

**Panel 16**  
**Beyond Text: Film and Art**

**Performing Decolonization:  
South Korean Avant-Garde Art and the Global Rewriting of Art History**

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From Edward Said's groundbreaking work, *Orientalism* (1978), through Homi Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* (1994), to Dipesh Chakrabarty's *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (2000), and Gayatri Spivak's *An Aesthetic Education in the Era of Globalization* (2012), postcolonial studies have evolved from debunking Eurocentrism in cultural and intellectual productions to systematically dismantling the very colonialist structure of academia, knowledge formation, value systems, and epistemological shifts. It also involves acknowledging the multiple modernisms experienced in various regions on an equal footing. In global art and exhibition history, successive generations of postcolonial thinking, complementing the previous ones, have taken strides since the 1990s and continually informed art historical scholarship that delves into various regions not previously part of discussions, now becoming major players. My paper will quickly map out how the center-periphery binary models that tenaciously underpinned much of previous scholarship within global art history and exhibition-making have been successfully challenged and dismantled, by discussing landmark art historical literature and exhibitions, with a focus on East Asian postwar art. I will then explore how postcolonial and decolonizing viewpoints and scholarship on South Korean performance, conceptual art, and ecological/environmental art criticisms may offer a new model for approaching global art and cultural history. This model emphasizes diversity and pluralism, treating multi-directional exchanges and influences with equal importance and without favoring one cultural model over another.

**Biography**

Sooran Choi is Assistant Professor of Art History at the University of Vermont. She specializes in decolonizing avant-garde discourse, global feminism, and ecocriticism in East Asian art. Her honors include fellowships from College Art Association (CAA) and the Center for Place, Culture, and Politics, and grants from the Mellon Foundation and the Academy of Korean Studies.