



1. Youn Bummo (Director, MMCA) 2 Jun Seungbo (Director, Gwangju Museum of Art) 3. Ahn Kyuchul (artist)  
4. Kim Seongeun (Director, Nam June Paik Art Center) 5. Park Sohyun (Professor, Seoul National University of Science and Technology) 6. Sujong Song (Head of Museum Policy and Research Department, MMCA/Moderator)

## **Online Streaming *the Roundtable: Museums in the Time of Pandemic***

20 July at 4 p.m. MMCA YouTube channel

**The National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea (MMCA, Director Youn Bummo)** will stream footage of its online seminar “**Roundtable: Museums in the Time of Pandemic**” on **Monday, 20 July at 4 p.m. on the MMCA’s YouTube channel**, sharing its discussion on the response and role of museums amid the COVID-19 crisis.

The roundtable gathered museum directors, an artist, and a theorist for an online seminar exploring the role of museums during this unprecedented crisis caused by the global pandemic.

**The roundtable began with a keynote speech by Youn Bummo, Director of the MMCA.** Director Youn described how COVID-19 affected the MMCA’s ongoing exhibitions and diverse programs, sharing the new changes that took place as the museum responded swiftly. Pointing out that COVID-19 will leave fundamental and lasting changes to our lives, he expressed his hope that the roundtable would serve as an opportunity to discuss the repercussions.

**Jun Seungbo, Director of the Gwangju Museum of Art,** spoke next, sharing a future outlook for the art community based on wide-ranging research on trends in international art circles, including his analysis of the webinar “Coronavirus and Museums: Impact, Innovations and Planning for Post-crisis” held by the International Council of Museums and the OECD. He gave a multi-angled analysis of the paradigm shift toward digital museums and the active use of online content, using this analysis to offer policy proposals as his conclusion.

Although he accepted the need for online museums, **the artist Ahn Kyuchul** discussed **the essential role of museums as physical spaces and platforms**, which cannot be replaced by digital media experiences. As a place, the museum provides unique experiences that cannot be had elsewhere—experience of the space, experience of a time outside daily life, experience of encounters and contemplations—which must be preserved as much as possible under the current circumstances. Given that museums can no longer deliberate on whether to include or exclude works from outside through exhibition planning or international exchange, Ahn spoke of the need to turn this crisis into an opportunity by reestablishing standards of judgment internally.

**Kim Seongeun, Director of the Nam June Paik Art Center, spoke about the ongoing, diverse effort made to change the art center grounds into commons**, explaining the obstacles facing these conceptual foundations and practices in the COVID-19 era. Director Kim also described the provisional programs the center had introduced to maintain their key functions as a museum amid the shutdown, sharing strategies for practical museum operations during the pandemic.

**Professor Park Sohyun** focused on **the coming post-COVID-19 era**, drawing attention to the **human and material resources and the functions of museums that will face a crisis of change**. Citing specific, statistical figures to demonstrate that many museums around the world are threatened with closure and the ensuing loss of livelihoods by countless museum staff, Professor Park spoke of the need for long-term measures to maintain museum functions. Pointing out that online museums cannot serve as a sufficient solution, the professor commented on the need to consider those who are marginalized by technology.

In the discussion that followed, the speakers exchanged thoughts on different ways to convert the COVID-19 crisis into an opportunity, along with the practical and policy-level elements required for the change. A special focus was given to the MMCA online museum's content and management, prompting the exchange of various views.

The MMCA plans to build on this roundtable by continuing to plan and offer various public programs dealing with the future of museums in the COVID-19 and post-COVID-19 era. Delving deeper into the trends in museums and the broader art scene, the MMCA will investigate its role and the various ways the larger art world can cooperate during these trying times.

The roundtable will be streamed on the **MMCA's YouTube channel ([youtube.com/MMCAKorea](https://www.youtube.com/MMCAKorea)) on 20 July (Monday), 4 p.m.** The footage will feature English subtitles to broaden the field of discussion, engaging art communities abroad and sharing ideas internationally.

Youn Bummo, Director of the MMCA, notes, "I wish to thank the speakers for participating in this roundtable and providing thoughtful suggestions for the art community amid difficult circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic. I hope that the ideas from this roundtable will help shape the direction for COVID-19 responses at the MMCA as well as the broader art community at home and abroad."

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