

■ Deliberation Statement for the 2026 ARKO Art Studio

- Program Division : 2026 ARKO Art Studio
- Meeting Dates : (Round 1) March 5, 2026, (Round 2) March 12, 2026
- Meeting Venue : (Round 1) Committee Room, ARKO Art Center, (Round 2) Committee Room, ARKO Art Center & Online (via ZOOM)
- Deliberation Committee Members : Jeong Heonki, Jieon Shim, Jungju Ahn, Kwon Hyukgue, Song Kahyun

We would like to begin by expressing our sincere gratitude to all artists who applied to the ARKO Residency Open Call. This year's programme received applications from a total of 550 artists from both domestic and international contexts. The review process offered the jury an opportunity to encounter a broad spectrum of practices from artists actively engaged in contemporary artistic discourse across diverse generations and disciplines.

Many of the applicants demonstrated sustained artistic commitment and a thoughtful engagement with their respective mediums and conceptual frameworks. The submissions reflected not only a high level of artistic rigour but also a wide range of perspectives and methodologies that characterise contemporary artistic practice today. Through this process, the jury was able to recognise the depth, diversity, and vitality of current artistic production within both domestic and international contexts.

At the same time, it is important to note that the ARKO Residency Open Call differs in several ways from other public or institutional residency programmes. One of its distinctive characteristics is that the programme operates through two separate terms within a single year, with artists selected for the first and second halves respectively. This structure is not simply administrative in nature but reflects the programme's intention to situate artistic production within a defined temporal framework that allows for focused development and experimentation.

In this regard, the selection process was not structured as a competitive evaluation aimed at identifying the "best" artists based solely on artistic merit or career trajectory. Rather, the jury approached the process with an emphasis on contextual alignment: considering how an artist's proposed project might engage with the specific spatial, temporal, and institutional framework of the residency.

Residencies function not merely as facilities that provide studio space. They

are environments in which artistic processes unfold through the intersection of place, time, and dialogue. For some artists, a residency may offer the conditions necessary for a shift or transition within their practice; for others, it may provide an opportunity to deepen or expand ongoing lines of inquiry. In this sense, the residency can be understood as a site in which artistic ideas are tested, negotiated, and transformed.

In a way similar to site-specific practices, the meaning and potential of a residency often emerge through an artist's relationship to the particular conditions of the programme. For this reason, the jury paid particular attention to the question of why each applicant sought to engage with this specific residency context.

Each application included documentation of the artist's existing practice alongside a proposal outlining their intended project during the residency period. The jury carefully considered whether these proposals articulated a clear and feasible trajectory for artistic development within the timeframe of the programme. Given that the residency is structured in two distinct terms, the presence of a well-defined and realistic creative plan was an essential criterion for further evaluation.

Another important aspect of the selection process concerned the potential dynamics within the residency community itself. While the residency provides individual studio spaces, it also constitutes a shared environment in which artists coexist and interact over a defined period of time. Such proximity can foster unexpected conversations, exchanges, and forms of collaboration that may influence the direction of individual practices.

For this reason, the jury also considered how each selected artist might contribute to a collective atmosphere within the residency. Beyond the individual project proposals, attention was given to the potential forms of dialogue, exchange, and synergy that might emerge among the participating artists.

The purpose of this selection process was therefore not to establish a hierarchy of artistic excellence. Instead, the jury sought to identify artists whose practices and proposals demonstrated a meaningful potential to engage with the particular conditions of this residency and to contribute to its evolving

community.

The artists ultimately selected represent a group whose proposed projects resonated with the conceptual and structural framework of the programme. Their selection should not be interpreted as a definitive evaluation of artistic value. Rather, it reflects a curatorial judgement regarding the compatibility between the artists' proposed trajectories and the specific context of the residency.

At the same time, the jury would like to emphasise that many of the applications presented compelling artistic practices and thoughtful proposals. Due to the limited capacity of the programme, it was unfortunately not possible to include all deserving applicants. The jury acknowledges the depth and quality of the submissions and expresses sincere respect for the artistic commitment demonstrated by all applicants.

For the artists who have been selected, it is also important to recognise the structural conditions under which the residency operates. While the programme is organised by the Arts Council Korea, it functions within a framework of limited resources and administrative capacity. As such, the residency cannot provide unlimited support for artistic production.

Artists are therefore encouraged to approach the residency as a platform for experimentation and dialogue, while actively realising the projects they have proposed within the conditions provided. The creative plans submitted as part of the application process should not be understood merely as formal documentation, but as a guiding framework for the work that will unfold during the residency.

Furthermore, the residency programme exists in relation to a broader cultural and social context. While artistic practice often develops through highly individual processes, it also inevitably intersects with communities and environments beyond the studio. The ARKO Residency likewise seeks to situate artistic production within a wider network of social and cultural relations.

The jury hopes that the selected artists will engage not only with the residency space itself but also with the surrounding community and the diverse contexts that shape it. Through such engagement, the residency may function

not simply as a site of production but as a platform for dialogue and exchange.

Once again, we extend our sincere appreciation to all artists who applied to this year's open call. The review process provided an invaluable opportunity to encounter a wide range of practices and perspectives that continue to shape the contemporary art landscape.

We look forward to witnessing how the selected artists will develop their projects during the residency period, and we hope that ARKO Residency will continue to evolve as a meaningful platform for artistic experimentation, exchange, and collaboration.

Deliberation Committee Members : Jeong Heonki (서명)

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