



For All That Breathes On Earth: Jung Youngsun and Collaborators
SMAC San Marco Art Centre, Procuratie,
Venice 9 May – 13 July 2025



Jung Youngsun, Courtesy of MMCA

***Landscape architecture can be a poem
written on earth and it can resonate deeply.***

Jung Youngsun

Venice, 14 April 2025 - SMAC San Marco Art Centre and MMCA (National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea) present *For All That Breathes On Earth: Jung*

Youngsun and Collaborators, the first major international exhibition of Korea's foremost landscape architect Jung Youngsun (b. 1941).

Jung Youngsun was the first Korean woman to earn the title of land development engineer. Her work fostered a new sensitivity to rehabilitation and the creation of green spaces, both in urban settings and in various public and private domains, focused on designing not only for nature but also for communities, creating resilient and sustainable havens.

Jung Youngsun: *"Landscape architecture can be a poem written on earth and it can resonate deeply. Just as the sight of a rainbow in the sky makes our hearts skip a beat, I hope that the gardens we tend, stroke, and nurture will be a source of inspiration and a moment of healing and recovery for all."* Youngsun's work incorporates living materials, favouring native species that enhance 'the beauty of the void. The social role of landscape architecture is exemplified in Jung Youngsun's work through the creation of harmonious spaces for socialisation, contemplation, and meditation, which unlock the regenerative powers of nature.

For All That Breathes On Earth: Jung Youngsun and Collaborators will recount and document the breadth of her practice, which has always aimed to give locations a distinct spatial identity rather than merely linking buildings and their surroundings. The exhibition design at SMAC will incorporate traditional Korean wood-building techniques.

Among her projects, the exhibition highlights those designed and built for major international events, such as the Seoul Olympics, the Asian Games, the Daejeon Expo, and Incheon International Airport. These ambitious state-led projects, which presented opportunities for economic, cultural, and technological advancement, inspired Jung Youngsun to leave teaching and enter the field of landscape architecture in earnest, founding the landscape architecture firm Seo-Ahn Total Landscape (STL) in 1987.



Seoul Arts Center Model, ca.1985. Courtesy of STL

Since the 1980s, she has been dedicated to reclaiming urban suburbs by creating facilities for leisure, sports, art, and tourism—designing captivating environments that enhance nature’s self-healing properties. During this period, she developed an archetypal resort suited to Korea’s mountainous terrain. She also established arboretums and botanical gardens where nature and humans coexist and interact harmoniously. These include the Amorepacific Botanic Garden, composed solely of plants used in cosmetics, and the Asan Medical Center, a forested space where families and patients can mourn in peace, comforted by nature, which nourishes both body and spirit.

Jung Youngsun has also worked extensively on the restoration and regeneration of the Han River, creating a sequence of parks aimed at improving the river ecosystem through self-healing wetlands. By connecting aquatic spaces, she has revitalized areas that had been cemented over and become degraded. The dialogue between nature and architecture has always been central to Jung Youngsun’s research in landscape architecture, as has the equally fundamental relationship between land, ecosystems, and people.

Jihoi Lee, Curator of *For All That Breathes On Earth: Jung Youngsun and Collaborators* at SMAC and Curator, The National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea:
“For All That Breathes On Earth: Jung Youngsun and Collaborators in Venice will further echo our efforts in revealing the profound relationship between the built environment, landscape and ecology. As a landscape architect, Jung has explored the interdependence of life through designed environments, with water as one of her central elements. Her renowned work,

Seonyudo Park, a former industrial site transformed into a water-purifying ecological park, exemplifies this vision. Presented at SMAC San Marco Art Centre, Procuratie, in a city shaped by its own aquatic balance, I hope the exhibition fosters a dialogue on resilience and sustainability, inviting audiences to reflect on our shared responsibility for all that lives and breathes."

The opening of the exhibition will coincide with the launch of SMAC San Marco Art Centre, a new centre for the arts in the heart of Venice, located in the Procuratie on Saint Mark's Square, recently renovated by Pritzker-prize winning architect David Chipperfield. The exhibition also coincides with the opening of the 19th International Architecture Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia, and celebrates the year of Cultural Exchanges between Korea and Italy. As part of its inaugural programme, SMAC will also present *Migrating Modernism. The architecture of Harry Seidler*.

The Procuratie also hosts The Home of The Human Safety Net on the third floor, with the interactive exhibition 'A World of Potential', an immersive journey in which visitors are led to discover their strengths and can connect to the Foundation's programs.

'For All That Breathes On Earth: Jung Youngsun and Collaborators' is presented by MMCA National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea in partnership with SMAC. The international presentation of the exhibition is made possible by the Korean Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism and the Korean Foundation for International Cultural Exchange, in commemoration of the Year of Korea-Italy Cultural Exchange. The exhibition has also received the patronage of the City of Venice.

The presentation at SMAC San Marco Art Centre is sponsored by AMOREPACIFIC and Samsung Foundation.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

SMAC San Marco Art Centre
Procuratie, Piazza San Marco 105
30124 Venice

Open from Wednesday to Monday, 10am - 6pm (closed Tuesdays)

Tickets and more information at www.smac.org

About SMAC San Marco Art Centre

SMAC is a new centre for the Arts in the heart of Venice. Every year SMAC presents a dynamic and vibrant programme of exceptional exhibitions across all of visual culture. Situated in one of the most iconic locations in the world, SMAC is located on Piazza San Marco inside the Procuratie, recently restored by Pritzker-prize winning architect David Chipperfield. SMAC presents an ambitious programme across art, architecture, design, fashion and film, offering opportunities for discovery for specialists and the general public alike. SMAC focuses on content that sheds light on the unexpected, that challenges conventions and poses rigorous

questions. Through research, dialogue, and experimentation, SMAC critically examines contemporary visual culture and its relations with history, science, philosophy, and society. SMAC believes that the Arts open new possibilities for human co-existence and allow for cities and communities to thrive.

About The Procuratie

The Procuratie opened to the public in 2022 for the first time in 500 years, following a major restoration by David Chipperfield commissioned by Generali and orchestrated by Generali Real Estate. The second floor houses SMAC San Marco Art Centre. The third floor houses The Home of The Human Safety Net, a Foundation working in 26 countries to unlock the potential of those living in vulnerable conditions. The permanent exhibition '*A World of Potential*' is conceived as an experience that leads visitors to discover their unique combination of character strengths, while also enabling them to see the best qualities in the people around them.

About The Home Of The Human Safety Net

The Human Safety Net is a global movement of people helping people, whose mission is to unlock the potential of people living in vulnerable circumstances, so that they can transform the lives of their families and communities. The Human Safety Net's programmes support vulnerable families with young children (0-6 years) and integrate refugees through work and entrepreneurship. The Home of The Human Safety Net has been designed as an amplifier of its programmes through the interactive exhibition '*A World of Potential*', which guides visitors to awareness of their own potential and the right we all have to express and develop it, as well as the co-working hub, the event space, and the library dedicated to themes of social inclusion.

About Chau Chak Wing Museum

Located on Gadigal land, the Chau Chak Wing Museum is a hub for sharing the University of Sydney's extensive collections with the wider community. Officially opened in 2020, the Museum comprises three separate collections within one multidisciplinary institution. From First Nations culture, natural history collections, antiquities, and contemporary art works, the Museum's collection embodies cultural and artistic creativity at its core and welcomes all communities to engage with the collections.

About MMCA

Established in 1969, the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea (MMCA) has emerged as one of Korea's preeminent arts and culture institutions, sharing its history with the course of Korean modern and contemporary art.

The MMCA currently operates four venues; MMCA Gwacheon opened in 1986, MMCA Deoksugung at Seoul's Deoksugung Palace opened in 1998, MMCA Seoul opened in 2013, and MMCA Cheongju opened in 2018.

MMCA Seoul is a multipurpose museum that houses a full range of contemporary art and serves as the face of Korean modern and contemporary art. MMCA Deoksugung specializes

in modern art, focusing on Korea from the 1900s to the 1950s. MMCA Gwacheon focuses on research and family-oriented art, broadening the horizons of art history into the areas of architecture, crafts, prints, and design while also providing a full experience with its Children's Museum. MMCA Cheongju is located in a former tobacco factory that has been repurposed as "visible storage," specializing in the curatorial life cycle of its collected works and its stages of research, preservation, and exhibition.

As a leading cultural institution, the MMCA plays a pivotal role in shaping and disseminating critical discourses within the field of contemporary art, positioning itself as a dynamic site for intellectual inquiry, creative education and the cultivation of aesthetic engagement through rigorously curated exhibitions.

BIOGRAPHY Jung Youngsun

Jung Youngsun (b. 1941, Gyeongsan) is a seminal figure in Korean landscape architecture, renowned for redefining the discipline's role in urban and ecological contexts. Since founding Seo-Ahn Total Landscape in 1987, Jung has led transformative projects that bridge design, environmental stewardship, and cultural memory. Her work—spanning Seonyudo Park, Cheonggye Stream Restoration, Gwanghwamun Plaza, and Seoul Botanic Park—has been instrumental in raising public awareness about the social and ecological significance of landscape design.

A consistent advocate for ecological resilience and biodiversity, Jung has integrated native species and site-specific ecologies into her projects long before such practices became standard. Her designs prioritize the long-term vitality of landscapes through strategies rooted in contextual sensitivity, habitat preservation, and the symbiotic relationship between natural systems and urban life.

Jung's contributions have been internationally recognized with honors including the IFLA Award of Excellence, ASLA Award of Merit, and the AIA Architecture Honor Award. In 2023, she became the first Korean laureate of the IFLA Sir Geoffrey Jellicoe Award, the field's highest distinction. Often referred to as the "godmother" of Korean landscape architecture, Jung continues to shape the field with a vision grounded in ecological ethics, cultural continuity, and design for the future generations.

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