



REAL DMZ PROJECT 2014

About from eflux:

The REAL DMZ PROJECT is a contemporary art project based on research conducted on the DMZ (Demilitarized Zone): the last relic of the Cold War. Having begun with a critical perspective on the ironies that surround the demilitarized zone, the REAL DMZ PROJECT has extended its parameters by experimenting not only with new productions and exhibitions but also via dialogue and discussions within the field of the humanities and social sciences. The long-term vision of the REAL DMZ PROJECT is to create a platform that not only supports a variety of research methods, but also ensures that such research is made accessible to both local and global communities.

Co-curated by Sunjung Kim and Nikolaus Hirsch, the *REAL DMZ PROJECT 2014* attempts to renegotiate the ideologies of peace and war, on the one side, and the realities on the ground, on the other. The impact of ideology remains omnipresent: an oppressive presence of military infrastructures such as checkpoints, fences, and guard posts; and the manifestations of peace rhetoric such as the DMZ Peace Plaza and the Cheorwon Peace Observatory. The other, often neglected truth is the DMZ's wild natural landscape with rare species and agricultural territory cultivated by farmers in the Civilian Control Zone, an area in which civilian access is strictly regulated. The project investigates this paradoxical condition, while imagining a new, alternative reality for the Demilitarized Zone.

The tension between the politics of military paranoia and the politics of everyday life is reflected by the spatial strategies of the *REAL DMZ PROJECT 2014*. Together with the artists, the curators have selected venues and sites of intervention that span from relics of the Sunshine politics of the past decade such as the DMZ Peace Plaza and the DMZ Peace Hall (with works by Mark Lewis, Seung Woo Back, Dinh Q. Lê, and Koo Jeong A), to the Cheorwon Peace Observatory facing the DMZ and North Korea (including an

intervention by Tomás Saraceno and a sound performance by Florian Hecker), to military infrastructures such the US-military bunker under Mount Soi (Koo Jeong A) and a new civilian shelter (sound installation by Florian Hecker). A specific focus is directed to the farming village Yangji-ri, founded in 1970s as a propaganda settlement in the buffer zone, where the REAL DMZ PROJECT has initiated an artist residency program. Within this framework, Adrián Villar Rojas has developed a large-scale work that intervenes and adds to the existing fabric of the village. Other artworks include the experimental architecture of *A Dugout Hut* by Joohyun Kim, and *Reduit*, a video by John Skoog that documents the conversion of farmhouse into a nuclear bunker.

An integral part of the project is dedicated to acoustic and performative formats, with the intent of investigating a non-visual approach to the DMZ, a territory whose perception seems to be determined by visual imagery and political paranoia. Beyond the sound installation and performance by Florian Hecker, the exhibition will present new work by artist Chung Seoyoung (installed at the Artsonje Center in Seoul), performances by avant-garde cellist Okkyung Lee, an installation and a performance by Albert Samreth, and a new version of a guided tour between Seoul and the DMZ by writer Ingo Niermann, an extract of his upcoming book based on a scenario for Korean unification.

Participating artists: Seung Woo Back, *Stigmata-#001* and *Stigmata-#008* / Jae Eun Choi, *No Borders Exit in Nature* / Chung Seoyoung, *A Nap* / Florian Hecker, *Reformulation* and *Rearranged Playlist as Auditory Scene Synthesis* / Joohyun Kim, *A Dugout Hut* / Koo Jeong A, *Consciousness Dilatation* and *Dearest Young Hoi* and *steady zero* / Dinh Q. Lê, *What Lay Beyond* / Okkyung Lee, *Broken Sky* / Mark Lewis, *Tiger* and *Observation in Cheorwon County* / Ingo Niermann, *The De-Mechanized Zone* / Albert Samreth, *Dancers on a Plane (DMZ)* / John Skoog, *Reduit (Redoubt)* / Tomás Saraceno, *DOF (Degrees of Freedom)* / Adrián Villar Rojas, *El momento más hermoso de la guerra (The Most Beautiful Moment of War)*

Curated by Sunjung Kim and Nikolaus Hirsch

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