

What would an artist-conceived “city” look like?

Obayashi Foundation Research Program

Press Release – March 20, 2023

“Visions of the City - Obayashi Foundation Research Program”

The fourth grant recipient is Minouk Lim



The Obayashi Foundation has selected the Korea-based artist Minouk Lim as the fourth recipient of the “Visions of the City - Obayashi Foundation Research Program” grant.

The first grant recipient was Makoto Aida; the second was Theaster Gates; the third was exonemo. In the 2023 fiscal year grant program period, Minouk Lim will carry out investigation and research. Detailed information will be announced when it is confirmed.

About “Visions of the City - Obayashi Foundation Research Program”

This creative grant program is carried out every two years by Obayashi Foundation with the aim of supporting artists’ research and investigation activities on the theme of “cities.” Launched in 2017, the program is being held this year for the fourth time.

Based on recommendations of a five-member selection committee, the program awards grants to artists with an abundance of creative ideas and a strong interest in the life of cities. Selected artists carry out research and investigations on issues facing urban areas, from original perspectives that differ from conventional approaches to urban planning, and present ideas and proposals for approaches to a city in which they would like to live or to an innovative or ideal type of urban environment.

<https://www.obayashifoundation.org/english/urbanvision/>

| Fourth grant recipient

Minouk Lim

Minouk Lim (b. 1968) is an artist of many forms and has been creating works that are beyond the boundary of different genres and media, deepening the scope of questions while encompassing writing, music, video, installation, and performance as her modes of artistic expression. Lim's practice recalls historic losses, ruptures, and repressed traumas. Rooted in language, and specifically, the politics of expression, her work does not replay past events, rather, they elevate the experiences, memories, and feelings through the means of imagining or engaging structural beings of non-human witnesses in her performative sculptural objects and installations.



Portable keeper-Seal

2012

Buoy, metal, fan, fishing gut, thread, glue
200 x 50 cm (diameter)

© the artist



Portable Keeper-Sea

2020

HD single channel video, color, sound
5min.22sec.

Suwon Museum of Art specific Installation view
© the artist



Si tu me vois, je ne te vois pas (If you see me, I don't see you)

2019

Hot water canal, mixed media
Lyon Biennale installation view
Dimension variable
Photo by Blaise Adilon



Dudumulmul (頭頭物物) No. 32

2021

epoxy resin, urethane, plaster, agar, partially eaten waffle, piece of photograph, earphones, LED bulb, arm warmer, electrical wire, kangaroo skull,
27 x 134 x 40 cm
Photo by Sangtae Kim

| About the grant program “Visions of the City - Obayashi Foundation Research Program”

This foundation was established in September 1998 under the name Obayashi Foundation to Promote Urban Studies. As the name suggests, we have worked to advance the development of urban research in Japan by supporting those engaged in research activity to help actualize urban planning that will enrich the lives of city residents. In September 2010 the foundation received accreditation from Japan’s Cabinet Office as a public interest incorporated foundation. In September 2011 we changed the name to our current name, Obayashi Foundation, while maintaining the same fundamental philosophy.

Following the postwar reconstruction period, Japan achieved remarkable economic growth and became a materially wealthy nation while at the same time creating highly efficient and convenient urban environments. But even though these cities had come to be viewed as rich, it would be difficult to say whether the inner lives of the people residing in them had truly become richer. Considering that, for some time after the war, Japan was engaged in frantic efforts to revive its battle-scorched land, as well as the fact that our country experiences an extraordinary number of natural disasters, it is not surprising that the nation’s top priority for many years was to build a durable infrastructure to protect the lives of its people.

On the other hand, there are many impoverished areas in the world where, for people who live there, the facilities in place are merely a means by which to go on living. The entire world, moreover, faces common problems including excessive population concentration in cities, air pollution caused by widespread automobile use and industrial agglomeration, depletion of the natural environment, and abnormal weather due to greenhouse gas emissions. In today’s Japan, where the decreasing birth rate and the aging of society have led to population decline, there has also been an emergence of various social problems such as the abandonment of vacant houses and the phenomenon of people dying alone in their homes.

Isn’t there some way to rethink urban development as a way to make people’s lives richer and more fulfilling, and contribute to the study of cities in terms of interaction among human beings? Cities and people co-exist, and our idea was to support research on the various relationships between them in a wide range of fields connected with cities and people, including the arts, the economy, the environment, and history.

Rather than call upon experts on cities or urban engineering, in this program we are asking artists from Japan and overseas who have an abundance of creative ideas and a strong interest in cities to consider various issues facing cities and conduct research on approaches to a city in which they would like to live or to an innovative or ideal type of urban environment.

Actually, I don’t think there has ever before been an organization that supports artists who research and think about the subject of cities. The grant program “Visions of the City - Obayashi Foundation Research Program” is meeting that need.

Takeo Obayashi
Chairman of the Board
The Obayashi Foundation

| Selection committee

Chairperson: Shinobu Nomura (Senior Curator, Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery)

Vice Chairperson: Kenjiro Hosaka (Shiga Museum of Art)

Committee:
Shihoko Iida (Curator)
Koichiro Osaka (Founder / Director, ASAKUSA)
Tomoko Yabumae (Curator, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum)

| Previous recipients



Courtesy Mizuma Art Gallery

Grant Program No. 1 (2017)

Makoto Aida

Exhibition: “GROUND NO PLAN”

Archive:

https://www.obayashifoundation.org/urbanvision/event/2017_aidamakoto/



Photo: Rankin

Grant Program No. 2 (2019)

Theaster Gates

Research and presentation: “To Be a Maker: Finding Afro-Mingei”

Catalog: “ECONOMIES OF MINGEI”

Archive:

https://www.obayashifoundation.org/urbanvision/profile/2019_theaster_gates.php#pager01



Photo : Niko

Grant Program No. 3 (2021)

exonemo

Catalog: “Infected Cities”

Archive:

https://www.obayashifoundation.org/urbanvision/profile/2021_exonemo.php#pager01

| Inquiries

[Concerning the grant project]

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[Concerning press coverage or publicity images]

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