February 5, Discussion

Namsoo Kim (moderator): Yesterday and today we held the Paik Nam June Art Center international seminar. Thank you very much for your attention throughout these two very long days. Nam June Paik – what was his background in Korea and how did he become a world-renowned artist? I do not know how much of the secret we have revealed over these past two days, but I'm sure that if Paik Nam June was looking down at us he would have said, "This is utopia." Nam June Paik pictured the *Fluxus Island* as his version of paradise. I do not know if you saw this on the first floor of the exhibition hall, but the composition of the residents is quite strange. Followers of Buddhism make up 5%. -10% are Hindus and there are different percentages for different religions. Zen are 28%. I believe that this is very meaningful: people who are not able to communicate live on this island and create a utopia together. That was how Paik imagined it, and I believe that this is really the venue in which Nam June Paik's dream came true.

This international symposium was possible through the efforts of many people. Let me take this opportunity to thank them: our chief curator, Tobias Berger, Jiyoon Moon, Claudia Pestana, Sooyoung Lee, and Chaeyoung Lee, and towards the back you have Heekyung Lee, Sohye Lee and Youngri Lee. Over the past few months everyone has worked hard to fill the Nam June Paik Art Center with the academic passion and the optimistic energy of Nam June Paik.

I do not want to take up too much time. Some people spoke for an hour, some for more, others for less. I would like to briefly summarize today's major points before starting our discussion. Mr. Youngchul Lee talked about the moon

and how Nam June Paik was able to realize his dreams. How he expanded those dreams to the electronic moon. We heard a very anthropological and dynamic presentation. It was not in narrative form because our exhibitions are not narratives. It was not in linear form. It was scattered and dynamic. It was something whose changes you cannot predict.

We took a look at ideas and their implications for our society. Maybe I am summarizing too quickly. Professor Bazon Brock, I saw three of his DVDs and they were very touching. Although I cannot understand German, it was still touching. On a more personal note and on behalf of the art center, I want to say it is really a blessing to have him here with us. It is quite amazing.

Professor Brock talked about how the quest to find the answer for a question is related to time. He also mentioned how the answers to questions lead to new questions and how answers to questions can also be questions, and how the answers to questions, or the questions to the questions, go deeper into the problems questioned. He presented guidelines, not only for appreciating Nam June Paik's work, but also modern art. He talked about the triumphal arc, and he talked about the spirits of the early Christians. It was probably a spirit that was not defined into a strict form at the time – it was just starting. Nam June Paik also talked about Eckhardt and Christian philosophy – I remember that.

Nam June Paik talked about that because Suzuki talked about good based on that philosophy. The trinity structure was used to talk about how we can realize the promise of eternalness. That was very touching, and I think that Pataphysics is a concept that is very important. Pataphysics is also key to our exhibition. Science expresses truth and Pataphysics talks about how art expresses the gift to the normal world. We look forward to your questions from the floor.

Bazon also talked about exposition. How we need to be exposed. Nam June Paik and Stockhausen's Originale were about exposure, and his piece is based on contact. Those are some of the thoughts that we can think of. Oh, excuse me. I skipped over Professor Kim Jin-Sok's presentation.

Professor Kim and Professor Lee are here. They also have deep academic relations, and they are both probably the only scholars with their own language expressing their own thoughts. Concerning Nam June Paik they both presented new ideas from a new perspective. Thank you very much for your presentations.

Professor Kim talked about stationary nomads. A stationary nomad is a conflicting idea, but the life of Nam June Paik was portrayed as a flight, and flight is not always beautiful. He talked about the overall picture of flight to describe Nam June Paik.

I think someone else mentioned this yesterday as well that Nam June Paik's life was the life of a nomad. He was also a refugee, and later on he was somewhat homeless, according to some of the testimonies. So you can see that he was on the run.

The first escape and the second escape – the flight from Korea and all those escapes he called a spiritual revelation, and I think that was very interesting. A realistic escape was portrayed as a spiritual revelation. In a 1974 interview, Nam June Paik mentioned that video art is technology art. He said, "I knew that we would have a shift towards technology art, and I knew someone would have to do it. In 1960 I got up and I thought, why not me?" and he experienced a moment in which he commanded himself. I believe this goes along the same lines. He was on the run and he was passive but then he thought, why not me? And there was a transition. That is something that we should discuss further.

In his presentation, Mr. Jinkyung Yi introduced the philosophies of Deleuze. He was able to present a new philosophy of Deleuze that is localized to Korean culture. He talked about how Nam June Paik was focused on his existence but also on relationships. Paik, when he lived in Korea and Japan, wanted to become a modernist, an avant-gardist, but in Europe he met John Cage. Of course he knew about John Cage already, but after he met him, he started to think about Zen Buddhism and shamanism. So his relationships with his friends were what then lead to his optimism. Fluxus, actually, is a community of people who cannot form

a community. George Maciunas was a refugee from Bulgaria. And so concerning George, Nam June Paik mentioned that he was someone who understood people but at the same time he was very harsh. I never thought that Paik gave up on George, and he is doing this communion movement, so maybe we could talk about new communion movements.

I would like to end the summaries there and open the floor for questions from the audience and from panelists. I hope there are many questions.

Mary Bauermeister: I want to add something to all these lectures, especially about escaping which was presented so strongly from your side. The Asian concept of honor and the way you perceive knighthood is congruent with courage and staying to be killed along with your soldiers. There are so many of these ideals, which we have when we think of war and enemies, but if you are a real pacifist, you just do not fight. You do not fight fights. It is absurd to fight for pacifism. And Paik was only a child. Every parent would send his or her children out of the warzone, but Paik was also a pacifist and would never lose energy fighting fights. We are very lucky he escaped and was not killed.

Let's say, if we translated this to Germany. Imagine if all the Jews had bravely stayed at home. They would not have been able to go on with their culture in Europe or in New York. To escape a dangerous situation is not to lose honor, it is instead a question of intelligence.

Those few Jewish people who did not believe that Hitler could rule because they thought he was stupid, and everything would just blow over, they were killed in the end. It is not a question of honor or dishonor to leave, but a question of intelligence.

The second point I want to make is that to escape or to betray your home country would mean that you must be at home somewhere, and my feeling when I was with Paik was that he was not at home anywhere. He was not connected home-wise to space-time. His real home was his spirit. His home was in his mind. He could live in a basement, he could live in a palace; he could live with food or

without food. His euphoria came through thinking, through exchange with people who understood him in the way Bazon said. So, there were only a few people who understood him and it was with these people that he was at home. I would not say that to be at home means to be fixed to a space.

To our last speaker, you talked about the equalization of all noises into the scale of music. When we performed Merce Cunningham and John Cage in Cologne in 1961 the most astonishing part was people were still used to the fact that there is an audience and there are performers, a stage, and people who look at it.

There is also a second division of the audience-performer limit that had already been broken by Stockhausen's *Originale*. Usually a performer prepares himself backstage and then the curtain goes up and the performance begins. This notion was also shattered when we did not use the curtain. The dancers danced the most perfect movements and then suddenly broke and warmed themselves up exactly as dancers usually do before going on stage. They warm up their knees and such. So they stopped the performance and started warming up doing exercises and then suddenly they started to dance again.

The division between preparation, of getting something ready to be shown and showing it, was also broken down. The preparation process for making art or getting a performance perfect was also broken down. That means a clumsy sketch was as valuable as the final drawing, and sometimes even more interesting. All these things now seen commonplace, every theatre has now done them, but in those early days it was really a breakthrough – a breakthrough by the school of Schaeffer in Paris and the electronic studio in Cologne.

The Cologne people did their sounds with synthesizers and they made them artificially. In Paris, the 'Musique concrète' movement obtained its sounds by just taping noises. They taped sounds like the noises from the street or nature. This is why they called themselves 'Musique concrète'. There was a real battle between them related to their experiments and ideologies. Now all can be used.

We're used to just take it as a palette, like a painter has his medium. But in the beginning of all of this there were convictions behind it. Convictions and manifestos and groups of artists who were really enthusiastic about what they found out. They, although they were avant-garde, distinguished themselves from other groups through their findings.

It is really unimaginable today, when all of this is available to all of you, how much we had to fight for this widening of what is art which you spoke about. To broaden our aspects of what is art we asked, "What else can we declare as music or as dance or as performance?" I hope now you start asking questions. Sometimes the Q and A is more interesting than the speeches, so I encourage you to ask questions.

Bazon Brock: I am encouraged. I am so astonished because nearly every speaker and nearly everyone to whom I spoke in the audience keeps using the term 'work of art' when discussing the result of Paik's work. It is quite fundamental that the status of these objects is not art. They are instruments of cognition which have been laid down.

Since the late 50s, no one out of this group ever produced art. They produced instruments of cognition. Even Beuys who was always forced to produce art said, "No! I forbid you to install my work in the same way as it was used for the first time." Let us say the monument which he installed in Venice. After it was shown there it has just to be laid down in the museum. It was just laid down.

They are instruments of cognition, which are laid down. That is the status of the work and not art. You would be sacrificing all these movements in modern science and art if you would stare at what there is on the wall as a piece of art. Every little piece of paper, every little corner of fat, or whatever – is just commercialization. It is a kind of commercialization and it is understandable under these conditions, but nevertheless, the status of these objects is not that of works of art, but instruments of cognition laid down. This is what they have in common with scientists.

For instance, what sense would it make to call the table on which scientists work out their theories a work of art? These are instruments. Nothing else. A work of art is something completely different. What is on the wall is just dead material, nothing but that. Like everything in the world, a work of art is something completely different. The work of scientists is also completely different.

I think a museum should educate the audience to these conditions. It is your role to get rid of these stupid classifications of bigger works of art and smaller ones and important ones and cheaper ones and so on. No! Just take it and prove it. If it is usable as an instrument of cognition, then use it – not only cognition but also imagination and representation – these three, in general. So just prove it, and that is it. To be an artist does not mean you produce art – not at all. To be an artist means to work and live under a special set of attitudes, attitudes towards problems. That is, we manage not to solve the problems in the very stupid way that nearly everybody says technicians solve problems. No. We are strong enough psychologically and also intellectually to be exposed to principally unsolvable problems, because, if a problem is solvable, it is no longer a problem. It is only a problem if it is not solvable.

Therefore, you have to develop psychological power to stand against problems that can never be solved. For instance, the problem of the death of any individual – it would be pointless to complain that someday someone will solve this problem, or the problem of cancer – just pointless. Cancer is a name for an unsolvable problem in principle, because the principles of creating cancer are just the principles of genetics itself. So, how can you solve them? You can only manage to stand them, and that is all.

The scientist and the artist themselves created this kind of thinking because in the history of art, there is no progression. Ever. Let us say in the 16th century, you have Perugino in the beginning then Raphael as his pupil. Then you have Michelangelo and Caravaggio. And every one of them is a master because he proposed problems which could not be solved by anybody. Even the most

perfect artists like Raphael or Michelangelo were not able to solve the problem of Perugino.

There is no progress. It is ever present in the history of mankind, in developing the capacity to stand against problems that are unsolvable in principle. In politics they tell you, we solve the problem of this or that by making laws. How stupid. What kind of problem could this be if you could manage to get rid of it by law, tax raising or lowering or whatever? That is stupid. Problems are in principle unsolvable. Otherwise they would not be problems. And this is the beginning for everything. Do we have any problems which you look upon as being unsolvable? If you start, then you are an artist or a scientist. Then you go into a problem and study and study and study until it grows. With more experience, you create more problems and then more experience and so on.

So stop speaking about Paik's art or that of any other artists in these modern groups, this is wrong. They produced instruments of cognition, imagination, and representation, and brought these three together. This is usable by nearly everybody who is and who has the capacity to understand that problems could never be solved. Art was the first area in the history of mankind where everybody accepted that there is no progress, and the problem of a great artist could not be solved by his or her successor or that of someone later on.

Youngchul Lee: Let me also add a few words. Paik was born in Korea but as an artist he always lived and worked in other countries. So as a human and as an artist I think homeland always becomes an issue when we talk about Paik. As we organized the biggest exhibition to date here at the Nam June Paik Art Center we had to ask ourselves how we would position Paik. And we decided to liken him to migratory birds that fly in groups, or salmon that return upstream to their place of birth after a long, hard life. And during its lifetime, the salmon encounters many dangers and hardships. But what I mean to say is that Paik as salmon or Paik as a migratory bird means that he had no concept of home as relating to a fixed space. Home was about the rotation of the earth. As a part of nature, he needed

to survive, to defend himself, and sometimes to negotiate. So while living like that with his group, his friends, he created his own home. It is a giant, moving home. For Paik, where his life took him was his home. And homeland was created by the friends that he was with. He had a homeland of the heart. That is how I understand it. And Paik's works are a new way of understanding the world. So it is a two level cognition.

When Paik came to Korea, Samsung was attracted to him as a possible symbol to help them create a brand image. I think that was in some ways a necessary process. Understanding the world with cognitive tools is very important. One thing I would like to add there is that in Paik's work he says, trust the world. That is what he is telling us. Do not be too critical. Do not try to separate things. The world we live in is stupid and we need to trust that we can live with stupid. Do not try to be the smartest. Smart and stupid – the wall that separates the two is something that we should not think about. And that is how he has said it and that is how he interpreted art.

We can see also look at how he answered questions. If you asked 'a', he always answered with 'b.' He never answered in a straightforward manner. And he was always optimistic and positive. It is all a representation of the world where stupidity and smartness mingle. And that is how he saw potential in the world. And that is my understanding of Paik.

Namsoo Kim (moderator): Professor Jinsok Kim and Professor Brock both talked about art and cognition. How they are not goods with certain fixed values, but they need to become a part of our lives. Does anyone have anything else to add to this?

Jinsok Kim: Well, Professor Brock also mentioned that the word 'artistic work' really does not fit here. We are talking about art and I feel the same way. Nam June Paik was someone who was fun. He was naïve. He was as naïve as a wicked child. And we continue to try to bring him into the system of art. We are trying to evaluate him in the framework of art.

The second point that I would like to make is in response to what someone said about it being good that he left. People who are pro-peace should not fight. But in Korea it was very difficult to talk about these issues, whether you agree or not. What I would like to say today is that there is this fact. Of course it is a sensitive issue because his father could be classified as being pro-Japanese. And we still talk about it because we are not able to completely deal with it properly. But we do not think about his father, if we take his father out of the picture, you can still run away if there is war. I think that is possible. And I wanted to add that point. I do not know if the foreigners here are aware of this, but sometimes when you feel that you want to escape from Korea, you realize you cannot. You go north and there is North Korea, you go south and there is the sea so we are kind of locked up here. And I think this situation locks up our thoughts as well.

Bazon Brock: Is that why you are so radical?

Jinsok Kim: I believe this is important.

Hannah Higgins: I just have a quick question which I think I would direct to Bazon and also to Jinkyung Yi on the left. Mr. Yi, you were talking about Erwin Panofsky, whom I greatly admire. He makes a clear distinction between iconography and iconology and the idea that all art, in a sense, is ontological. All art proposes a theory of knowledge. And my question in relation to both of your points of view is, if there is no progress in art the way that Bazon described, then I do not understand first of all at what point there stopped being art and how there can be an art before and after this art, or a practice of thinking. If we work with Panofsky's idea, then all art, in a sense, proposes a theory of knowledge and a theory of shaping. The best art always transcends the category of art and always has. And this is also a non-historic fact – a non-linear sort of fact. So I guess I would like to hear both of you speak to this idea of the category of art and an ontology of the machine. An ontology written through the machine on the one hand, but also the possibility or impossibility of the category of art within a shaping of history that both is and is not simultaneous and linear. Do you understand my question?

Namsoo Kim (moderator): Mr. Yi would you like to go first?

Jinkyung Yi: I do not know if I have an accurate understanding of your question, but let me try to answer it to the best of my understanding. As Mr. Brock mentioned, modern art in the 21st century, modern music as well, actually broke down the barriers of what is and is not art. And I think it is a process of bringing everything into art, and at the same time expanding art into everything. And from that perspective art is a cognitive tool. And I think that term is an excellent term that explains how that barrier is breaking down.

But let me try to explain or express this in another way. I think you might confuse what I am about to say with Marxist definitions, but I believe that art is political. Because art is a way to clash with existing lines and spaces and it questions existing lines and distinctions. It also opens things that have not been seen or heard before. That is why I believe it is innately political. From this perspective I think we can say that not only art but philosophy is also innately political. Unlike Professor Brock, I do believe there is progress in art not because we are going towards a certain ultimate goal, but because we are continuously revealing and exposing new things. And I think all of that is radical and progressive.

Philosophy and art, once we say that we cannot distinguish these from common sense that would mean that I would be on par with Nam June Paik and I instinctively cannot accept that. And so if I would put myself on par with a philosopher I would be happy. But if I put myself on par with Paik I do not think that I can really deal with that.

The ambiguity of artistic work or 'werk' in German, which means peace as well as 'arbeit' or labor, and so it is a task that is done – I think we can say this is work in the sense that he actually performed this. Work is a way to create peace, but it is also very closely related to labor. So it has that ambiguity. And from that perspective I work. And Paik worked. And other people work as well. So it is a way of creating positive results. All that is work.

And as I have mentioned before, it is a way of confronting territories. I

also confront territories and I believe that is all. What I am doing is not part of the territory called art. Although I do believe that we can go across borders between the territories.

Namsoo Kim (moderator): I think you are repeating yourself and so I would ask you to please close your remarks.

Jinkyung Yi: Basically I believe that it is ambiguous but there is a distinction.

Namsoo Kim (moderator): Positive production through the process of art. That might be a bit different from the Western concept. It is very much an Eastern concept, so maybe Bazon, you could give your thoughts on that?

Bazon Brock: Yes, there is progress, of course, in the development of societies. For instance, the definition I know best is that society developed until now towards the highest terrain by assembling its own pasts simultaneously. These past are, for instance, represented by museums. So the invention of the museum around 1760 was the invention of how to demonstrate that society is aware of how it developed. Then, the aim of progression – where does it all aim at? The answer is quite simple. As far as I know there is only one definition. We studied this topic for nearly fifty years and all definitions given by artists, scientists, in historical periods were examined. So when I say there is only one, I know what I am saying. It is not just a fundamentalist attitude. It is a summary.

The definition is that the progress of a society aims at utopian knowledge, which means criticism of the truth. Because as Mary discussed with Paik, the tyranny of natural law must be criticized. Utopia is the source for criticizing the truth, the truth of nature, the truth of the loss of nature. And that is what progress aims at. If we were able to criticize the principles under which we were created, if we were even able to criticize the connection between the way something developed and is now effective, then we would succeed in having progress.

Utopia means to be able to criticize truth. And the only truth there is, is of course, the truth of nature, the laws of nature. The tyranny of nature is what impels

us.

As for the first question, I would recommend Hans Belting beting's thoughts on about the image before the invention of art. This is quite substantial and fundamental. Art was invented in the 14th to 15th centuries. There was no art in Greece, none in Rome, or China, or Egypt, nor in Korea or Japan. All of these places had magnificent capacities in ornamenting clothes and making pottery and building houses, but there was no art because art was invented when it was necessary. Not only to criticize evidence, but to do it by producing evidence as I tried to explain. Another way of putting this is, if there is someone who is accepted to be an authority by authorship, what kind of authority is this if there is only one author? By being an author or an artist or scientist, he is an authority for working on the hypothesis on the world. That is it.

Namsoo Kim (moderator): We would like to open the floor at this time. Yes, Professor Midori Yamamura.

Midori Yamamura: I have a question for Bazon. You mentioned that materials on the wall, like paintings and sculpture, were no longer important after the war. How do you see the paintings of Yves Klein or Pierro Manzoni, for example? They look almost like materials? They look more like forces and are more important than what is on the wall?

Bazon Brock: Was that question to the panel or to me?

Hannah Higgins: She was making an observation about Paik actually returning to Korea and then leaving in a self-imposed exile and then to you the question was about establishing why and how you deal with post-war art if the category art does not exist in terms of materials or actions.

Namsoo Kim (moderator): Midori, we appreciate your comments, but must change the topic at this time.

Bazon Brock: I will answer you personally.

Namsoo Kim (moderator): In Korea, we respect the time Paik lived here. Those from Europe, those from the US – of course you respect Paik's time in your

own countries. But as you can read some different documents, Paik wanted to be free from the shackles of time. In Hamlet, it says that time is out of joint. And I do believe that Paik, in pursuing his art, wanted to be outside of the flow of time. I think somebody else said something similar to that yesterday. So, on that note, Mr. Kim, or anybody from the audience, if you have any questions or comments, please raise your hand.

Mary Bauermeister: I just want to add a few remarks. When you say Paik was naïve that is just too simple. Paik was the most sophisticated thinker with an incredible cache of knowledge. I would say he had reached a naivety referred to in Christianity. This naivety of children, one cannot enter eternity or paradise without it. When Paik talked with others he reduced his complex thinking down. He was not naïve at all. Or my concept of naivety is completely different from yours.

The second thing is that we discussed, whether man is evolving or devolving. Is he in a big bang or a steady state? Paik and I used to call these discussions 'Hegeling' it through. 'To Hegel' means to see both points and get a synthesis. We even made a joke about it. Let's go Hegel. And after a few hours of Hegeling everybody left the studio and very often I was left alone with Paik and we did not say a word. We just sat down and were silent with each other. You can call it meditation, you call it whatever you like.

I remember one time after a long time he said there is no time, there is no space. And everything we had discussed he denied. In that sense I understand Bazon when he says there is no art and there is no progress. But you cannot say it in the beginning you can only say it if you have deepened your understanding in each of these areas. There is very often a misunderstanding when people, as a result of all their thinking make a quote. If you do not remember all the things which led to that quote we misunderstand each other.

I remember that the deepest insight comes in a mystic state. Not in an intellectual state. That is why when Master Eckhardt said, "God and me are one," he was nearly killed. In mysticism if you declared, "God and me are one," you were

killed by religious leaders. But this mystic state is the only way to real understanding. And Paik reached that and whether he did art or did not make art, that is not the point. He reached an understanding of life which was beyond polarities and dualities. So let us go on, Hegel it through, but let us also understand that there is a much deeper understanding when we are silent, when we try to understand each other on a deeper level. But he was not naïve, definitely not.

Bazon Brock: And this level is still rational, because mysticism has the same structure as rationality. For instance, from twenty years ago nearly every scholar has been able to mathematically define the law of chaos. You have the same law of rational argumentation and mathematically you can define it of the mystics and the irrational, of the absurd. Because in Europe, in 190 AD, one of the philosophers said, "I believe it because believing something cannot be criticized by rational argumentation. It cannot be criticized because it is very important."

I believe in what is beyond rational thinking, because rational thinking and the first rank know its own limitation. Therefore, by rational thinking you produce the limitations on which rational thinking is operating. Therefore, rational thinking produces mysticism, irrationalism, and absurdity. So it is the incorporation of logic, like chaos is the incorporation of a very special mathematical definition of chaos.

Then the third point – we have "I know that I have to believe because knowing knows its own borders." So by being rational and knowing something, you know the borders of what you know. And then you create the absurd or the irrational. And the third point is, then, therefore I know the absurd, the irrational, and the counterfactual. I know it, and therefore I can calculate with the counterfactual, with the irrational, and with the absurd. That is the scientific and artistic thinking. Not this kind of mystery. It is the definition of what you produce by knowledge, which means the borders of the reach of knowledge.

Question from the audience: There might be some gap in translation, but I do not know who you pose that question to. I did not say he was naïve, I said

he was devilishly naïve. So I am not saying he is innocent in a child-like way, I am saying he looked at the world in a skewed way and he had a kind of devilish naivety in that.

I said he had a line of flight, but Brock said it was the truth of cognition. I think even art in modern society within the disasters we are experiencing needs to look within the disasters we are experiencing. And that is why I use flight and other words in my paper. I did not mention disaster in my presentation because that would have just lengthened my talk.

Secondly, you said it is not a betrayal. And I do agree with you, it is not a betrayal. But in the Korean discourse, flying, escaping, or making a run for it was taboo and we needed to suppress that urge. Sometimes we wanted also to honor Paik with devotions. And to do this we wanted to suppress some part of his life. This type of discourse is something we need to go through because, of course, if I say something there should be some other opinions. So I wanted to open it all up. That is what I want to do, because we need this kind of frank discussion.

Bazon Brock: Who is the devil? That is a generalized other. That is a devil, according to Levinas.

Namsoo Kim (moderator): Well I do not think there are any questions. Yes, the foreigner right in the front?

Question from the audience: First of all I would like to thank everybody for this wonderful seminar. It has been extremely informative. We heard a lot of ideas about Nam June Paik's identity, his nationality, his status as a refugee, and as an international artist. But I am really curious about the name that we know him by. In Korea the family always comes first. And Korean people refer to him as Paik Nam June. Western people have known him as Nam June Paik, which is kind of interesting to me. So I was just wondering, I would like to ask maybe some of the people who actually knew him quite well, how did he refer to himself? Did he say, Hello, I'm Nam June Paik. Because I have heard his name pronounced over the past two days, Peck, Beck, Paik, Park. Whereas Korean people always just say

Paik Nam June. So it seems to me that one of the strongest ways we make our identity is through our name. Who first decided that his name would be inverted to the Western style to put his given name Nam June? And who decided on the Romanization of his name as P-a-i-k and the pronunciation as Paik, which seems to be what is the norm in Western countries.

Bazon Brock: Yes I can tell a story. In 1963, when we came together to prepare this one event, we discussed this problem. Because the Korean pronunciation is Peck and Peck is similar to Woody Woodpecker, a character out of the Disney comics. On one hand, a woodpecker is an animal who reaches the deepest end. On the other hand, he is trying to get a hole into a tree where there is a climate which helps his babies to develop. So we asked Paik, should we then just announce you as Woody Woodpecker? And Paik said very seriously, "No, I would prefer to be Moody Mood-paik-er. Moody Mood-paik-er." Then the next round was, how about the name June? June, not July – his name is June. July is Julius Caesar. June is the highest ranking goddess in the Roman hierarchy, the wife of Jupiter. So the name June means switch from July, Julius Caesar to June. To get another dimension, the name June Paik. And Pike is a figure in diving. It was a kind of permanent transformation of the onomatopoetic impact of his name and the different pronunciations. He liked it very much. When he came down from the hotel the next morning he asked, did you find something different? Can I bear to hear it? I would like to approve it. And this went on and on and on. I think he was the richest named person in modernity. There are dozens of names for him, but my favorite is still Moody Mood-paik-er.

Question from the audience: That is quite interesting. When I think of the work 'pike' in English, I think of the very aggressive long, fish, or a pointed stick, which can be used as a weapon. Or sometimes, severed heads will be stuck on pikes, in times of war. So that was interesting that you said it was the diving pose. I would not have thought of that.

Namsoo Kim (moderator): I think Mary has something to say. Maybe she

can also answer this question. But I would ask her to keep it simple.

Mary Bauermeister: As his career as an artist started in Cologne, and the German pronunciation of P-a-i-k is 'Pike,' that became his name. For the first few years he was in Germany we all called him Paik. It was much too long to call him Nam June, so nobody ever used that. For me it was, hey Paik, where are you? Similarly, he did not call me Bauermeister He called me Mary because it was shorter. It would never come into my mind to change his name. During his first years, 1958 to 60 when he was establishing himself he just used the German pronunciation of his last name. That is why it is Paik.

Namsoo Kim (moderator): Are there other questions? Yes, toward the back, near the window.

Question from the audience: If I may introduce myself a little more in depth, in 2009, this year, Cheongju is opening a Biennale and I am in charge of that Biennale. Thank you very much for this seminar. It has been a very informative event. Our Biennale is centered on craft. And Nam June Paik seems like he is someone we still have a lot to learn about. In any case, I think there are a lot of similarities between Nam June Paik and our Biennale. I do not know if this is actually a question, but I was up all night working and I just came for the discussion session, and I would like to share my feelings after listening to all this.

Director Youngchul Lee– when he was invited to be the director of the Nam June Paik Art Center, he went through a lot of thought in deciding the English name: The Nam June Paik Art Center. And he opened this exhibition, the first exhibition under the title of Now Jump – very successfully, in fact. And this seminar is really the climax. I do not know if we are creating a jump from this seminar or if we are going to use this art center as a memorial ground, whether we are talking about the memories of Nam June Paik or trying to take a jump from here. As all museums are, I feel like this seminar and this art center are yet another memorial for another great artist. But we are not jumping anywhere. So I would like to ask Director Lee about the title, Now Jump.

Youngchul Lee: I think that he asked a very important question, but let me just give a very simple answer. I think your question probably deserves more discussion publicly and also privately. Anyway, Nam June Paik or Paik Nam June gave us a new two-fold cognition in modern art, especially as it goes through a period of rapid change. He gave that to the people of our modern society. But to understand that correctly is difficult, already everything is institutionalized through the education system. Even the study of art has been institutionalized, so we now have fixed categorizations.

In school we learn that art is long and life is short. But Nam June Paik reversed that convention and said that art is actually very short and life is very long. So wherever you may be in the art industry or even if you are not in the art world, you have to keep your life precious and we need to keep questioning anew in order to keep life precious. This is a big question that he threw at us, and that is also where the Nam June Paik Art Center needs to start. In Korea, we have 3-4 big Biennale's and every year we also have various international events. Asking this question sometimes might seem naïve or might seem too generalized or sometimes even criticized as being too abstract. But, I think we need to be aware about these issues because we are living in times of uncertainty. In that context, the questions that the young Nam June Paik struggled with and posed to other people need to continue to be discussed and experimented with and produced from. We wanted to create a space where we could do that. And we will be very open about how we create that space.

Bazon Brock: May I contribute, because it is a crucial question, what is really to be achieved by establishing this kind of institution? The answer is quite clear. You might even say there is only one answer.

A museum is a perfect home for the ability to understand, to study, to become familiar with what you thought to be the strange sphere of your enemies or counterparts or simply other cultures – people from other cultural identities, professions and so on. Within living cultures you have no chance to understand the culture of

your enemy. You have to transfer these desires into museums and there you have the chance to differentiate because there are so many scientists, art historians, archeologists, politicians, who are working to offer visitors the criteria of differentiation between all these different ways of making tables or dishes or paintings, etc. over the last 5000 years.

We learn to get rid of the terror of cultural identity. The museum is the only place that has a paradise-like atmosphere, because you are not forced to sacrifice your culture when you come in contact with others. You are free to understand yourself by looking at others or understanding others. So it is the return of anthropologists. Paik studied foreign cultures, but his goal was to better understand his own culture and this is why we study other cultures: to confront the foreign.

It is the most important mission museums fulfill because it is the only place where the future of a universal civilization can be imagined through exacting cultural differences of cultures all around the world. Only in the museum can you exact without aggression and without destroying. By using the museum as a kind of classroom to learn about the other, you keep all cultures safe. And you can learn about the others, all the others: the higher ranking, the lower-ranking, the cultures of the past, the still living cultures, the dead cultures, any language, etc.

This is really the only way we can develop our ability to exact all others beyond our own cultural identities – only in the museum. So the bottom line is that you have to "museo-lize" yourself.

"Museo-lize" yourself means you have to look upon yourself, your inner circle, your society and its institutions, citizens, schools, universities, and so on, as if you were not a member of those groups. Then you can develop an anthropological view onto your own culture and you can differentiate between cultures. And you can understand the distances of what you do not know. Knowing means knowing the borders – knowing the beyond as something that is identifiable. Therefore museums have the only mission everybody in the world can share. It is not the international trade fair and all those that are the leading institutions for

building up universal civilization, it is the museums. And they do this by respecting all these hundreds and hundreds of differences within living and dead cultures over the past 5000 years, and hopefully the next 2000.

Namsoo Kim (moderator): Thank you. When we listen to Bazon and Mary talk I really feel excited. After Mary's presentation yesterday I also felt similarly. I think we have a bit more time so we will accept more questions.

Question from the audience: I want to apologize first because I am going to back track a bit. I have attended all the presentations both yesterday and today and I noticed that the age that Paik went to Japan was, I think, 18. However, I think most 18 year olds are not capable of making their own decisions in life. So I found this a bit confusing. Would a student who has not even finished high school have thought, "I need to escape?" I need to make a flight? He probably made his flight because his parents told him to do so. I think we need to keep all this in context. Also, Paik Nam June was a voracious reader. He would go to used book stores a lot and buy classics. He had a real hunger for knowledge. He wanted to see the world and talk to different people and maybe he wanted to overcome something. And maybe that is the real reason he went abroad. Professor Brock and Ms. Bauermeister, you were with Paik in his early years, when he was young. Could you talk a bit about his friends?

Namsoo Kim (moderator): Before that, let me just say I think his youth was different from today's standards. I think that at that time even teachers began teaching at twenty one. They matured more quickly than our generation. Everything is pushed back these days. And a lot of knowledge is input passively into students today. However, when Paik was in high school, as far as I know, he read philosophy, history, and formed his own philosophical thinking. I do not think you can equate what is happening now to what happened then. But you asked Mary and Brock to answer, so maybe they can answer.

Youngchul Lee: Let me just talk for 30 seconds. Paik was a guest speaker at the National Museum of Contemporary Arts. And he created a large piece

called, *The More, The Better*. Paik was so popular in Korea that whenever he spoke he drew large audiences. And many people asked him questions. This was because Paik was not as commanding a figure as other Korean men. So he was asked a lot of questions. Once there was a question by a second-year junior high student who asked, "How can I be like you?" And Paik answered, "Do not trust your teachers." There were famous professors in Germany who were in their 20s, and there were people in their 40s who wanted to write about the world. The main point is that people are all different physically; their level of thought and the maturity of their thoughts are all different. I think today's education is really ruining that diversity. Now it takes such a long time to become a doctor or a professor. We believe that we really need to educate our people, but at the same time this system has a lot of faults. Professor Brock? The person who asked, "Do you think Paik followed his parents to Japan?" The quotation that I shared was a comment he made when he was a bit older, but I think it gives us a glimpse into his maturity. I do not think we can say that he just followed his parents to Japan because he studied Shoenberg right away, so I do not think we can say that. I think we need to go beyond that kind of passive thinking. We need to base our ideas on the fact that he had his own ideas. And if you look at the fortune teller who told his mother about Paik's destiny you will see that he was bound to be like this.

Bazon Brock: To give a short answer, in those days – the fifties up to the mid-sixties – the only working international system was the German state-owned radio system. It was made up of public channels and these curators of the German public radio stations fed nearly the whole world of musicians, especially composers.

It was quite obvious to everybody in the world to go to Germany, because there you could be fed by the radio stations. Nearly every third day there was an evening concert, then an hour and a half of essays, then another concert, or opera, or so on. This was every afternoon and every evening. And if I look back on my own career, I can safely say I lived from the money the radio stations paid me.

And so did many other artists.

Because of the public radio stations, there were hundreds of foreigners in Germany – English and American, but especially Americans. We thought the Americans were rich, but the American authors told us they did not earn a penny in the United States, they had to come to Germany to earn money. In those days the system of public German broadcasting was absolutely productive as a media for nearly the whole world of creative young persons. And everybody knew about this. It was so unique. Not in the USA, not in France, not in England, not in Italy. Only in Germany, because of the effect of the structure of development of the federalist system made it necessarily oriented towards public media, with access for everybody.

Mary Bauermeister: And the really wonderful thing was the competition. Usually competition is horrible. But there was competition between our four occupational forces that was very positive. Our country is still under occupational status today. We are not a free country. If someone says to you, "Germany is free," he or she will be wrong. It is not. It is still not. But at that time after the war Germany was divided into Russian, French, Belgian and English occupational quarters. And American. Furthermore, each had its own radio station. And they competed with each other.

It is unbelievable what these five stations produced because they were in competition. And culture was the only thing they fed us. We were hungry and culture was not politically dangerous. Or so they thought because they did not realize that our cultural acts were political. They were actually acts of terror. But that came into their minds later. At first they just saw us as crazy artists and they let us be. Culture was our only free space at that time. Four or five radio stations would compete with each other – it was unbelievable. You cannot imagine the quality of culture that was produced then. Like Bazon said, even the Americans and the English and the French composers wanted their music to be performed by German musicians. Our orchestras and our chambers orchestras they performed all

of these great composers who were still unknown in their home countries. That was the advantage of having been bombed down to nothing.

Bazon Brock: The most important thing about education was that you had one version of the Schoenberg from Munich, one version from Berlin, one version from Cologne, and one version from Frankfurt. Even from the southwest radio in Stuttgart and Baden-Baden. So this was educational because you had the chance to listen to three, four, five different versions of the same piece. That was just amazing, and the same with theatre. You had nearly all the important plays being broadcast and brought to life by the most talented actors. And sometimes even preformed in French or English. So you had the chance to compare and create criteria. For example, at that time we developed the highest ranking list of criteria to judge music in those days in Germany.

Mary Bauermeister: And the programs were not decided by the number of listeners like programs today that have markers that check how many people watch a certain television program. Today the quality of a program is directly related to the number of people who watch it, so democracy in culture only brings about mediocrity, whereas at that time culture was in the hands of those who knew it. Our radio programs were unbelievably good and our early television programs too cannot be compared to the nonsense we see today.

Bazon Brock: The argument was if you produced a piece of avant-garde music for 2000 people, that was fine because they were a minority and were pardoned as such. So everybody was directed towards the minorities because they made the difference.

The curators and the stations would say, “Oh! Lovely! Only 2000!” That is exactly what we wanted. So there would be another show or essay for 3000 or 5000, but nobody cared about mass audiences as those that were established after the 80s when the TV system and the radio system completely changed into a commercial affair.

We still have some public radio programs today, but they have to adopt

commercial attitudes so everything has broken down. The public broke down because there were no minorities and if you have no minorities you have no public, because the public is made up of minorities. A dozen minorities build the public because they are able to diversify. A society is not a homogeneous mass of people. The public is built of minorities. Every society is built up of minorities – dozens and dozens and dozens of minorities: the butchers, the tennis players, the doctors, and so on.

That was quite different from all today. The consciousness that we are founded on specialized minorities of extremely interested people. We all were refugees, we all came from all the different countries, and we had just to find out in which way we could be helpful to a developing society. And contribute as someone who was specialized and part of a minority – either a cultural heritage minority or a professional minority, or by the department you chose to study.

We had all the departments. Even if there were seven students they would create a department. Nowadays they shut a department down if there are less than 700 students. They simply shut it down if it does not pay.

This destruction of the public was countered by scientists and artists. They said if the public is destroyed, the public that produced the enlightenment, which produced progress in society, then we have to do it. So the artists and the scientists took it upon themselves. Even ladies in their salons started. Mary, for instance, was an institution. Just by having nothing, not even a spacious room, she only had a tiny studio. Even that was possible. Nowadays it is horrible. No one can just take the initiative anymore. There is no initiative anymore. No starting again and again. Nothing. It is all just this mish-mash.

Mary Bauermeister: That could answer the gentleman's question, where to jump to. So that is an answer to him. Where do we go from now. Be courageous again to jump. Paik only asked me for advice once in my life. He came to me, and was visibly emotionally moved and he said, "I need your advice." And we talked about it and when I gave him the answer I said, "Do what takes the most

courage." Make the decision by what takes the most courage because that will lead you to an opening. I would give that advice to any student. When you make a decision, you should always take the path that takes the most courage.

Bazon Brock: You know where this comes from? It comes from a universal experience of mankind of crossing against the wind. Because you will succeed in going on if you really cross against the wind. The wind gives you direction; it gives you the measure of your own moves. So crossing against it is Mary's answer. Always try to find the biggest resistance to your ideas, against your will; then you know you are on the right track.

Namsoo Kim (moderator): Thank you very much. Let me try to summarize a bit. Nam June Paik talked once in an interview about the experience of loving an experience, and walking down a path that was not a path before. And I think this is in line with what Bazon and Mary have been saying. In Korea, there are many different movements. Mr. Yi is here with us and he is working not only on the political aspect of art but also on education and ideology. Would you like to talk about your work?

Jinkyung Yi: We were talking about Paik and then you sort of gave me a question from left field so I do not know how to answer. It is a very active discussion so I do not know how to insert myself. What we discussed the most was the issue of flight. If I may comment on that, I have asked myself before, "What would I do if there is a war between South and North Korea?" because I do not like the South Korean government, but I also do not like the North Korean government. So, what am I to do? Would I go into the mountains and act as a guerilla? I hate both sides. So what am I to do if there is war? There is only one answer. I have to make my own flight and become a refugee. That is what Paik and Shoenberg opted for. So I should have the courage to immigrate or become a refugee. That is what I thought. And I think maybe that is what Paik thought.

In Korea you have a lot of nationalists and members of the press and there are always questions from the nationalist point of view. Bazon said questions

are very important. If you ask the wrong question, then, you can never get a good answer. So to somebody that is not interested in whether or not you are questioning him, you cannot say either yes or no. I think that is the situation. For myself too, I would have made a flight if there were a war on the Korean peninsula now, and I was asked to comment about what I am doing. Mary and Bazon shared with us their personal experiences and I am very envious of them. I think we can get a lot of advice from them on how to improve our lives. That excites me and I think that it excites all of us.

I also think that whatever the situation now may be, what the current dominant value or lifestyle may be, if you do not want to be bound by those lifestyles or dominant values but you cannot give up on life, then you have to create a new way of life. And that kind of activity becomes very important. Capitalism and modernism have many calculations and rules and everything is systemized and to confront that we need to create a new way of life. And to create new way of life is to create a commune.

Socialism was at times a hope for me, but now socialism has failed. I also cannot not revert to capitalism. I cannot not go backwards or forwards. I have to create a third way, a new way of life and that is why I became interested in creating a commune, a new kind of commune. And I think that it is very important to do it now. I am involved in these activities, and I think the moderator wanted to give me a chance to introduce my activities although it might be not in line with our discussion today. While reading Paik's interviews and writings, I thought a lot about the public. Paik's attitude towards public was, I thought, very important.

I also talked about this in my paper, but Paik was not the type of modernist who wants or expects to be cursed or ignored by the public. He was in line with the public and in line with the senses of the public. That is why he wanted to go into the messiness of the public. I think that is what Paik thought. At that time, he was not about trying to condition himself to the public's likings. I think he just wanted to go into the public and maybe create something that is his own.

So maybe in that regard he was not a modernist but a postmodernist. Zen also is very important in the world of Paik, and what he learned from Zen is maybe what led him to do that. In Videology, he criticizes Suzuki's Zen and says, "Zen is based on two negations: acknowledging life and being, and acknowledging complaints." Accepting all complaints. And this is different from just conditioning yourself to an imperfect world.

I think that is why he equated life with art. In that regard, enlightenment or revelation is different from Zen's revelations or enlightenment. It is instead an awareness or enlightenment of one's own life. I think Paik used Western languages and Western art forms to express that type of oriental or Asian enlightenment. And that is why within Paik we can find the encounter between East and West and we can find a new way of life. He is urging us to lead a new way of life that is different from what we are seeing as the conventional way of life today. My current activities also relate to the thinking or philosophies of Paik. So in some sense I feel close to Paik. I feel like we are colleagues.

Namsoo Kim (moderator): Thank you very much Mr. Lee. I think we can find performance at the core. It is not a learned performance, but it is a Now Jump, a performance that happens now. And then we can think about what to do next. So that is the potential that we can take a look at. We are really out of time, and so just one or two more questions.

Question from the audience: I would like to add, to say that, "I think this is what he said" is really non-Nam June Paik. By saying, I think he lived this kind of life, how is that related to Now Jump? The moment that we start to use words we bind ourselves. When we talk about art, what is art? What is life? I think the moment that we start to ask these questions we walk down this path that really is never ending. And so this is really something that we need to take a look at. We use the brand, Nam June Paik. But are we truly faced with the true Nam June Paik? That is something that I would like to add.

I think it was 1984 when he first came to Korea. At the time I was serving

as a soldier in Baengnyeong Island. I was serving my mandatory military service. And Paik came to Korea and he said, “Art is fraud.” I think inside that statement, he was already saying, “Let us not talk about what art is.” I do not know why, but a Chosun Daily reporter was there to meet him at the airport for an interview. There were a group of artists that were against Nam June Paik coming to Korea as a so-called ‘artist.’ And so, do we think art is fraud? Or do we think art is something else? Do you think art should be a temple of some sort?

His words are not the words of Jesus Christ. The moment we talk about this, it is just like a pastor trying to live off of the name of Jesus although he does not really know anything. I hope that this will help Now Jump.

Namsoo Kim (moderator): Thank you very much. We only have ten minutes left so we need to close. But first Mr. Yi needs to give his response.

Jinkyung Yi: I think you can say that. And I have heard that comment a lot. But first I would like to ask a question – why do I need to read Nam June Paik in a Nam June Paik style? Would that make me better understand Paik? How can I read Nam June Paik in a Nam June Paik style when I am not Nam June Paik. I opt for a different way. If you look at the works of Nam June Paik displayed here, and say, “I can think the same thing as when Nam June Paik made it,” that would make no sense. I think it is ridiculous even to find something that is faithful to Nam June Paik. I do not think that Paik would have even expected that.

I talked about equalization and what I think as equalization. Paik shows us something and I look at it and have my own thoughts. In that regard, I received some sort of message that was never sent by Paik. I got a letter that was never sent. When we look at Paik, we look at ourselves and not at what Paik wanted us to look at. Because I form my own thoughts. So while talking about Nam June Paik here, how can it be possible to be in the brain of Nam June Paik? That is impossible.

I have my own understanding of Nam June Paik, and Bazon would have his own understanding of Nam June Paik, and other people would have their own

understandings of Nam June Paik. Although we live in the same world we have different understandings of the world. In that regard, pressuring us to understand Nam June Paik in a Nam June Paik way is not right.

Question from the audience: I am not so stupid as to say that you should understand Nam June Paik in Nam June Paik's way. I think you are distorting my point.

Jinkyung Yi: So then what are you trying to say?

Question from the audience: You asked, "How should we understand what he said?" And by doing so you are creating a hierarchy between Paik and the audience and that kind of hierarchy happens only in a temple. Not when we need to engage in critical discourse.

Jinkyung Yi: I do not think I fully understand. But what I said applies not only Nam June Paik but also to other people. Nam June Paik thinks as Nam June Paik. That is given. Also, the encounter of you with Nam June Paik differs from person to person. I am just saying that this was my encounter with Paik. I am talking about only my encounter. And maybe that is not the real Nam June Paik. But I do not really think the real Nam June Paik exists. I can only tell you about my encounter with Nam June Paik as I perceive him.

Namsoo Kim (moderator): It seems we have a very heated discussion. We would like to accept the question from the person standing by the window, and then we will turn the microphone to Mary.

Question from the audience: I have a short question. It might be a difficult one. But in our society, we have two taboos: Marxism, and sex or eroticism. How did Marxism influence Paik's early pieces? And then, how did eroticism later blossom in his video art? I would like to ask how he arrived at Zen through Marxism and eroticism. That is what I am very interested in. I am opening the question to anyone.

Namsoo Kim (moderator): It is certainly a very creative question. And I think it is really beyond our scope. But Mary, we look forward to your answer.

Mary Bauermeister: There is a certain energy arising here. And this energy is the kind of energy that would make Paik fall asleep or walk out, because the energy is destructive. It does not aim at understanding, but it aims at attacking one another.

It is very important to have many different opinions. I did not understand everything everyone was saying. But I feel an energy that is counterproductive and the question was very good, where do we jump to? That was a very important question. And then when I felt this energy, I withdrew from it because it was painful. So I withdrew and asked myself, "Paik, what would you jump into now? What would you do?"

I dream of him very often and he is with me in spirit, so I asked myself, "What would you say to do? Instead of talking about your past and what your art was," and I wrote down the answers which I got.

Go and find out about the true origin of mankind, with and by all means. Distill the essence of finally becoming a human being in spirit and matter. And the major thing is to get un-cloned. We are very much against cloning. And find out what we are all cloned with. And all our opinions, be they political, scientific, whatever they are, we need to move away from our cloned patterns and dogmas. Get un-cloned was a major message. And then to finish off, Paik is no longer limited by his human body, so he is really at home. Be inspired by him. That, to me, is the center of Paik in his spirit. Be inspired by a spirit of raising consciousness, of finding out more about people, of really being curious about our origins. And no matter what kind of conference you might stage in the future, if it circles around that question then it helps mankind on a political level and on a scientific level. Whenever you reach one essence in any field it automatically touches the other.

If you are really deep in art you are a politician and you are also a healer. You are somewhere at the point when you reach into all other spheres. The major point Paik made to me was to get un-cloned. Whatever that means, find out for yourself.

I really appreciate your question, where do we go from now? This center should not be a funeral ground for his past. But let us be inspired by what we all think our future needs to do. That can only be felt not by knowledge because knowledge is past, but by intuition. Intuitively tune into what the zeitgeist or the future impulses want to say through us. In that sense, a museum and a space like this is in an incredible space of freedom. And there I agree with Bazon. It is one of the last places of freedom where we can discuss openly any controversial topic.

Because it is only art, it is not important. It is not money; it is not politics. Because it is only art, it is a free space of free thinking. Those are my final comments. Please do not fight. It is useless; it is lost energy. Fight spiritually by learning and deepening knowledge, but do not get emotionally involved because that creates attached energy. We are allowed to research, but let us not get attached. That is what I learned from Buddhism. You can do anything but do not get attached. Not to your sorrows, not to your joys. Just stay and look. Look from the distance because you can see more clearly. When you get involved you are shadowed.

Bazon Brock: He used Duchamp's term: productive indifference.

Namsoo Kim (moderator): I think there was also a student who was trying to ask a question.

Question from the audience: Good afternoon. I am a university student. Thank you for this seminar. It has been a great experience. There was a lot of talk about Paik's identity as an artist. The Germans seem to think he is a German artist. The Americans think he is an American artist. And Koreans think he is a Korean artist. And I think that was a strong point of Paik's. I think it proves that he was global.

In any case, I like to visit exhibitions. As a pure participant, as a pure visitor, I watched the exhibition yesterday. And I thought that the guide map was very difficult to follow. It was very difficult to see if there were footprints on the floor. I thought that the price of the tickets was appropriate, but if you add the bus fare, it

becomes quite expensive. The staff was very friendly. So I come to my question, it must cost a lot in terms of electricity bills to run this center. And I know in the Gwacheon center that there were some problems with the fixtures. The pieces here must also be very difficult to maintain. I am sure that is one of your concerns. Could you talk a little bit about how the pieces are maintained?

Namsoo Kim (moderator): Maybe we can leave your question there.

Question from the audience: Well, that was really it. How are the pieces maintained?

Namsoo Kim (moderator): And what will this art center do in the future? There are many people who are here who are old friends of Paik's, so maybe we can turn the microphone to Director Lee? Let us give him the microphone for a comprehensive answer.

Youngchul Lee: I think I have spoken for too long. I wanted the floor to speak much more. But I keep receiving the microphone for answers. The Nam June Paik Art Center was supported by the Gyeonggi Province when Paik was still alive in 2001, and the governor then was a very ambitious politician who also had a deep respect for Paik. He believed we needed a place to hold all of Paik's precious messages after he passed away. He wanted to have that place in Korea and more specifically in Gyeonggi Province, not in Seoul.

The contract was between Paik and the Governor. At that time Paik said, "I do not need to have my name in the name of the Art Center. I would like to see a place where we can show new frontiers of video art to the world. I want to see an institution that is dedicated to video art." He said, "We can call it 'The House Where Paik Lives for a Long Time'." And that was the name that he gave us. It is very Paik-like, don't you think? When he used expressions like that we felt the picture that was inside his spirit and heart. And we need to keep our eyes focused on that picture as we proceed.

It did not go well until 2006. We thought that we would not be able to build a center because there was a change of governor. But after much difficulty we did

open this art center. When the center was opened there were no chairs, tables, or walls. There was nothing here. So my staff and I had to work very, very hard. Everything in Korea is quite similar and there were many setbacks. There are still setbacks. But we did our best. And the most important part is we kept the spirit.

Systems always have problems, whether you have money or not. And the desires of people always create problems. So the staff that works here, they all came from somewhere. They are all unfamiliar people. But we got together to work on this great project for 5-6 months. That was something really great. They hardly ever went home because they worked so hard.

This art center was built from the Gyeonggi Province's taxpayers' money. And we bought this collection from many different areas. Paik is a very lucky artist. We need to learn from that spirit. We need to interpret all of this as a gift from Nam June Paik. And we need to make sure that we share it with many people in various ways. Bazon is here, Mary is here. They are of the same generation as Nam June Paik and they are so passionate. They were passionate enough to come here and participate in this dialogue for this first conference. We do not know when they will come back. They do not know when they will come back. Perhaps Nam June Paik knows when they will come back.

Paik is watching us and he is with us, and that is the spirit that we had when we built this center. We went through a lot. The people of Korea hope to create a Nam June Paik that is loved by everyone. He is really in the hearts of the German people and the Japanese. He is someone so needed by the world. Just like the moon he is always here. Paik always read many newspapers and was interested in what was happening in the world, and he commented on the world through art. He gave us so much advice, and we need to learn from his spirit and his attitude. To do good, we need to be awake. We need to work hard. And we will work hard. We will be with the people of this community. We will be an art center that is with the community. Thank you.