

Park Chan-kyong & Lina Selander

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Exploring the post disaster consciousness, this exhibition travels from Korea to Hiroshima to Chernobyl to Ancient Greece

In January it often seems that everyone is caught up in a relentless frenzy of self-improvement. With every magazine article and advert demanding you to become a “better you” - new body, new hair, new personality – it is easy to be caught up in a self-obsessed bubble.

But, tucked away off busy Curtain Road at [Iniva](#), is an exhibition to challenge this egotistical perception of the world. The exhibition is simply titled after the two artists, Park Chan-kyong and Lisa Selander. In the first UK solo presentations of their work, curated by Binna Choi and Lisa Rosendahl, it challenges assumptions about modernity, catastrophes and the process of creating art. With references to Chernobyl and Hiroshima, this exhibition ensures that the omnipresent materialistic demands of January are left at the door.

Situated in Rivington Place the exhibition is part of Practice International, an EU-culture-funded research project exploring what internationalism might be. And, this art exhibition certainly displays its academic roots through Park’s work being surrounded by Korean reference books and one of Selander’s work being on display in the Stuart Hall Library.

Priscilla Granozio, the communications manager at Iniva, spoke about the artists’ work being linked through their interest in “archival material”. Even though the two halves of the exhibition were developed separately there is a synergy through their methods as Granozio elaborates: ““They are researchers, they are Sherlock Holmes. They’ve been collecting information on different subjects that were close to their hearts.”

Park's accessible work, *Pa-Gyong – Last Sutra Recitation*, is the first artist you encounter. Walking in you are overwhelmed with the choice of activities: a table is covered with intriguing books on Korean rituals, there are videos playing with headsets inviting you to listen and the walls are covered with pictures.

In setting up his display, Park is keen to stress that he “wanted to make a public space, I wouldn't say a library, but a place to read and see and hear”. This is an immersive experience where you are not only using your visual senses, but also engaging with the material through learning the background.

“Because it is my first exhibition in the UK, it is important to bring all this context to understand better.” And this information is certainly beneficial with the unfamiliar Korean folk religious practices such as shamanism and utopian religious communities.

Park believes he is linked to Selander's work through the sharing of a “post disaster consciousness” as they both examine “modernity fails”. Selander herself mirrors Park's words by explaining how they both “work with post catastrophe topics”.

When going up the stairs to the second half of the exhibition, you encounter a very different display. In a darkened room *Open System – Silphium and Other Works* consists of three films and a selection of materials from the artists' working archive.

In one of her works, *Model of Continuation*, Selander questions ideas of time and image, taking its starting point from the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima.

“Everything was destroyed and disappeared but what was left was unintentional monuments, like prints. Extremely brutal and poetical but also interesting”, explains Selander. The poignancy of this is shown through the video work screened and the artist working materials displayed.

Anteroom of the Real is a video showing the artist's hands flipping through a pile of Chernobyl disaster photographs and it is this work that raises the question, “What is an editing room? There is always someone's choice – someone's hand.”

It seems this convergence is where the two artists are most in sync -when acknowledging this process of omission. Park counters it through providing points of reference and Selander by explicitly displaying someone always decides, “what kind of material should be in an archive or a library or in a collection”.

By juxtaposing Park and Selander, the Iniva have succeeded in putting on an exhibition that attempts to tackle issues of huge magnitude: time, disasters, art.

Perhaps eating that extra doughnut last night isn't the end of the world.

URL : <http://londoncalling.com/features/park-chan-kyong-lina-selander>