

Press Release

Title	Announcement for the 16th anniversary of Nam June Paik's Passing	
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The 16th Anniversary of Nam June Paik's Passing

- ▶ **On the 16th anniversary of Nam June Paik's passing, Nam June Paik Art Center is unveiling "Paik's Video Study," the world's only archive streaming system for the artist's video work**
- ▶ **A commemorative ceremony for the anniversary of Nam June Paik's death will also be held at Bongeunsa Temple**

January 29 of this year marks the 16th anniversary of the passing of world-renowned artist Nam June Paik (1932–2006). A pioneer of media art, Paik was an artist who incorporated technology into work that was creative and experimental. Even today, he is regarded as one of the most "contemporary" of artists. Recalling the artist as someone who created art "freely and without fear of things that no one had ever done before," Nam June Paik Art Center director Kim Seong Eun said, "We are commemorating the 16th anniversary of Nam June Paik's passing in the hopes that 2022, which marks the 90th anniversary of his birth, will be a year filled like never before with Paik's vibrant and enjoyable moments."

To commemorate the 16th anniversary, NJP Art Center is unveiling Paik's Video Study (njpvideo.ggcf.kr), an archive streaming system for the artist's video work. This platform allows users to enjoy the world's only Nam June Paik's video archives in an online environment. Premiering to the public on January 29, Paik's Video Study is a digital archive that offers a glimpse at his artistic ideas through his video work, as well as a realization of his hope that Nam June Paik Art Center would become the worldwide leader among museums in researching his video archive. By improving access to the institution's public resources, Paik's Video Study is expected to help awaken new interest in the artist.

In addition, a memorial ceremony for the 16th anniversary of Nam June Paik's passing will also be taking place at 11 am on Saturday, January 29 at Seoul's Bongeunsa Temple, where the artist's ashes have been enshrined. These anniversary ceremonies have been held since 2007 as Buddhist cheondojae (after death) rites, with Buddhist monks and other adherents attending alongside Paik's surviving family members and other associated individuals. This year, the number of attendees is being limited in accordance with the Korean government's social distancing guidelines to prevent transmission of COVID-19.

On the 16th anniversary of Nam June Paik's passing

Seong Eun Kim (Director, Nam June Paik Art Center)

Humor Has It, a Nam June Paik Art Center exhibition focusing on the Fluxus group and humor, includes a section titled "Fluxus Store." Two plates hang there, each printed with a sentence by Nam June Paik. One of them reads, "When too perfect, *lieber Gott böse* [dear God angry]." This is one of Paik's joking remarks exhibiting the Fluxus brand of wit, but the short sentence also conveys the essence of what he sought to achieve in his art. In one of his writings from the early 1960s, he said that his experimental television was not meant as art to approximate an ideal form of perfection, but as art to seek out a method leading in unpredictable directions. He also referred to this as "fundamentally an experience oriented toward love, an experience of doing what no one has done before." He seemed to be saying that his art was not about finding answers, but about blazing a trail. As someone who worked freely without fear of the things no one had ever tried, Paik described that artistic experience as "love."

The other plate reads, "The eternity-cult is the longest disease of mankind." This sentence opens Nam June Paik's score titled *Symphonie Nr. 5 (Symphony No. 5)*. The next sentence reads, "WANN gespielt wird ist ebenso wichtig wie WAS gespielt wird"—"WHEN one play is as important as WHAT one plays." This suggests a paean to art that is not about the pursuit of something that will last forever, but about finding the value and fullness in each present moment. The year 2022 marks the 90th anniversary of Nam June Paik's birth. This fact inspires a new consideration of the significance of commemorating the anniversary of Paik's death in a year of special remembrance of his birth. It is also a sort of destiny for an institution that honors a particular artist to remember the dates of both their birth and their death. During his lifetime, Paik expressed his hope that Nam June Paik Art Center would be a home where he could "live for a long time." If he did not mean for "a long time" to refer to "eternity," then NJP Art Center hopes to turn those annual days of observance into something particularly vibrant this year. Our hope is that 2022 will be filled like no other before with Nam June Paik's enjoyable moments. In that sense, what NJP Art Center intends to remember this January 29 is Nam June Paik's laughter.

Nam June Paik (July 20, 1932 – Jan 29, 2006)



Nam June Paik (1982), Nam June Paik Art Center Paul Garrin Archive Collection © Paul Garrin

Born in Seoul in 1932, Paik spent his middle-school days in Seoul and Hong Kong, and studied aesthetics in the University of Tokyo. Moving to Germany in 1956 and studying European philosophy and modern music, he came to work actively with contemporary avant-garde artists and began to carve out his artist-identity by doing radical performances which were completely different from artistic canons and conventions back then. His media art gained momentum by his first solo show *Exposition of Music—Electronic Television* in Wuppertal in 1963.

In 1964 Paik migrated to the U.S. where he developed his video art in full swing. Not only producing video images, he combined them with sculptures and installations, and even created a video synthesizer, a machine to process images. His incessant exploration about music and the body was also a key factor in constructing a distinct territory of his art. From the 1980s Paik realized a series of global projects to tear down barriers between avant-garde art and popular culture by satellite TV technology. Later on he expanded his technological realm into other media like laser, and while suffering a stroke since the mid-1990s, he never ceased to take his artistic step forward until he passed away in Miami in 2006.

Paik is a pioneering media artist working with various technologies in experimental ways, and still lives on right here as “the most contemporary artist” today.

Paik's Video Study

- Website : njpvideo.ggcf.kr

To commemorate the 16th anniversary of Paik's passing, Nam June Paik Art Center is making the world's one and only Nam June Paik's video archives available for free online viewing. Titled "Paik's Video Study" (njpvideo.ggcf.kr), this archive streams around 700 works from a video archive created and stored by the artist himself. Presented in both Korean and English, Paik's Video Study offers both these video files and around 300 essays from Nam June Paik Art Center's research into Paik's art. Users can stream videos on their mobile devices and PCs, while using the features of "continue watching" and "making my videos" to create their own video studies.

Nam June Paik Art Center Video Archives includes 2,285 video works collected and created by Paik himself. Offering a glimpse at the topics, people, and video editing techniques that fascinated the artist during his lifetime, the video archive consists of analog tapes and films. These include various editing clips and footage from Paik's most prominent single-channel works; source materials boasting their own dazzling video aesthetic; archival footage of historic performance and exhibitions; television programs and documentaries from countries such as Korea, the US, Japan, and Germany that reflect Paik's life as a global nomad; and archival videos of interviews with fellow artists.

With its combination of digitally converted videos and metadata based on research, Paik's Video Study allows users to gain closer access to Paik's artistic ideas. Also, by improving access to NJP Art Center's public resources, Paik's Video Study will help to promote interest in the artist and encourage research into his vision and body of work. As a realization of Paik's hope that Nam June Paik Art Center would grow to become a globally renowned art institution through its video archive research and usage activities, Paik's Video Study is expected to promote reexamination of the artist's ideas, while providing an opportunity to remember Nam June Paik the artist.

Bongeunsa Temple to host 16th commemorative ceremony

- Date : January 29th, 2022 (Sat) 11am
- Venue : Beobwangru Pavilion, Bongeunsa Temple
- Hosted and organized by : Bongeunsa Temple

On Saturday, January 29, a commemorative ceremony will be taking place at Seoul's Bongeunsa Temple for the 16th anniversary of Nam June Paik's passing.

- The ceremony will be a traditional Buddhist cheondojae (after death) ritual conducted by the head monk at Bongeunsa Temple. In accordance with Korean government guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID-19, the number of attendees will be limited. The ceremony will be live-streamed via Bongeunsa Temple YouTube channel.
- Bongeunsa Temple was a setting associated with early childhood memories for Nam June Paik, and his ashes are now enshrined at its Beobwangru Pavilion. Also present there are a photograph of the artist and a bronze death mask of Paik produced by the sculptor Ha Youngjin.
- Since 2007, Bongeunsa Temple has joined many of those who remember Paik in commemorative ceremonies to express the hope that his artistic vision will live on for future generations.