate different realities. It will playfully magnify aspects of these power relations by considering a range of mediative situations,

from popular entertainment, to the enticement of 'big' names for a cultural event, and even the coercive ploys of immanent art institutions supported by governments. The exhibition will itself be loaded with a few tricks up its proverbial sleeve, attempting to persuade its audience into taking a step through and beyond the contemporary world.

Nam June Paik himself was similarly a playful trickster. From the early days he used paradoxes and 'kōans' in his writing and works, such as with the essay *Afterlude* (commenting on his *Exposition of Television* exhibition in 1964) or his re-definition of TV by inventing the Video Synthesizer. Paik's multifaceted performances also had their final act when he was introduced to Bill & Hilary Clinton at a state gala and his trousers "accidentally" fell down. If we define the Trickster as somebody who frequently uses magical, even controversial strategies to make real their ideas and ambitions, then Paik could certainly be considered as one of the most sophisticated artist tricksters of his generation.

Participating Artists:

Nam June Paik and Heman Chong (Singapore), Ronny Heiremans & Katleen Vermeir (Belgium), Saskia Holmkvist (Sweden), Christian Jankowski (Germany), Ray Johnson (United States), Jaewhan Joo (Korea), Kesang Lamdark (Switzerland/Tibet), Lim Tzay Chuen (Singapore), George Maciunas (United States), Gianni Motti (Italy), Ahmet Ogut (Turkey), Beom Kim(Korea),

Curated by Tobias Berger, Nav Haq and Young Chul Lee with assistance of Sooyoung Lee and Yujean Rhee.

The Nam June Paik Art Center is supported by Gyeonggi Cultural Foundation and Gyeonggi province.

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